

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

It's annual reports time and for Mid-Hudson it begins with Linda Vittone working towards the end-of-the-month deadline for our 2012 financial report to the State Comptroller. And Assistant Director Merribeth Advocate gets busy coordinating the compilation of circulation, collection, database and website access, Overdrive downloads and other data for our member libraries as well as for Mid-Hudson, which Eric McCarthy, Robert Drake and other staff gather, calculate and summarize.

Several workshops on annual reports for new directors have also been scheduled and the deadline for member libraries to complete their annual reports for the state is February 17. Merribeth, Linda and I will be reviewing all member library reports to help ensure their accuracy.

Just a quick note on the demand in 2012 for ebooks: we've seen something of an explosion in Overdrive downloads in comparison to 2011: a 224% increase for ebooks and a 14% [CORRECTED] increase for audiobooks. More detailed statistics are available online at <http://midhudson.org/collection/overdrive.htm#collection>. Compare the downloads on January 1, 2011 and January 1, 2012 and this may be an indication of where this is heading: up, up and up! Merribeth and staff have done a great job compiling statistics and instructional resources on our site.

## **ADVOCACY**

The State Librarian Bernie Margolis continues to advocate for an increase in the funding of the state's public library construction program. He's expressed some hope that there's support in Albany to increase the \$14 million program to \$50 million. Given the recent devastation resulting from Hurricane Sandy and Irene, this might be an opportune moment to join the State Librarian in his advocacy. And as I mentioned at the last board meeting, OCLC Vice-President George Needham spoke at the NYLA conference about FEMA's view of libraries as serving as "first restorers" in their communities following natural disasters.

There's some concern in the public library community, however, that more flexibility would be needed around the match required by the grant in the event the legislature and governor support this significant increase. And there are a number of other ideas being discussed as well, such as less of a match required for disaster preparation, including the installing of emergency generators, and allowing payments for architectural or engineering fees on projects begun within 180 days of a project's approval.

An informal "working group" has been established to discuss how this level of increase could be implemented successfully across the state. Rebekkah Smith Aldrich has agreed to participate in this discussion and I will email my two-cents to Bernie Margolis.

The NYLA Legislative Committee met on December 12 and at present the goal is full restoration of state funding. This is \$102 million, the high water mark in state funding for library services reached in 2008. This goal may be adjusted after the Governor announces his budget. Governor

Cuomo is scheduled to give his State of the State address on January 9, so by the time we meet on the 12th, we'll have some idea how reasonable a goal this is. The Governor called for \$79 million in state aid for library service for this year, which the legislature increased to \$81.615. So there's quite a climb to achieve full restoration.

Mark your calendars! The state library community's annual advocacy day in Albany is scheduled for Tuesday, March 5.

## **UPDATE ON GASOLINE FROM DUTCHESS COUNTY**

Tom Finnigan has been working with Chris Barclay, Director of Dutchess County Central Services, on a deal that would provide Hudson River Transport (HRT) and its drivers access to county fuel that promises to reduce our delivery costs. We've received a contract from the county and Bryan Duroy at our legal firm of Thomas, Drohan, Waxman, Petigrow & Mayle has made some recommendations and will be talking with the county's legal department on our behalf to revise the contract where necessary.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding, HRT has agreed to use this fuel once it's available. Although Dutchess County will be charging a 10-cents per gallon administrative fee, we expect our net savings to be about 30-cents per gallon. In addition, our agreement with HRT fixes the minimum cost of gasoline at \$4.144 per gallon--it cannot drop lower--and we pay the difference between this minimum and anything higher in a weekly fuel surcharge based on the New York State average cost of regular gasoline provided by the AAA Daily Fuel Gauge Report. We eliminate this minimum and weekly surcharge by purchasing our gas through the county.

## **PERSONNEL HEALTH & SAFETY**

The year ended on a "healthy" note with the refurbishing of staff work areas to improve staff health and safety. Kit Kassel, our local CSEA unit president, and Linda Vittone worked together and arranged to have an Occupational Safety and Health Specialist from the CSEA Capital Region Office evaluate how staff work at their desks and in their work areas. He spoke with each staff about how they can avoid repetitive motion injury and reduce fatigue. Since then, we've been implementing his recommendations. These include replacing old chairs and desks with ergonomically designed furniture. In the delivery area, we're working to keep stacks of delivery boxes below shoulder height.

