

Executive Director's Report to the MHLS Board | May 2019

1. State Budget Report

- a. The New York State FY 2019-2020 Budget reversed the Governor's proposed cut but held library aid flat from the previous year at \$96.6 million.
- b. State Aid for Library Construction was cut by 60%, as proposed by the Governor. An effort is underway to pass an "Article 7" capital bill that would augment the budget. A restoration of the State Aid for Library Construction is included in that bill.
- c. 2020 Census Efforts: The budget includes \$20 million for complete count efforts, with "public libraries" noted in the appropriation language along with many other agencies.
- d. Targeted Aid: The budget includes \$15 million targeted aid to school districts, public libraries, and not-for-profit institutions, divided equally between the Senate, Assembly, and Governor. We have encouraged our member libraries to reach out to their legislators to make their needs known ASAP.
- e. In light of the budget outcomes this year, a new strategy is necessary moving forward. We will be working to profile and target key legislators and the Governor for the coming year.
- f. Save the Date: Library Advocacy Day in Albany for 2020 will be on Tuesday, February 25th.

2. Delivery Services Contract Signed; Transition Phase Expedited:

- a. At the board's direction, we have signed a new delivery services contract with Valley Courier & Delivery Service. This is a local company (located in Kingston, NY) that has been in the same-day delivery service business for 37 years.
- b. Valley Courier will take over on Friday, May 17th. This transition date is earlier than previously reported due the decision by our current vendor, ALD Services, to leave their contract with MHLS earlier than the stated end date of the contract (June 30th). ALD has provided the necessary permission for all current drivers to be interviewed by our new vendor, a stipulation of our contract.
- c. Given our expedited start date with the new vendor we are working closely with Valley Courier to get their operations up and running. Site visits to each member library are being planned, beginning the week of April 29, to improve our new vendor's understanding of each delivery stop. Our "Delivery Services Transition Team," MHLS Delivery Operations Staff, Tom Finnigan and Chris Herron, will be joined by Andrew Thibodeau, Lead Dispatcher for Valley Courier, for these visits. Valley Courier and their staff will be on-site @MHLS on May 15th for training and orientation.
- d. On Wednesday, May 1 a Directors Association-created task force made up of members of the System Services Advisory Committee, Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee and MHLS staff will meet to develop a 3-year financial plan to cover the increase cost of the new delivery service contract. This plan will be voted on by the Directors Association at their June 11th meeting.

3. Integrated Library Service (ILS) Contract Signed; ILS Road Map to be Created:

- a. At the board's direction, we have signed a new 5-year contract with Innovative. Our base cost is flat compared with our contract ending later this year. We have negotiated a lower annual increase (2%) compared with the current contract which has a variable annual increase of 3.5% - 5%.
- b. New:

- i. The contract includes workflow consulting and training for MHLS staff.
- ii. MHLS' Cataloging Team will now have access to SkyRiver to search, edit and export records.
- iii. MHLS will be in the lead to explore Innovative's new "experience platform" (also known as the library catalog!) called Inspire Discovery. This platform is powered by a context engine, transforming traditional MARC records into BIBFRAME which is purported to enable results in our catalog to be more discoverable by platforms such as a Google Search.
- iv. On April 4th we convened an "ILS Road Map Working Group" made up of Directors Association leadership, System Services Advisory Committee members and the chairs of the county directors associations to learn about five new products available under the new contract. The group has prioritized three of these products for implementation over the next 18 months:
 1. Text Messaging: This is an opt-in service that will enable patrons to receive text messages when their holds are ready for pick-up.
 2. DecisionCenter: This is a collection management and analytics solution for member library directors and staff. The user-friendly interface will streamline the creation of reports that library leaders need to make data-driven management and collection decisions.
 3. Mobile Worklists: "Workflow on the Go" with mobile worklists will enable member library staff to move into the stacks with a mobile device to do hold pulls, inventory and weeding projects.

4. Migration to Office 365 Completed

- a. After a major failure of our office productivity framework last summer Tech Ops staff members Laurie Shedrick, MHLS Assistant Director and Technology Operations Manager, and Gerry Formby, MHLS IT Operations Supervisor, conducted a thorough diagnosis and analysis of what went wrong and what our options were to stabilize our working environment.
- b. We decided to move from a hodge-podge framework that knitted together three products without enough licenses for all of our staff to an all-in-one product, Office 365, which provides a number of benefits for staff efficiency and will cost us less on an annual basis.
- c. Prior to the transition we provided staff training and engaged in a "Digital Clean Up" project in which we rebuilt our file structure from the ground up and weeded out files and folders that we have all inherited. Staff weeded out more than 34,000 files saving 14 GB of storage space (we started with 66,000 files taking up 30 GB!)
- d. MHLS staff now have all of the same tools they did before as well as expanded capacity due to the availability of new tools in the Office 365 suite that enhance inter- and cross-team communication and collaboration.

5. Green Business Partnership portion of the NYLA Sustainable Library Certification Program completed

- a. We are pleased to announce that we have completed the first portion of the NYLA Sustainable Library Certification Program through the Green Business Partnership. A briefing on this effort can be found in the Facilities Committee meeting report.
- b. We = The MHLS Sustainability Initiative Team: myself, Laurie Shedrick, Linda Vittone, Chris Herron, Casey Conlin, Thomas O'Connell, Kerstin Cruger, Courtney Wimmers, and Joan Kay.

