

Delivery: The biggest challenge to our budget and service plan is delivery, which is our number one service. The Regional Library Cooperatives are in the process of reviewing responses to our request for proposal for awarding a new contract for this service. Costs will definitely increase. To cover any eventuality, the Executive Board has added \$100,000 to that budget line. Cost share with members will remain part of this service.

JerseyCat: HRLC, the State Library and the other Regional Library Cooperatives (RLCs) share the cost of providing members with access to the statewide interlibrary loan system. Currently, the RLCs base their share on a formula that combines usage statistics and the number of libraries using the system within each Region.

EBSCO and Online Information: The four RLCs and the State Library continue to fund EBSCO online full-text magazine databases, providing free access to public, school and nonprofit libraries. The State Library also funds a variety of other free access databases to members of the Regions <http://www.njstatelib.org/LDB/Databases/index.php>. HRLC has renewed the ProQuest contracts and continues to provide them to members at greatly reduced rates. A list of vendor discounts is available to HRLC members at <http://www.hrlc.org/vendors/vendors.htm>. We all extend our thanks to Cheryl O'Connor, Executive Director of INFOLINK, for her tireless efforts in putting together this package on behalf of all the RLCs.

Telephone Reference Center Service for Libraries: The New Jersey Regional Library Cooperatives are no longer funding Telephone Reference Center Services as of December 31, 2007 due to a precipitous decline in use.

Continuing Education and Technical Training: Every HRLC committee and taskforce has responsibility for recommending continuing education and training for the members. The Strategic Plan, the Continuing Education Survey, Committees, Task Forces and constantly evolving needs of our members guide our education planning. Staff development opportunities in advocacy skills, strategic planning, diversity issues, customer service, electronic resources and more Library 2.0 technologies are scheduled for the coming year. Our ongoing successful use of the Peopleware software allows 24/7 web-based registration for classes and events. We now have 1,940 registered users.

Committees and Task Forces: The HRLC Strategic Plan called for creating a new Public Relations Committee to succeed the Marketing and Public Relations Task Force and for the formation of a Government Relations and Advocacy Task Force. Both have been created and are working on projects. Since interests in youth and children's services are being well served by NJLA and by many consortia, the HRLC Youth Services Committee has been dissolved.

Downloadable Audiobooks – OverDrive Project: This is by all measures an enormously successful program. The board has added a \$12,000 budget line in support of the third year of this project.

Incubator Project: It is important that HRLC foster new ideas and support pilot projects for unique and cutting edge services. The board has again created a budget line of \$7,500 to serve as incentive funds for an incubator/demonstration project. In FY07 and FY08, it was used to support and grow the OverDrive project. The same amount is in the FY09 budget. A new project has not yet been identified. It will need to reflect our Strategic Plan and the multi-type nature of HRLC. Partnerships are valued.

Personnel and Benefits: The HRLC Personnel Committee recommended a salary increase 4.0% for the staff. The Executive Board approved this recommendation. The cost of benefits has increased that budget line by 12%.

The Budget Future: Careful financial planning was necessary for FY2008 and continues for FY2009. As you know, our funding has not increased in over nineteen years. Our operational costs continue to rise. With the Finance Committee carefully monitoring our expenditures, we use the strictest financial controls in order to keep costs down.

Please call me, HRLC President Mark Titus, HRLC Treasurer Robert White, or your board representative before May 15th, if you have any questions about the budget.

Attachments