

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

County Discussions

Penn Yan Public Library

August 18, 2009

Brief Notes

Attending: Paula Nelson trustee and Lynn Overgaard, Director, Penn Yan Public Library; Philip Archer, STLS trustee, Ristiina Wigg, Director, STLS.

PowerPoint – STLS Services

Rotating collections, especially large print might possibly be of interest to agencies like Clinton Crest Manor, St. Mark's Terrace

Philip Archer – discussed the need for another interested Yates County resident to join him as an STLS trustee. This discussion of planning and funding for the future makes it even more important that libraries be represented on the STLS Board.

Lynn Overgaard addressed what Penn Yan Public Library will need in the next five years:

- Facility renewed and improved to meet patron needs
- All sorts of technology things, opportunities to learn about changes, ideas for how to adapt
The community is not ready now for things like RSS feeds, but at some point they will be and will expect those services
- Need assistance with keeping up with these kinds of changes and how to implement them

Penn Yan with its own integration library system is not as connected to system services as other libraries. As some point they may take a hard look at that, reviewing pros (connection to Keuka College) and cons.

Q. Does STLS subsidize services to members too much? If a community is going to have a library, they have to expect to pay for certain basic costs, including electronic services. STLS funds between ½ to 1/3 of annual electronic services costs.

For example, processing is available reasonably from 3rd party vendors who can tailor processing to the needs of individual libraries. STLS cannot take the time to provide different services to different libraries.

Penn Yan would like more System help in keeping up with the library world, for example more assistance with policies, ethical issues, attracting residents who are not using the library. The System should directly address issues that might be side conversations when meetings are held on less important topics.

Some STLS workshops/seminars have been helpful, sometimes great meetings, but other times meeting focus on the same basic issues year after year. Library staff that have specialist responsibilities – youth, reference, other – also need support.

Q. Should STLS put effort into propping up libraries that maybe should combine?

There was discussion of the difficulty of balancing continuing education for people who have no training/library experience and may be doing many things in their library with continuing education for staff who are quite knowledgeable about their work.

Technology – we're going to need to be kept aware of changes. Would like topics like "This is how you can start small to make changes," and "Five easy ways to make your website better."

Philip Archer – the STLS Board needs to see that members are "buying into the System" and are supporters of System services.

Importance of VISION – both on the part of library directors and trustees. They need to have a sense of the bigger picture, have to promote expectations. STLS needs to educate and promote more than the nuts and bolts of daily service – technology, delivery, processing.

Fees and member contributions in other systems were discussed. In some regions the System does not subsidize electronic services; the System pays on the same basis as members. STLS has a culture of heavy subsidies for technology. Reductions in STLS services and costs were also discussed.

Ristiina Wigg said that although the budget is a moving target, library contributions would need to increase from the estimated \$190,000 in 2010 to \$300,000 in 2013.

Q. What would trustees need to know to support and to feel comfortable with bigger contributions?

Paula Nelson answered:

- 1) Tell us what value we are getting for our money. Don't ask us to support a pig in a poke
- 2) On the other hand expenses are going up. Suggest increases be added reluctantly and slowly over time.

Lynn Overgaard – STLS Board absolutely shouldn't be fundraising. Message to libraries should be

- We're getting less money
- Here are the services, need funding if you want them to continue
- Use equivalencies to depict the impact, such as this message in the March 2009 STLS UPDATE:
The Governor's proposed budget would reduce funds for System services provided to your library by more than \$200,000.
How much is \$200,000? It is the equivalent of:
1) The combined total cost, including staff time, of cataloging your materials for STARCat, processing library materials, and purchase of new DVDs and audio books for rotating collections

OR

2) The combined total costs of interloan from outside the region, youth services, and delivery

OR

3) The combined cost of annual Sirsi fees to maintain Directors Station, STARCat and Workflows, the telecommunications that enable patrons and libraries to use these services, and 25% of IT staff

Your library would need to contribute more funds in order to maintain services.

- Another example, say that without more funds STLS can only make one delivery per library per week. We have brought the delivery crunch on ourselves by allowing patrons to request titles from other libraries when they are owned by their home library. In Penn Yan, if a book is out, patrons put their name on a wait list, instead of borrowing the book from another library.

Reviewed the 2009 record of public votes on increases in local library funding.

Libraries asked for increases from \$500 to \$28,809; increases in funding from 1.3% to 66%. Every vote passed; voters said yes to every library proposition.

Philip Archer said that with each proposition libraries should compile a fact sheet – “here are the good things we are doing.”