

2014 MHLS Annual Member Survey Report

The MHLS *Planning and Personnel Committee* conducts an annual survey of the member library Board Presidents and Directors. This report will address both the actions taking to address the 2013 survey results and the results of the 2014 survey. (The 2014 results and recommendations are on page 3.)

Follow-up on 2013 Survey

The staff and Board of Trustees took several actions on the key findings of the 2013 Survey. Board actions included

1. Improving outreach by holding additional meetings throughout the MHLS service region and
2. Recognizing MHLS staff for outstanding services being delivered.

Staff actions included:

1. Providing software/online applications that can be used to support meeting and training participation by remote users
2. Reducing the MHLS Service Fees (e.g., databases, OverDrive, and assessments)
 - a. It is noted that this is an on-going effort with conflicted positions being expressed by member libraries
 - b. This was mentioned in the 2014 survey, is an on-going effort and will be the subject of a separate staff report to the board in 2015.** (It will be the subject of discussions at the March DA meeting.)
3. Enhancing advocacy efforts to promote libraries to local and NY State elected and appointed officials.

The MHLS Staff reported on the status of these items in more detail in a report to the committee, *2013 ANNUAL MEMBERS SURVEY – 2014 Priority Themes & Actions*, included in this report as Appendix A.

2014 Survey

Looking back at the 2013 survey (one of very open questions) we realized that, while we were getting very good feedback and could identify areas of concern and places for improvement, many (most?) were not directly related to what we committed to as a Board to the member libraries and the State *with the endorsement and agreement of the member libraries*.

At the suggestion of our new Executive Director we changed the format of the surveys this year to focus very specifically on our committed Plan of Service. The surveys for the Directors and for the Board Presidents are very different as the Plan of Service impacts their roles differently.

The raw survey results have already been distributed to the MHLS Board and to the Directors but are also available on request, as are the breakdowns by county.

Participation

We had a very significant increase in participation this year, 18% overall (24% for Directors and 12% for Board Presidents. This is really a tremendous improvement and all participants are thanked for their efforts!

Year	Total Responses	Board Presidents	Directors
2014	111 (84%)	47 (71%)	64 (97%)*
2013	87 (66%)	39 (59%)	48 (73%)
2012	91 (69%)	34 (52%)	57 (86%)
2011	73 (55%)	29 (44%)	44 (67%)
2009	42 (32%)	7 (11%)	35 (53%)

* It is noted that at *least* two directors *appear* to have submitted two surveys. We have proceeded using everything submitted but will look at ways to prevent that in the future. Unfortunately a longer response time, while great on the surface, led to many queries of whether survey had already submitted! As it was anonymous we could not track submissions unless they voluntarily indicated the library or asked for a confirmation. **Looking at the raw data it was noted that the overall results would NOT have been significantly changed by trying to identify and then eliminate or combine the suspected duplicates.**

Methodology

Directors Input

After the survey closed, seven separate break-out groups at the December 5th MHLS Directors Association meeting analyzed the surveys, summarizing the results into 2-5 findings/trends/issues. The results of these seven groups were then analyzed by the MHLS Staff in their preparation of reports to the committee on each survey.

In addition to summarizing, each group provided input as to what SHOULD and SHOULD NOT be included in the 2015 annual evaluation of the system services by Library Directors and Board Presidents. These will be taken under consideration in preparing the 2015 Survey later this year.

The notes from the table talks (14 handwritten pages) are available on request.

Staff Input

The Staff Reports include the assumptions the staff used (and the committee agreed with) in their analysis of the results. Each area of each survey was rated based on the objective ranking of responses for the area to aid the board and staff in focusing on areas that need attention or improvement as well as areas that are already highly successful and will not be recommended for survey questions in 2015.

The *Staff Report on the Directors Survey* is included as Appendix B and the *Staff Report on the Board Presidents Survey* is included as Appendix C.

