North Central Library District

District Advisory Council (DAC) Meeting
November, 11 2009

The meeting of the DAC was called to order at 12:pm on Wednesday November 11th 2009 at the McBride Memorial Library, Berwick. Presiding officer was Melissa Rowse. Attending members were: Gail Broome Degenstein Library, C. Lynn Williams Priestley-Forsyth Memorial Library, Mary Sirgey Mansfield Free Public Library, Tracy Carey Union County Library, Hal Pratt Bloomsburg Public Library, Jeffrey Singer Bradford County Library, Rick Miller McBride Memorial Library, Charles Ormsbee JV Brown Library, Bob Mummey Milton Public Library, Ann Phillips JV Brown Library, Karen Temple JV Brown Library, Barbara McGary JV Brown Library, Melissa Rowse Montgomery House Library Janice Trapp JV Brown Library, Lynda Warner Bradford County Library, Carol Roinick Sullivan County Library

This was the regularly scheduled quarterly meeting. Minutes from the meeting 0n Aug, 27 were read and approved.

Janice Trapp opened the meeting by discussing an overview of the Budget Cuts. State monies are 400 million dollars lower than last year and libraries accounted for 6.2% of the shared loss. It is forecast that next year will be no better. Janice stated that we need to focus on 2 things right now to better prepare ourselves for the present situation and for the future. First, it is important to think of how to continue delivering services the best we can with what we have. Second, it is critical that the district and all participants start planning right now for next year. We need to anticipate the library campaign for dollars and how to address need. We don't want our politicians coming back to us next year patting themselves on the backs and saying thank goodness we got it down to 20.1% and it could have been so much worse. Janice, Karen and others have already been meeting and talking with pending governor and political candidates putting the library and needs in the forefront of their minds. It is critical that libraries are consistently put into the forefront of their minds. That kind of advocacy now and having 6 million card carriers support that advocacy will create impact. We need to anticipate that next year will be worse than this year.

Access Pa is definitely affected, but the word of how the funding is being arranged is not out yet. We should anticipate notice from Harrisburg in the next few days. Although this is not official, all libraries should anticipate not getting the 2nd payment from Access. They are 85-90% sure this funding will not happen. Keystone Grants have been totally cut and are not being funded, even for those who were granted the funding.

Waivers are granted to all libraries. The waivers must be prepared in as much detail as possible. There are no specific formats, but examples are available to see. Extensions of time will be granted as far as the library code and regulations go. Noted was the need for all libraries to maintain the standards as much as possible. If a municipality cut funds, make sure that is stated on the waiver. The cutting of hours must also be stated on the waiver. More information can be found on the NCLD website. Karen and Barbara asked that all waivers be copied to the District Office as well to insure complete awareness on all levels. That will assist them in supporting the changes. Emphasized again was that all changes be noted.

Discussion included the frustration of how the library standards are not cut when the funding is and how difficult and unfair that treatment is towards libraries. Janice noted that they do understand and are looking at alternatives such as an advisory code within the regulations. She stated that the regulations are good in some ways and do protect us. There is agreement on necessary change however. Gail Broome brought up the fact that a library who already runs on a negative balance each year and then is mandated to maintain standards, such as on materials and salaries, on a cut budget, does not allow any way for the library to try to recover if this is all based on expenses. The deficit causes the library to lose additional money and to continue to run at a negative balance. This was noted and stated a good point to raise in Harrisburg.

The DAC budget was then examined and discussed. Specifics followed the contingency plan agreed to on 8/27/09. ILL mail service was maintained, staff was reduced. The rotating collection, movie license and Heritage Quest were eliminated and the district collection cut. The youth collections developer monies were also cut. Also eliminated were technology upgrades and Susquehanna Chamber membership. What was considered critical in keeping were the District Staff. They are an integral part in the district libraries getting the assistance, guidance and training that they need. Funding was cut to training but the district is working on specific strategy sessions for libraries to strengthen themselves. A developing program being worked on is an advocacy module. This module will be targeted at identified trustees and librarians to enable them to go out and market, promote and advocate for libraries. The district plans to go county by county with these trainings. Karen stated it's “influencing our influencers”, that we have to raise the value of how we are seen. The core purpose is to be able to go out to county commissioners and promote library services and to find money.

Charles then spoke of Learning Express Library and the need to promote its services. Attendance is down and promotion is necessary. Note skill-building courses when speaking about it. Individuals were given posters and book marks.

The committee was informed that the officers had met last week and all strongly felt the budget had been strategically applied and should be agreed upon. The committee passed the proposed budget with no objections.

Barbara then discussed the election of officers and because of the budget impasse, new officers and members would begin Jan 1, 2010. All libraries were instructed to designate representatives, either trustee or librarian. The positions are on a 2 year rotation. Small library representation was discussed as in Bradford County, and numbers of votes were discussed. Also emphasized was the expectation of attendance to the DAC meetings and the availability for members to attend. Karen and Barbara emphasized again to please e-mail both Barbara and herself due to some technical quirks. Individuals were asked to consider interest in being an officer.

A statement was also made that the district is working on having continuing education credits for these meeting and trainings. The DAC would meet from 11:00-3:30. Lunch and the meeting would be the first part. Training would go from 1:30-3:30.

Meeting was concluded with the date set for the next meeting. We will convene on Jan 27th 2010, at James V. Brown.