



Meeting Minutes

Date: 2-13-07

To: Angela Camack, Ernie Jaeger, Pat Kennedy-Grant, Michele Nestory, Paul Schroeder, Mary Wilson, Joanne Roukens

From: Pat Lawson

RE: HRLC Funding and Resource Development Taskforce

Please Note: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 1st from 10:00 to 12:00 at HRLC

Present: Ernie Jaeger, Pat Kennedy-Grant, Michele Nestory, Paul Schroeder, Mary Wilson, Joanne Roukens, Pat Lawson

Valuing Libraries Project

Joanne: Has adapted the workshop to the needs of school media personnel, and gave it in a condensed format at the Martin Luther King Day school library program. The materials are now available on the HRLC web site. At the NJ Trustee Workshop, 50 trustees and directors received a two-hour overview. She will present it at the Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library, which is a PA District Center, in Fort Worth TX and also in Arizona. She will be bringing back some interesting library funding and governance models from those states. Joanne has requested a spot on the PLA program, and will be presenting Valuing Libraries at NJSL. Having reached out to InfoLink, NJLA and NJLTA, she noted that Michele Reutty, the incoming President of NJLA, has taken Valuing Libraries as her theme.

Valuing Libraries Grant Final Report

Joanne distributed the report, which includes some sample success stories. The collection of these stories forms part of the plan for the workshops. One of the librarians quoted in the report used her workshop materials to begin a discussion of the unmet needs of school libraries among her district administrators. Pat Lawson has used the Value Proposition and Value Statement as a Trustee exercise, and each Trustee has written an 'Elevator Speech'. Some Library Friends groups will use the Value Statement in their fundraising efforts.

The State Library will not require the return of the \$6,184 left at the end of the grant period, and suggested that it might fund a statewide ROI study. We discussed the idea, but concluded that in order to yield credible results, such a study would have to be scientifically designed and rigorous; the budget would not be sufficient for that. Would simply aggregating the ROI figures that libraries produce be a less expensive way of conducting such a study? We agreed that Valuing Libraries has purposely been designed as a quick way for individual libraries to portray their contributions to their specific communities, not to produce apples-to-apples comparisons. Rather, we agreed that the funds should be used to give another round of Valuing Libraries Workshops, particularly during the summer as a follow-up to the School Library Survey. Joanne will look into holding one centrally this Summer, with Fall follow-up sessions in the North and South. We agreed that two days, separated by enough time to complete "homework", are the best model.



HRLC Strategic Plan

With the Valuing Libraries Project firmly established, we discussed possible initiatives for the remaining term of the Task Force. We were established to identify ways for libraries to support their long-term fiscal health. The HRLC Planning Committee has identified a greater understanding of “Advocacy and Government Relations” as a priority need for members. It will be up to the HRLC Board to decide whether it wishes to give that or another mandate to this Task Force, or to create a new Task Force to meet the need. In the near term, perhaps the Region could offer a one-day workshop as a follow-up to Valuing Libraries, Mary suggested the topic of preparing to face your local government. We then identified our unfinished business as the School Library Survey.

School Library Survey

Ernie distributed the text of the Survey and Introduction, commenting that as matters stand today, each school library is an island. While there may be a statewide data on districts, there is no statewide picture of school libraries, public and private. Pat Kennedy-Grant commented that the data that would result from the survey was needed more than ever, with both municipalities and school districts being impacted by pending property tax relief legislation. Joanne stated her belief that the survey project is a must. Our school librarian members need information on comparable schools and comparable districts to theirs in order to advocate effectively for their students’ needs. We decided that we would complete the editing of the survey and introduction this month, and that HRLC could put the survey into Survey Monkey for a final review before making it available for the month of April. Mary pointed out that if participation were too low, the results would not be valid. We brainstormed some ways of increasing participation. Pat Lawson asked whether we could give a small incentive, keeping identity separate from the data collection (since the survey itself will be anonymous). Michele suggested that member public and academic librarians be asked to call their local school librarians after the Survey goes up and urge them to complete it. Joanne and Ernie can call upon their NJSL colleagues to promote it. We agreed that the Introduction to the Survey would be crucial in convincing busy media personnel to respond, and that it must clearly state the potential benefits. We can quote the Introduction in the email that alerts school library members to the Survey.

To-Do’s

- Ernie to add Task Force comments to the Survey and Introduction
- HRLC staff to confer with Ernie, and mount the Survey on Survey Monkey
- All—Meet after the Strategic Plan is adopted, and before the Annual Meeting to sum up what the Task Force has produced, and what direction the HRLC Board wishes the Task Force to pursue if it is to continue.
- All—Respond to requests for input on the Survey revisions, test the Survey.