

Directors' Association Upper Hudson Library System Friday, September 5, 2008 at UHLS

Attending: Judith Wines (ALTM); Tim Burke (APLM); Nancy Pieri (BETH); Julie Zelman (BRUN); Darlene Miller (CAST); Deborah Canzano (COHS); Richard Naylor (COLN); Debbie Shoup (EGRN); Barbara Nichols Randall (GUIL); Carol Gaillard (HOOF); Lenny Zapala (MEND); Margie Morris (POES); Judy Felsten (RCSC); Candy Wilson (RVLL); Phil Ritter (UHLS); Gail Sacco (VOOR)

Visitors: Michael Catoggio (Interim @ EGRN)

Minutes:

Meeting convened at 9:02 AM

Motion: (Zapala, Naylor) To approve minutes of July 11, 2008 meeting (No meeting held in August). Motion carried.

UHLS: Phil Ritter

- **Times Union article in this morning's paper** – Phil distributed copies of the article in which BETH is ranked 49 out of 50 libraries in the country for circulation. He recommends directors visit the database site to view more information. (http://data.gannetnewsservice.com/libraries/library_start.php)
- **“Show Me the Money” workshop** – The limit is 15 participants and there are currently 12 people registered for this grant writing workshop. It will be held on September 15. Please call Mary Fellows if you are interested in attending.
- **Trustee Workshop** – At this time there are 39 participants – ½ of the number registered last year. The agreement with the Marriott is to pay for a minimum of 50 people so if more trustees do not sign up, it will cost UHLS. The final figures need to be into the Marriott by the end of next week (9/12) so there is still time to register. Please send registrations to Heidi and payment can be made after that. Josh Cohen and Libby Post are presenting at this workshop.
- **Report on bestsellers/new DVD releases being purchased** – The parameters are for a minimum of 150 requests at a 5:1 hold ratio. UHLS has not had to purchase any bestselling books using these guidelines. There was discussion about lowering the ratio to see if that triggers the need for purchases. Many libraries are making adjustments of their own to cover requests. For example, BETH is ordering 17-20 copies of a bestseller at the start rather than having to go back and get extra copies at various points. It appears the book buying is under control. Phil will try lowering the ratio to see what happens. The report on purchasing DVDs is as follows: March - 49 DVDs, May - 35, June – 4, July – 5, Aug – 1, and 1 so far in Sept. The consensus of the group was that there haven't been any blockbusters released over the summer, but the summer movies will be released as DVDs soon. The numbers may go back up when that happens. The ratio is the same as for books.
- **Courier** – Everything has been great. Barbara Nichols Randall asked for a round of applause for the success and smooth transition. All agreed. Phil reports that the only problem right now is with the sorting. The volume has been very large. The RFP estimated, at a high estimate, 40,000 bins in and 40,000 out per year. At the time of the RFP, the rate averaged 125 per day. For the last two weeks of August, there were 153 bins out and 171 in as an average per day. This would equal the “high” estimate on the RFP. Everyone agreed that August typically seemed to be the highest volume of circulation for all libraries.

Three drivers/routes – adjustments have been made in schedules

- **Ralph** – drops off COLN bins at UHLS at 8:30am and then goes to Rensselaer County libraries
- **Carmelo** – drops off APLM & North Albany bins to UHLS and continues route
- **Bob** – picks up from UHLS and does Albany hill town libraries
- **Total of about 15 to 20 bins** dropped off in the morning and are sorted by UHLS staff

The drivers are getting back to UHLS around 2:00pm. The only hang up is at Troy/Sycaway on three days. The bins can only be picked up between 2:00 & 3:00. The drivers had been leaving 40 bins at UHLS at the end of each day and the bins needed to be sorted. UHLS staff had been sorting them. Phil spoke to the president of the company and the president said the drivers should be doing the sorting (as per the contract) regardless of how long it took. This meant a UHLS staff member needed to stay late (as long as 7pm) until the sorting was done. The sorting is getting faster but still goes beyond 5pm. It may come to a point where a person needs to be hired by the courier company to assist with the sorting. Phil will broach that subject if necessary. He believes it will work itself out. 300 more bins are being ordered. Barbara Nichols Randall suggested that some smaller bins be purchased in order to help with pre-sorting at the library level. Gail Sacco complimented UHLS on the incredibly smooth transition. Phil stated that we can now count on the delivery times. We can also guarantee our patrons a one day turn around of the sorting and delivering. Judy Felsten reminded everyone that it is only true if the items are pulled promptly by the libraries. Phil point was that the items do not sit at UHLS for more than one day. There are several things that can/should be done at each library in order to help facilitate the sorting and delivery.