New energy efficient windows in the office building is next on our "health and safety" list, which will help improve our interior environmental control. As to be expected in a concrete block building with single-pane aluminum-framed windows, when it's cold outside, it tends to be cold inside, except when the sun is out, especially on the second floor where most staff work. Fortunately, this is addressed next in our facility improvement plan.

## **NYSUT & FOIL**

Member libraries received Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests from the New York State United Teachers union (NYSUT) in December, asking for the numbers of full-time and part-time staff and for staff job classifications. This was an opportunity to provide member

library directors a refresher on the requirements of FOIL, which Rebekkah Smith Aldrich provided in the MHLS Bulletin. Tom Lawrence encouraged directors to review the law on the Committee for Open Government's website at <http://www.dos.ny.gov/coog/foil2.html>.

It was also an opportunity to clarify that FOIL does not require agencies to provide information that could be used by outside groups for the purpose of soliciting members or donations. So a FOIL request for names and addresses is in violation of the law and a recent court case, which turned up in my research--NYSUT v. Brighter Choice Charter School et. al--affirmed this.

Rebekkah has arranged for the Executive Director of the state's Committee for Open Government, Robert Freeman, to present a workshop on open meetings and freedom of information law here at our auditorium on January 30. The program is open to trustees and directors and begins at 6pm. I hope all of you will be able to attend.

## **BOARD DEVELOPMENT**

Once our Board Committees are organized and chairs identified, we'll want to renew our efforts on a number of tasks, including scheduling a special weekday meeting of the Board for a tour, lunch with staff and discussions on board objectives for the coming year. The Trustee Services Committee will need to complete its work on new trustee orientation and board to board visits, and begin planning our annual meeting in October. I've also laid out some tentative schedules for the year that will be helpful to the Finance Committee and Facilities Committee.

## **TOWN OF UNION VALE CONTRACT**

I'm asking for Board approval to sign a contract with the Town of Union Vale, contingent on the fact that it is identical to last year's except that it is for the 2013 calendar year. The purpose of the contract is to funnel support from the Town of Union Vale to the member libraries of Beekman, LaGrange, Millbrook and Dover Plains. The contract was prepared and vetted last year by Dan Petigrow of Thomas, Drohan, Waxman, Petigrow & Mayle, LLP.

The Town of Union Vale is a town in Dutchess County of approximately 4,500 residents. It's an unserved area--it doesn't have a library--and is not included in the chartered service area of any member library. Its residents almost exclusively use the libraries of Beekman, LaGrange, Millbrook and Dover Plains. Until 2012, the Town of Union Vale had not supported the services provided by these libraries to its residents.

To avoid restrictions on its residents allowed under our Direct Access Plan, the Town of Union Vale has budgeted \$25,000 in support of these libraries for a second year. The libraries agreed to distribute this support based on their circulation to the town's residents and on the number of the town's residents they've registered. I have asked that the libraries have their Boards of Trustees approve Mid-Hudson's role in signing this contract and the directors have informed me they have.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS GOALS**

My goals for 2013 include:

- 1) Conducting a policy audit.
- 2) Considering new policies such as a non-solicitation policy and a policy that sets parameters on the creation of new staff positions, something suggested by Board Member Bill Conine at our last Board meeting.
- 3) Developing a simplified continuity plan.
- 4) Coordinating our budget development for 2013 and 2014.
- 5) Coordinating our facility planning for 2013 and 2014.

Planning for our 2014 budget and a revision of the 2013 budget in July has begun and includes coordinating this with the System Funding Task Force and Directors Association. We've scheduled a planning meeting with the System Funding Task Force on January 16. The tentative schedule is below.

I have also drafted a tentative facilities planning schedule, which is also below.

## **2013 MHLS BUDGET SCHEDULE - TENTATIVE**

### January

- 1/16 Planning meeting with System Funding Task Force
- By 1/31 meet with Board Treasurer Regina Morini to review and discuss schedule

### April

- 4/26 Staff have identified possible revisions for 2013 budget following the adoption of state budget.
- 4/26 Staff have completed 2013-2014 Budget Application.
- 4/29 Possible revisions of 2013 budget and 2013-2014 Budget Application posted for Board Meeting of 5/8

### May

- 5/8 Director presents 2013-2014 Budget Application to Board for approval and possible revisions to 2013 budget.
- 5/24 Possible revisions of 2013 budget posted for DA meeting on 6/3.