Library Directors Survey Results and Recommendations

1. The Committee reviewed the *Survey of Library Directors*, the comments from the Directors Association table talk groups, and the *MHLS Staff Report on the Survey of Library Directors*.
2. The Committee accepted the assessment model presented, resulting in the recognition of:
 - seven (7) services being rated as Highly Successful or Successful, and
 - three (3) services needing additional attention:
 - (a) Construction Grant Program Services,
 - (b) Special Client Services, and
 - (c) Cooperation with Other Library Systems.
3. The Committee agreed that due to the table talk comments from library directors regarding concerns about the Integrated Library Platform/Sierra, the Integrated Library Platform/Sierra should be added as a fourth service needing attention.
4. The Committee agreed MHLS staff will provide the Board with recommendations on potential actions regarding the four (4) services needing attention in 2015.
5. The committee accepted the recommendation that the survey results should be used to report on the MHLS Plan of Service in the annual report and that these findings should be broadly reported to the stakeholders (specifically that this report be sent to all participants and interested parties).
6. The committee also agreed that the 2014 survey findings should influence what is included in the 2015 survey.

Library Board Presidents Survey Results and Recommendations

1. The Committee reviewed the *Survey of Library Board Presidents*, the comments from Directors Association table talk groups and the *MHLS Staff Report on the Survey of Library Board Presidents*.
2. The Committee accepted the assessment model presented, resulting in the recognition of:
 - (1) five MHLS interactions with Library Board Presidents being rated as Highly Successful and
 - (2) one interaction (MHLS Board Outreach Efforts) as Needing Attention
3. The Committee agreed MHLS staff will work with the Trustees Committee to develop recommendations on potential actions regarding MHLS Board outreach efforts.
4. The committee accepted the recommendation that the survey results should be used to report on the MHLS Plan of Service in the annual report and that these findings should be broadly reported to the stakeholders (specifically that this report be sent to all participants and interested parties).
5. The committee also agreed that the 2014 survey findings should influence what is included in the 2015 survey.

It is noted that no area in either survey was rated as "Needs Improvement", the lowest rating. There was also continuing mention of member fees, as well as

improvement in workshop meeting times and some desires in the area of Client Services.

Future Activities

The MHLS Staff has committed to providing the Personnel and Planning Committee with recommendations for:

1. Construction Grant Program Services;
2. Special Client Services;
3. Cooperation with Other Library Systems;
4. Integrated Library Platform/Sierra; and
5. Potential actions regarding MHLS Board outreach efforts.

These will be reviewed by the committee and be presented to other committees and the board as appropriate.

Requests for aforementioned additional materials should be directed to JohnBickford@Alumni.UVM.edu with a copy to tsloan@midhudson.org.

Appendix A: Report from MHLS Staff

2013 ANNUAL MEMBERS SURVEY – 2014 Priority Themes & Actions

A. Board Activities

- 1) Improve MHLS Board outreach by holding meetings throughout the MHLS service region
 - a. Adopted 2014 meeting schedule which included meetings at the Cairo Public Library (Greene County) on May 7 and the Mahopac Public Library (Putnam County) on September 17
 - b. Conducted general orientation and training for MHLS Board in March
 - c. Expanded understanding of Greene County library issues with regional meet and greet event on May 7 at Cairo Public Library
 - d. Expanded understanding of Putnam County library issues via presentation by the Putnam County Library Association at the Board meeting on September 17
 - e. Surveyed library board presidents regarding MHLS Board outreach efforts in 2014.
 - f. Adopted 2015 meeting schedule which includes meetings at the Roeliff Jansen Community Library (Columbia County) on May 6 and the Town of Esopus Library (Ulster County) on September 16
- 2) Recognize MHLS staff for the outstanding services being delivered
 - a. Featured a MHLS service and staff providing the service at 2014 MHLS Board meetings
 - Library Sustainability Service/Rebekkah in March
 - Outreach and Continuing Education Services/Merribeth in May
 - Delivery Services/ Tom F in July
 - Technology Operations Services/Robert in December
 - b. Conducted a Board/Staff Luncheon/Meeting on July 9
 - c. Conducted a comparative salary study between MHLS and other New York State Library Systems/related entities resulting in substantial salary adjustment based on market values.

