

# Board-to-Board Visits | Mid-Hudson Library System

As a trustee of the Mid-Hudson Library System, you represent the member libraries of your county. It is recommended that you visit an average of two member library Boards of Trustees each year during your tenure on the MHLS Board to stay in touch with the libraries of your county. These visits not only help you stay connected to member libraries, giving you context for conversations going on at MHLS Board meetings, they also serve to strengthen member library connections to the System by:

- ✓ Raising member library board awareness of System services that can help them.
- ✓ Increasing communication between member libraries and MHLS.

## Planning your Visit

- A memo is sent, each January, to all member library board presidents and directors that encourages them to invite MHLS trustees to one board meeting a year. When invitations are issued, please coordinate with the other MHLS trustees from your county to respond to the invitation in a timely manner.
- If there is a library that has not been visited in quite some time, you may contact a library's board president, introduce yourself and ask to be added to an upcoming agenda.
  - Let the board president know that you are coming to introduce yourself and MHLS, to share resources, and to listen.
  - The MHLS Visit portion of the agenda may take up to 15 minutes but ask if you can stay longer to listen in to what issues the board is facing.
- Rebekkah can supply you with current information that may be of interest to the member library boards you visit and brief you on 'hot topics' that might be buzzing through the System or that specific member library.

## During Your Visit – Suggestions:

- Let the Trustees know you are there for a friendly visit – to 'put a face' on MHLS for them. You are there to share some information, but your primary goal is to hear what's going on in their library.
- *Tip:* Don't try to problem solve at the meeting → It's okay to say, "I don't know but I'll find out." Confirm that MHLS Staff will follow up on a question or follow up yourself via conversation with the board president after you obtain an answer.
- As we all do, some member library Trustees may have very strong specific concerns about select issues. It's best to hear their thoughts, thank them for being so open, and assure them that you will bring their comments back to the MHLS Board.

## **Reporting on Your Visit**

The Board Development Committee recommends a report of any immediate issues/questions that come up during visits to Rebekkah and/or the MHLS Board President. A concise verbal report at the next MHLS Board meeting is welcomed. Only written reports submitted in advance, which are optional, will be included in the minutes of a MHLS Board meeting. Written reports might detail issues such as feedback on MHLS services, services/programs that may need more visibility, or issues of concern from member library trustees.