### June

- 6/3 Director presents possible revisions of 2013 budget to DA, "First Reading."
- 6/18 DA Funding Advisory Committee has reviewed possible revisions of 2013 budget, makes recommendations to MHLS Finance Committee.
- 6/25 Finance Committee has finalized any revisions to 2013 budget; considers projections for 2014.

### July

- 7/1 Possible revisions of 2013 budget and projections for 2014 posted for Board meeting on 7/10.
- 7/10 Finance Committee presents possible revisions to Board for approval, presents budget projections for 2014.
- 7/16 Possible revisions of 2013 budget posted for DA meeting on 7/24; projections for 2014 included.
- 7/24 Director presents possible revisions of 2013 budget to DA for approval.

#### October

- 10/11 Negotiations with CSEA have been completed.
- 10/18 Staff has finalized draft of 2014 budget.
- 10/25 Finance Committee has finalized draft of 2014 budget.
- 10/31 Draft 2014 budget posted for DA meeting on 11/7.

#### November

- 11/7 Director presents tentative 2014 budget to DA - "First Reading."
- 11/15 DA Funding Advisory Committee has reviewed draft of 2014 budget and makes recommendations to MHLS Finance Committee.
- 11/22 Finance Committee has finalized 2014 budget.
- 11/28 Finalized draft of 2014 Budget posted for Board meeting on 12/7 and DA meeting on 12/6.

#### December

- 12/6 Staff presents the proposed 2014 budget to DA - "Second Reading"
- 12/7 Finance Committee presents 2014 budget to Board for adoption.

### **2013 MHLS FACILITIES REVIEW SCHEDULE - TENTATIVE**

#### January

- By 1/4 staff blocks out calendar for auditorium use in spring '13 for the work planned on the facade and in the fall for the asbestos abatement project. Meetings on the third floor of the office building may be necessary in 2013. Block out calendar accordingly.

#### February

- By 2/11 Communicates no loitering policy to local police, reviews local sign ordinance.
- By 2/15, clarifies understanding with local police. Plans, purchases, signs.

#### March

- By 3/29, installs no-loitering signs.

#### April

- By 4/15, Facility committee meets and reviews maintenance and capital improvements for 2013 and 2014, tours facilities and grounds, and reviews staff plans for completing the asbestos abatement project in the fall of 2013, funded in-part by a 2012-2013 public construction grant.

Committee considers possible capital improvements for 2014, beginning with possibly installing energy efficient windows in the office building and covering the building's exterior with an EFIS system to reduce cost and increase energy efficiency, and considers 2013-2014 public library construction grant funding and alternatives to EFIS.

- By 4/20, staff contracts for the repairs and painting of the auditorium facade,

#### May

- By 5/24, staff finalizes plan for contracting with licensed asbestos abatement contractor.

#### June

- 6/1, Work on auditorium is completed. The repairs on the facade and the new roof completes the 2011-2012 construction grant-funded project.
- By 6/14, Facility Committee meets to finalize plans for 2013-2014, including recommending the installation of energy efficient windows and an EFIS system or its alternative.

*January 2013 Executive Director's Report to the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees*

- By 6/25 Finance Committee has finalized possible revisions to 2013 budget and recommendations for 2014, including capital improvements planned for 2014 and reviewed updated cost estimates for the asbestos abatement project in 2013.

July

- By 7/10 Board reviews revisions affecting maintenance and capital improvement expenses 2013 and 2014. Potential asbestos abatement contractors discussed.

August

- By 8/2 the fall asbestos abatement project is placed under contract.

September

- 9/15, Asbestos abatement work to be schedule between 9/15-11/15.
- On 9/18 Board considers approval of public library construction grant submissions for 2014, including MHLS capital improvements.

November

- By 11/ 15, Asbestos abatement project is complete. Optional annual wrap-up meeting of committee.

December

- 12/7 Final board meeting of the year, vote on the approval of the 2014 budget, including any maintenance and capital improvements.