

MID-HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM
Marketing Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: 3/22/2012

Location: MHLS

Committee members attending:

X Jeannie Bogino (Columbia)	X Gillian Thorpe (Putnam)
X Lorraine Rothman (Dutchess)	X Jody Ford (Ulster)
X Scott Jarzombek (Dutchess)	X Kara Lustiber (Ulster)
X Barbara Flach (Greene)	X Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (MHLS)

Staff Attending: Merribeth Advocate, Kerstin Cruger, Mike Nyerges, Eric McCarthy

Others Attending: Erica Freudenberg

Action Items:

1. Approval of minutes from 12/12/2011.
2. Remind front line staff to market the "Book Club in a Bag" program. Our success with WOMM proves that front line staff are the best way to market resources like this one.
3. Rebekkah will expand the 101 Facebook Post Ideas handout to actual posts that can be cut and pasted onto member library Facebook pages.
4. The committee will review the Tax Cap Explanation handout and give feedback to Rebekkah.
5. The committee will continue to brainstorm ideas to improve downloadable audiobook circulation.
6. Rebekkah will forward the research about improved Lexile reading levels to the committee.

Discussion Items:

1. **Advocacy Boot Camp** – This year's Boot Camp was very successful. We will continue to offer this as the value is clear, particularly for trustees although the training is also quite beneficial for front line staff.
2. **Building your Base Online** – Almost 80 people are enrolled in the "10 Things" online project. Participant feedback is positive. The course is taking participants more than an hour each week. Most people are taking their time learning each step and keeping up with the process. Because of the wide range of skill level in participants, this structure seems to work well. Front line staff who are enrolled report that the course has raised their level of understanding of MHLS resources and technology. Some staff are getting paid for their time and others are not. Rebekkah will assess where that split is. We hope to offer a second session in the Fall. We are coming to end of the grant period. Remaining workshops include next week's tech petting zoo with Jo-Ann Benedetti (3 sold out sessions) and Polly Farrington's digital storytelling workshop in April. MHLS is purchasing Webinar software through the grant as well. The next stage of BYB will focus on directors: development of a leadership skill set necessary to build their base of support in their communities; motivating internal library stakeholders; and, helping boards lead the charge to secure sustainable funding. This project has been going on since 2007 now.
3. **Advocacy Day** – In general, the energy seemed more positive this year, although attendance was down from last year. The Senate has agreed to the 4%, but the legislature has only approved 1.5%. The appeal for bus donations went out a little late this year and some Friends groups missed it, however there were a record number of donations from MHLS area Friends Groups.
4. **Book Club in a Bag** – The online reservation system has increased use of more titles in the collection. In light of the new reservation system, we will let it go one more year before weeding any kits out. Currently the cost of a kit is \$17.96 to the sponsoring library. The committee recommends that the cost be raised to \$25.00 to cover costs. The committee also recommends that the program be capped at 200 kits due to space constraints. Some

of the books in the kits are starting to fall apart. The committee recommends that 10 copies be maintained in each kit. The sponsoring library will be given the option of removing the kit from the collection or replacing the copies to make the kit complete.

5. **2012 Workshops** - Basic topics will include winning your vote, newsletters & enewsletters, annual reports to the community, digital media, and social networking best practices.
6. **Summer Reading Program** – Current data indicates that children who participate return to school more than 50 Lexile points ahead of children who don't. While we have suspected as much, it's great to have actual numbers to support this. This year we worried that there would be no summer reading funds from the state. Now DLD has results to show that state funds are necessary under the umbrella of state funds for education. This indicates that libraries are a permanent part of the education program, so real education partnerships between schools and public libraries are critical. Mini-grant approval will give preference to programs that both increase the number of participants and strengthen or establish relationships with the schools. There will be a series of webinars on how to use Summer Reader, the online tool designed to help libraries track summer reading program participation. This year the SRP final report deadline has been extended three weeks to September 14.
7. **Mobile App Development** - A patron, who works for Sprint Mobile, has a PhD and holds 12 patents for mobile software, has expressed an interest in developing a custom mobile app for MHLS. We have mobile versions of the catalog, Overdrive/Kindle app, AccessMyLibrary (Gale), QR codes, fb/twitter/ 4square, Screencasting, and 50%+ of library's web sites have a mobile version. The committee recommended MHLS pursue the development of patron "want" lists – an app that would be able to scan barcodes, look up the item in OPAC, and enable the patron to request the item. Other ideas to be explored at a later time: scavenger/treasure hunt that tie different libraries together, Summer Reading Program assistance, or an augmented reality app (e.g. Google Goggles).
8. **Explaining the Tax Cap** – The committee reviewed the one page handout titled "Understanding New York's Property Tax Levy Cap as it relates to public libraries." People often get confused between the tax cap and tax levy. The committee will send feedback to Rebekkah.
9. **Audiobook Downloads** – The committee brainstormed ways to increase audiobook downloads, which has flatlined. Most of the conversation centered on the need for training of staff on the Digital Download Center (OverDrive) so they are positioned to best help a frustrated patron. Other ideas included:
 - a. Post marketing sign where the physical audiobooks are located.
 - b. Market materials stating how to download items and return them early.
 - c. Expose staff to help section in OverDrive, "New Help," which provides assistance device by device.
 - d. The checkout limit could be an issue. Patrons may prefer using those slots for ebooks.
 - e. Promote help features and train the trainer assistance for frontline staff.
 - f. Offer both Help clinics / 1:1 appointments for patrons.
 - g. Provide feedback to Overdrive on what is causing angst amongst users.
 - h. Market specific titles.