B. Staff Activities

- 1) Provide software/online applications that can be used to support meeting and training participation by remote users
 - a. Promoted twenty-two (22) Web based professional development and continuing education opportunities
 - b. Established and demonstrated Skype services
 - c. Conducted survey of trustees and library staff regarding preferences for viewing Webinars
 - d. Developed specifications and sought bids to upgrade the MHLS Auditorium to support the broadcasting of events
- 2) Reduce the MHLS Service Fees (e.g., databases, OverDrive, and assessment paid by member libraries)
 - a. Assessment of member service fees paid over years
 - Summary Report on MHLS Service Fees - Final Draft (Document 3.a.ii)
 - Moving Forward assessment/cost of services underway
- 3) Enhance advocacy efforts to promote libraries to local and NY State elected and appointed officials
 - a. Provided 14 workshops on Awareness and Advocacy including 3 sessions of Advocacy Boot Camp with attendance total of 202; 100% of attendees reported it was worth their time.
 - b. Coordinated attendance of over 40 regional library advocates at NYLA Advocacy Day, making appointments with all regional legislators and arranging for bus transportation.
 - c. Promoted virtual advocacy, resulting in a total of over 1,760 contacts to representatives in the MHLS region.
 - d. MHLS staff member serves on NYLA Legislative Committee, provides contact information for every library to their representatives in the NYS Senate and Assembly, and talking points on significant issues for libraries.
 - e. Supported 30 libraries holding votes in 2013 with vote success ratio of 26:4. 87% passed (2 special district creations; 4 414's; 17 budget votes; 1 building referendum). Conducted post-vote assessments, resulting in additional information to use in vote support.

Appendix B: Staff Report on 2014 Directors Surveys and Findings

Working Assumptions - Purpose:

1. Board Bylaws state the objectives of the System shall be to foster and improve library service to the residents of the System area, through the member libraries, as specified in the System's Plan of Service.
2. Board Bylaws¹ state it is the Board's responsibility to "adopt a Plan of Service and amend it as necessary" and "insure the achievement of the System's objectives."
3. In support of the Board duties as described above, the Board conducted a survey of MHLS Library Directors regarding the Plan of Service, and a survey of MHLS Library Board Presidents regarding service interactions between trustees and MHLS staff.

Working Assumptions - Surveys:

1. A survey of MHLS Library Directors was conducted to determine how directors evaluated each service as presented in the Plan of Service.
2. The responses to the survey should inform the MHLS Board and staff if services are exceeding expectations, meeting expectation, or are below expectation.
3. The evaluation of services should be organized in a manner which informs MHLS stakeholders on status of each service and which service(s) should be a focus for further study and action in 2015.
4. A possible model to organize the services and survey responses is:

RATINGS	CALCULATION	ACTION
Highly Successful	More than 75% ranking as Significantly Exceeding or Exceeds Expectations	Service is not 2015 focus. No actions planned. Board surveys in 2016, not 2015.
Successful	More than 90% ranking as Significantly Exceeding, Exceeds, or Meets Expectations,	Service is not 2015 focus. Board surveys in 2015.
Needs Attention	More than 10% ranking Below Expectation, Requires Improvement, and/or No Opinion	Service area is 2015 focus. Specific actions are taken to bring attention to the service. Board surveys again in 2015.
Needs Improvement	More than 10% ranking Below Expectation and/or Requires Improvement	Service area is 2015 focus. Action plan is developed to improve service. Board surveys again in 2015.

¹ MHLS Board Bylaws - The Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board, is entrusted with the governance of the System. It shall adopt Bylaws, adopt a Plan of Service and amend it as necessary, establish such policies as will insure the achievement of the System's objectives, employ a Director, and employ and appoint other staff upon the recommendation of the Director and as the Board deems necessary, supervise the expenditure of the System's funds, discharge all such responsibilities as provided for in these Bylaws and exercise such other responsibilities as may be appropriate

The chart below uses the above model to organize the services and survey responses:

SERVICES	% Significantly Exceeds or Exceeds Expectations	% Meets Expectation	% Below Expectation or Needs Improvement	No Opinion	Rating
Consulting & Development Services	79%	16.1%	4.8%		Highly Successful
Professional Development & Continuing Education Services	77.8%	14.3%	7.9%		Highly Successful
Communications Among Member Libraries Services	69.4%	30.6%			Successful
Resource Sharing Services	67.2%	31.3%	1.6%		Successful
Coordination (IT) Services	58.1%	41.9%			Successful
Awareness & Advocacy Services	54.8%	37.1%	1.6%	6.5%	Successful
Central Library Services	54.1%	36.1%	1.6%	8.2%	Successful
Construction Grant Program Services	62.3%	16.4%	6.6%	14.8%	Needs Attention
Special Client Services	39.6%	44.4%	6.4%	9.5%	Needs Attention
Cooperation with Other Library Systems	37.7%	44.3%		18%	Needs Attention