1. Do not over fill the bins. They must close completely flat. More bins are being ordered to help with this problem.
2. Make sure the bins are ready for pick up. Driver cannot wait for bins to be prepared.
3. Label bins properly – if you do not need the labels that came on the bin, put the label into the bins to be re-used for sorting at UHLS. Tim Burke suggested a label “SORT” be made by libraries to denote bins which need to be sorted.
4. Rubberband CDs, use black bags, rubberband groups of items going to a specific library, and put any small white envelopes into black bags so they stand out for delivery.

CDLC, MVLS, & SALS are having problems with Velocity. Phil said the president of AL Delivery intends to stay local and does not want to expand. It is not likely they would work with the other systems. Please call Phil with any issues.

- **State Aid** – What does the reduction mean? There has been no official word on the cuts. It will impact all libraries in the State. UHLS has issued checks to member libraries so any additional reduction will impact UHLS’s budget. There is talk about a 6% cut.

UHLS Board: N. Pieri

- Elected officers – same slate as last year
- Joe Mattie & Lisa Seivert from DLD were in attendance
- Grant awards
- Outreach Council members

UHLS Administration: T. Burke

No meeting held.

Services Committee: R. Naylor

- **Construction grant approvals** – Phil distributed copies of projects approved for both the \$800,000 grant and the \$14 million grant. Phil reviewed the process and issues which arose. WTVT’s application is not yet complete as they need a letter from the City of Watevliet stating that will have 100% of the funding if they do not get the grant. For some of the grant applications, Phil had the project description but did not have all of the proper documentation. Some was out of the hands of the library; they were waiting for information from other agencies. There was an issue with the BRUN application. Phil told them the rules stated you must be able to show you have 100% funding for the project, even if you do not get the grant. BRUN went directly to DLD and Grace Kelly of DLD told Phil to fund the project so it could be completed. APLM & BETH are concerned about the process of deciding what projects get funded at what level. Tim Burke would like to see more consistency in the percentages awarded from year to year. He would like to see the UHLS Board make more of a plan for what is awarded. Phil will recommend that to the Services Committee. He wants suggestions as to how to approach the issues for

next year to be more consistent. Barbara said that DLD changes their mind from year to year also. Gail Sacco stated that even if a library can show they have 100% of the amount needed, it does not mean they will go ahead with the project using fund balances if the grant award amount is too small. Phil agrees that UHLS needs a discussion of how to fund next year's awards. Some systems fund 50% of projects and only the top several projects are funded until money is gone. The rest of the projects do not get any money at all. An issue with RNSS is that the city is supposed bond the \$800,000 + for the full amount of the project less the amount they would be getting from DLD and DLD is waiting for DASNY to make a decision. This may not be approved. If it is not, Phil will recommend that the money be distributed between ALPM & BETH. Also, Phil does not have the complete documentation needed from TROY. If it is not received by September 10th in order to be presented to the Board, the project will be pulled. Phil will take any recommendations from the directors to the UHLS Board and Services Committee. Barbara suggested either an equal amount to all or 50% for a certain amount of projects. There was continued discussion regarding how to set the parameters for deciding on the funding.

Motion: (Burke/Gaillard) The Directors' Association strongly recommends that the UHLS Services Committee develop a set of guidelines for the consistent distribution of future NYS construction grants. Motion carried.

Finance Committee: N. Pieri

- Recommended approval of amended budget
- Supplemental aid – proposal made to distribute remainder of aid as follows: \$5,000 to EBSCO databases; \$3,000 to purchase delivery bins; \$6,000 for purchasing Playaways

Central Library: T. Burke

Meeting tentatively scheduled for September 25th

New Business:

- Decision made to cancel November Directors' Association meeting due to NYLA conference
- Gail Sacco asked where we were in terms of grant priorities as she is beginning to work on the budget. The LSTA grants are set (2 year grants), UHLS is not applying for the Big Read grant, Fit for Life grant for 2009. Phil said UHLS cannot anticipate other grants until they are available.
- This was Debbie Shoup's last meeting. She said that the EGRN budget passed 2:1 yesterday. She introduced Michael Catoggio as the interim director. She will be working part-time as a children's librarian at BETH.