- c. Our next step is a formal presentation to the Green Business Partnership to become officially certified. We will be the first organization in our service area to do so.

6. Save the Date! MHLS Annual Membership Meeting: Friday, October 25th

- a. When: Friday, October 25th, 2019
- b. Where: FDR Presidential Library & Museum, Hyde Park, NY
- c. Who: Our Keynote Speaker will be Miguel Figueroa, American Library Association Center for the Future. More about the ALA Center for the Future of Libraries: <http://www.ala.org/tools/future> and their Trend Collection: <http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends>

7. Town of Union Vale Contract

- a. Four member libraries impacted by the Union Vale contract (Beekman, Dover, Lagrange & Millbrook) have directed MHLS to engage in a contract negotiation with the Town Board of Union Vale to prepare for the expiration of this contract at the end of 2019.
- b. This contract is in place as a result of our Free Direct Access Plan (FDAP). The town of Union Vale does not have a library and Union Vale residents have traditionally used the four neighboring libraries. However, this use had, for many years, been subsidized by the taxpayers of the neighboring towns. Usage of neighboring libraries rose to a level that triggered restrictions to library services for these residents due to the lack of financial investment by their town as per the FDAP. The current contract provides for a more equitable financial solution.
- c. We will begin negotiations later in May.

8. 2019 State of America's Library Report

- a. During National Library Week the American Library Association released its annual report on the State of America's Libraries. Findings include:
 - i. Library workers are on the frontlines addressing community challenges. Many serve as first responders who take on roles outside of traditional library service that support patrons' needs and community development. Functioning at various times as career counselor, social worker, teacher and technology instructor, library staff give special care to adopt programs and services that support our most vulnerable and curious.
 - ii. There is an increased need for library workers' to safeguard intellectual freedom, specifically the freedom to read. In 2018 hundreds of attempts to remove materials or eliminate programs took place in public, school and academic libraries. Many of these library materials and services included or addressed the experience of the gay, lesbian, transgender, and queer communities, most notably drag queen story hours and books affirming transgender youth.
 - iii. Major trends identified:
 - 1. Inclusion – In many areas, the library is the only place that is truly accessible and inclusive for all.
 - 2. Programming – Since 2012 the number of programs attended per capita has risen 16.9%.

3. 2020 Census – For the first time in US history the Census will be conducted primarily online. Libraries will play an essential role in helping their communities be counted.
 4. “A new, worrisome trend is the use of extreme tactics by would-be censors and pressure groups. These tactics range from an actual book burning in Iowa that targeted LGBTQIA+ books to lawsuits filed to halt libraries’ drag queen story hours and to end community access to curated and authoritative research databases. While these tactics have been given short shrift by the public and courts, these strategies have often proven successful in chilling the willingness of schools and libraries to provide access to diverse information and ideas.”
- iv. Did you know?
1. There were 1.4 billion in-person visits to public libraries across the US, the equivalent of 4 million visits each day or 2,664 per minute.
 2. There are more public libraries (16,568) than Starbucks cafes (14,606) in the US. Nearly 100% of libraries provide WiFi and have no-fee access to computers.
 3. There were 113 million attendees at public library programs, more than all Major League Baseball, National Football League, and National Basketball Association games combined.

9. Executive Director’s Event Participation: Mid-March – April

- a. Ulster County Library Association @Stone Ridge Public Library
- b. Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee Meeting
- c. Public Library System Director Orientation @New York State Library
- d. MHLS Finance Committee
- e. Trustee Education Regulation Committee
- f. Town of Union Vale Contract Meeting with the directors of the Beekman, Dover, LaGrange and Millbrook Libraries.
- g. Putnam County Library Association @Carmel
- h. 2019 MHLS Lab Project Kick-off Event
- i. MHLS Nominations & Elections Committee
- j. MHLS Bylaws Committee
- k. ILS Road Map Development Meeting
- l. SENY-Con @Southeastern Library Resources Council
- m. Directors Association & DA Workshop on The Director-Board Relationship (presenter)
- n. Public Library System Directors of New York State (PULISDO) (monthly) meeting
- o. New York State Library Briefing for System Directors (monthly)
- p. Trustee Essentials Workshop @Hudson (presenter)
- q. Referendum Committee @Desmond-Fish Library (Garrison)
- r. Ulster County Library Association @Town of Esopus Library
- s. Greene County Library Association @MountainTop Library
- t. Meeting with Debra Kamecke, Director & Dean Lavin, Board President of the Cairo Public Library
- u. Introduction to the State Aid for Library Construction Program webinar (presenter)
- v. Trustee Essentials Workshop @MHLS (presenter)

- w. MHLS Trustee Services Committee
- x. MHLS Staff Earth Day Event
- y. Board Retreat @Starr Library (Rhinebeck) (facilitator)
- z. Putnam County Library Association @Carmel
- aa. Meeting with staff from FEMA Region II and New Jersey State Library to discuss potential partnership
- bb. MHLS Facilities Committee
- cc. County Funding Advocacy Group @MHLS (facilitator)