

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

County Discussions

Montour Falls Memorial Library

August 5, 2009

Brief Notes

Attending: Roberta Beckhorn, Director, Hector; Marilyn Harling, Trustee, Luke Rondinaro, director, Montour Falls; Rebecca Abraham, Board President, Gayle Greuber, Director, Odessa; Brian O'Donnell trustee, Carol Franzese, Board President, Harriet Eisman, Director, Watkins Glen; Sherry Collins, Board President, Peggy Field, Trustee, Ristiina Wigg, Director, STLS.

PowerPoint – STLS Services

Peggy Field – We want to discuss services and contributions with you. STLS trustees hate to charge libraries.

Q. What is your shortfall? Increase current cost-share by a percentage each year. Would be easy to do and libraries could plan. You do a wonderful job; we have to find the money.

A. Budget is a moving target due to uncertainty of state aid, and changing needs of libraries. Estimated 60% increase needed by end of 2013.

Q. What can we do to advocate for libraries – squeaky wheel gets the grease

A. Maintain personal contact with state officials. This is essential. Our funding is worth less each year. Ask personal and libraries friends to pass the word. Get in touch with regional representatives on the Board of Regents.

Q. Small libraries have problems with just raising the kinds of funds needed to support their own local library programs, let alone helping to support STLS in this ongoing fiscal crisis.

A. STLS trustees have held two retreats. Need your support and to know what kind of system-based? local?] services you deem important as libraries.

Comments:

- Hard to prioritize, to do without any of services. Delivery so great and efficient, other services are great too. So how do you, in such a situation, deem what's most important and what can be let go of? ...
- Hector Reading center gets no public funding what-so-ever. Could raise funds at the moment, not sure about future. Support STLS 100%

Future needs:

- Electronic formats: DVD moving to Blu-ray, mp3
- Computer usage
- Early literacy
- Things are changing so rapidly, don't know what new technology might be coming
Residents have to come to libraries to apply for jobs online. Watkins has seen a huge increase in people writing resumes, applying for jobs online. Library must have high-speed Internet connection. The library is a community utility.
- We need to encourage corporate support. Companies are making an assumption that people can get Internet access at libraries. Look for specific corporate sponsorship of libraries to bolster offering these services.
- While all this emphasis on encouraging the use-and-development-of online library services is a good thing, it creates for an added burden on libraries to provide that access.

So how as libraries can we support and sustain such technological development? Ongoing Gates Grant, BTOP (Federal Stimulus Broadband initiative) projects under way. Hopefully, these projects will help to make a difference for our local libraries/communities]

- More and more people are retiring – they will use libraries for retirement information, other needs
- Partner with schools – they have the best possible technology. Open schools so people can have access, do online searches.

Join STLS Member Contributions Committee – Carol Franzese may be able to participate; Brian O'Donnell by e-mail

Brainstorm – member contributions

- Across the board increase for every library, based on current cost-share
- Set fee per year – libraries pay per hold filled
- Bookkeeping (per contributions/costs for individual services) shouldn't be too complicated for libraries to keep track of
- Different bill every month? Bill should be somewhat predictable
- Not to count usage wouldn't be fair – USE MORE, PAY MORE
- Add factors to current cost-share formula, example holds received
- Allow option for libraries to charge patrons for holds
- Keep processing fee separate

Spring 2010 – ask members to evaluate services – are we doing what you think we need to be doing

How can STLS be held accountable?

How inform trustees of this process

- Send summary of each meeting to each director and board president
- Help trustees get to know STLS services better; hold annual spring Open House and/or some other sort of system-wide get-together for trustees and library personnel up at STLS, i.e., a mixer/picnic. Trustees would get a whole different feeling during a visit and through dealing with system staff, trustees, and other libraries on a more personal basis.