Old Business:

None

Nuts & Bolts:

ALPM: There is a lull in the construction. The bids went out and were received for renovations DASNY is working on the numbers. The same process will happen in a few months for the new construction. Tim stated that the bids are a lot higher than anyone anticipated due to fuel costs. ALPM is starting strategic planning process. They are working with John Allen of Performance Matters. He has never worked with a library before. Typically work with nursing homes and banks. The company was highly recommended by several people and will bring a fresh perspective. The plan should be done by the end of the year.

BETH: Starting the roofing project that was funded last year. They have new skylights made. Nancy also remarked on the high costs. Libraries are expected to estimate costs 18 months before a project starts but many prices change during that time. The time frame needs to be changed. We need someone (maybe Jeff Cannell) to lobby on our behalf. Richard Naylor suggested that Michael Borges be contacted about the issue to be brought up to the Legislative Committee. Tim is also on the Legislative Committee and that is something that could be approved without adding any costs to the budget.

GUIL: Today or Monday the new parking lot should be completed. They are having a great deal of difficulty with a neighbor. They have the concept plan for the expansion. The next newsletter will have a supplement

about the plan. A survey will be going out to determine if the needs of the community have changed since the process was started. On September 10th they expect preliminary approval of the Glasswork Village to be built next to the library. It is a mixed use village.

EGRN: A trustee came out against the budget vote. She felt it was an unfair tax on the residents as 44% of the usage is from outside the chartered area. There was discussion as to how a trustee can be removed – DLD can help if the other trustees wish to take action. A very successful project was “Keeping Your Memory Alive.” Michael Catoggio and Carol Trager worked with the Alzheimer Association and Hawthorne Ridge’s Alzheimer’s unit to talk to residents and record their stories. A story teller interpreted the stories and worked them into her own storytelling. Debbie explained that Michael would be on the search committee as he will not be a candidate for director. He plans to move back to Alaska within the year.

POES: Tim Gordon will be visiting for two hours on September 10th. He will also be at NASS and SNLK for two hours each. Saturday, September 13th is Market Day - book sale, bake sale, plants, and produce. Also POES received an additional \$15,000 from Senator Bruno, before he retired, to add to the \$15,000 we had already received to upgrade the library’s technology and go wireless.

BRUN: Fundraiser today - Summer BBQ in Wal-Mart parking lot. The Board is planning the Capital Campaign. They have been doing a good job of getting pledges. Residents and businesses have just been waiting for BRUN to decide what they were going to do and now have been giving pledges. The agency that was hired to advise on the capital campaign said that library staff should be collecting donations and writing acknowledgements. Julie said that the staff should not be involved in fundraising. Phil wrote a letter stating that it was an inappropriate request for staff. Julie was grateful for his support in the matter. The BRUN Board has found a volunteer to manage the donations.

ALTM: The Board president signed the contract with Jamison & Co as contractors for the new building. They will lay the first slate as a groundbreaking ceremony. Residents are very excited about the new library. They will be holding an Antiques Appraisal fundraiser.

COLN: Looking for a children’s librarian.

VOOR: Asked if there was a mandated retirement age of 65. There is not. Gail thanked UHLS for helping with the bookkeeping issues. The new bookkeeper will be back next week. VOOR had a record year for summer reading. They sued the program created by BETH to register children for the program. Nancy Pieri extended the offer for any library to use the program. It is the second year for BETH and they registered over 1000 children. BETH received the PLS Program of the Year for the online reading program. Gail stated that she is being asked to do things that should be the responsibility of the Board and other directors agreed the same thing was happening to them. Deb Canzano suggested that it should be stressed at the Trustee workshop that directors are supposed to be running the library, not doing fundraising or working toward special districts, etc. They are trustee activities.

RVLL: Very busy. Board held the annual meeting on the same day Candy planned the end of summer reading event.

RCSC: They had a 25% increase in program participation over the summer. Assemblyman Breslin held office hours at the library and it was very successful. They lost their Romp & Read person as she went back to teaching. They are looking to fill that position. There was some discussion regarding civil service. Judy would like some recommendations for building consultants. Tim suggested Paul Mays.

COHS: All is well.

Adjournment

Motion: (Wilson/ Naylor) To adjourn meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM. Next meeting is October 3, 2008 at 9 AM at UHLS.

Submitted by,
Margie Morris