Working Assumptions – Survey Findings:

1. In 2015, the MHLS Board and staff should focus on the three (3) MHLS services which are rated as needing attention. MHLS staff should propose specific actions to the MHLS Board on what actions (e.g., additional assessment, changes in the Plan of Service) should be taken regarding these services.
2. The MHLS Board should recognize the seven (7) services rated as Highly Successful or Successful.
3. MHLS staff should use survey findings to report on the Plan of Service in the MHLS Annual Report.

4. 2014 survey findings and Board plans based on those findings should be broadly reported to the MHLS stakeholders.
5. 2014 survey findings and Board plans based on those findings should direct what is included in the 2015 survey of library directors.

Appendix C: Staff Report on 2014 Board Presidents Survey & Findings

Working Assumptions - Purpose:

1. Board Bylaws state the objectives of the System shall be to foster and improve library service to the residents of the System area, through the member libraries, as specified in the System's Plan of Service.
2. In support of the Board duties as described above, the Board conducted a survey of Library Board Presidents regarding their interactions with MHLS.

Working Assumptions - Surveys:

1. A survey of MHLS Board Presidents was conducted to determine how Board Presidents evaluated their interactions with MHLS.
2. The responses to the survey should inform the MHLS Board and staff on the current quantity and quality of interactions.
3. The evaluation of interaction should be organized in a manner which informs MHLS stakeholders on interactions and provides focus for further study and action in 2015. A possible model to organize the services and survey responses is:

RATINGS	CALCULATION	ACTION
Highly Successful	More than 75% ranking as Significantly Exceeding/Exceeds Expectations; 80% or more YES responses to interactions	Topic is not 2015 focus. No actions planned. Board surveys in 2016, not 2015.
Successful	More than 90% ranking as Significantly Exceeding, Exceeds, or Meets Expectations; 75% or more YES responses to interactions	Topic is not 2015 focus. Board surveys in 2015.
Needs Attention	More than 10% ranking Below Expectation, Requires Improvement, and/or No Opinion; Less than 75% YES responses to interactions	Topic area is 2015 focus. Specific actions are taken to bring attention to the service. Board surveys again in 2015.
Needs Improvement	More than 10% ranking Below Expectation and/or Requires Improvement; Less than 50% YES responses to interactions	Topic area is 2015 focus. Action plan is developed to improve service. Board surveys again in 2015.

The chart below uses the above model to organize the services and survey responses:

INTERACTIONS	% Significantly Exceeds Expectations	% Meets Expectation	% Below Expectation or Needs Improvement	No Opinion	Rating
MHLS Fostering & Improving Library Services	82.2%	17.8%			Highly Successful
MHLS Board Outreach Efforts	31.1%	24.4%		44.4%	Needs Attention
	Yes	No	Don't Know		
Attended MHLS Event and/or Used MHLS Resource	97.8%	2.2%			Highly Successful
MHLS Event/Resource Positive Influence on Board Decision/Action	86.4%	6.8%	6.8%		Highly Successful
Consulted with MHLS Staff Member	88.9%	6.7%	4.4%		Highly Successful
MHLS Staff Consultation Positive Influence on Board Decision/Action	95%	4	5%		Highly Successful

Working Assumptions – Survey Findings:

1. In 2015, the MHLS Board and staff should focus on the one (1) interaction with Board President as rated as needing attention. MHLS staff should propose specific actions to the MHLS Board on what actions (e.g., communications with Board Presidents) should be taken regarding this interaction.
2. The MHLS Board should recognize the five (5) interactions rated as Highly Successful.
3. MHLS staff should use survey findings to report on the Plan of Service in the MHLS Annual Report.
4. 2014 survey findings and Board plans based on those findings should be broadly reported to the MHLS stakeholders.
5. 2014 survey findings and Board plans based on those findings should direct what is included in the 2015 survey of Board Presidents.