Central New York Library Resources Council

Library Resources and Services

June 13, 2011

2:00 p.m

Topic: Newsbank Subscription Renewal

Present: Peg Elliott (OCPL); Diana Wendell (Madison-Oneida BOCES); Mike Poulin – *teleconference* (Colgate University); Déirdre Joyce (Assistant Director, CLRC); Debby Emerson (Executive Director, CLRC) liaison; DeAnn Buss – *teleconference* (Syracuse University); Nancy Virgil-Call - *teleconference* (Utica College)

Excused: Beverly Choltco-Devlin (Mid -York Library System), Chair; Deb Lewis (OCPL)

Absent: Steve Weiter (SUNY ESF); Christine Kucharski (SUNY Upstate)

*NB: This was a special meeting of the LRS Committee, convened to discuss whether or not to renew and continue to subsidize CLRC’s subscription to Newsbank. Several other items were briefly addressed.*

In the absence of the committee chair, Debby Emerson called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

**Action Items:**

1. Check to see if the Syracuse papers will be included in the Newsbank package. Funding decisions are contingent upon this. (Debby)
2. Submit ideas for a listserv discussion of background graphic for the redesign of CLRC’s website (all committee members)

**Previous meeting minutes:**

Minutes for the May 9th meeting, as well as this special meeting, will be approved at the next regular meeting of the LRS Committee.

**Agenda Items**

*NB: No official agenda was created for this meeting.*

1. Newsbank subscription

* Debby announced that at the end of last week, CLRC learned that Newsbank would no longer provide access to the NYTimes when the new subscription year starts (August 1). Diana asked if this was still available through Gale/NOVEL – the answer is YES.
* Peg reported on some additional findings regarding the 2011-12 Newsbank databases, and the committee discussed the following:
  + Peg explained that Newsbank has exclusive rights to many NYS newspapers.
  + *Syracuse Post-Standard* is listed on Newsbank as “pending.” It is not known yet whether Newsbank or another vendor may ultimately win exclusive rights to the Syracuse newspaper content. Mike made the point that the Syracuse paper is the critical issue. Without this paper, many subscribers will find no value in Newsbank. He suggested that we would not be able to move forward on this decision until the question is resolved.
  + Diana asked if the *Utica Dispatch* would continue. Answer: YES. Utica is unique to Newsbank. Mike pointed out that Bev has consistently argued that the Utica paper is not of much value due to the lack of backfiles. Without a Syracuse paper, the Utica paper may not be enough of a reason to continue subsidizing this package.
  + Debby reported that Bev had mixed feelings and would go along with whatever the committee decides.
  + Debby asked if anyone has ever contacted the *Post-Standard* individually to see if they can create a subscription for area institutions. Peg noted that many newspapers do not provide institutional subscriptions directly as they want users to buy their own individual subscriptions.
  + Mike felt that it was pretty obvious there would be a mass exodus from the product if the cost for it goes up at all.
  + Mike expressed that when the Committee started discussing what to do with the Wilson money coming back in, he was not enthusiastic about putting those monies toward the NewsBank product. Debby reported that the cost for Newsbank would be 77k, if we decided to proceed. Last year, we charged back 21k. Since we opted not to proceed with the Wilson subscription, this frees up 30k. Even with the reduced budget, still gives us 80-85k to utilize. In the past, that has been used to purchase or subsidize e-access to resources. At its most recent meeting, the CLRC Board asked what had happened to the member grants. Mike said that inflation was the main thing that happened. Putting all the money to Newsbank and continuing to subsidize continually will reduce the cushion.
  + Mike says that the council subsidizes the cost for CLRC member libraries so that access to regional newspaper content can be provided for the region
  + Diana and Mike both said they would not continue under the full pricing.
  + Peg mentioned that, during Fall 2010 when it was uncertain whether CLRC would have the funds to continue its Newsbank subscription, OCPL signed for a 12 month subscription. After CLRC renewed with Newsbank through 7/31/2011, Newsbank agreed to extend the OCPL contract out from CLRC’s ending date July 31, 2011. All agreed that Newsbank loses value without the Syracuse papers in it.
  + Debby read a list of the “local” papers that are in the Newsbank subscription, only 8 represented in the counties that CLRC serves.
* Diana asked if we have some ideas for other resources that might be available. Not something we’ve discussed, but we can. Debby said that it is always a challenge to come up with ideas for databases because of the diversity of membership. Some points that the committee brought up included:
  + Who knows how well NOVEL will continue to work? If newspapers contract with database providers other than Gale, this will make the NOVEL products less useful for NY users.
  + EBSCO and Wilson merging make it more interesting.
  + Mike noted that many any of the academics have these types of the resources already. Mike doesn’t like the idea of CLRC getting into the regional provision of generic databases, Diana thinks that this would be a good idea IF NOVEL was drastically cut back.
  + Peg has a concern with all the newspaper databases because they are so volatile. Let’s look for something that is steady.
  + Diana mentioned that we might look into an eBooks subscription. Academics already have access to a number of eBook packages.
    - Mike mentioned that Colgate is a member of ConnectNY, 15 academic libraries with 2 nearly all the way to ebooks, which makes resource sharing very difficult. Mike thinks that a consortial environment may be difficult to deal with if you are looking at something mixed (i.e. public/special/academic/schools). If an academic purchases an eBook, it cannot be loaned. If there is no print equivalent, then there is no resource sharing. Now it’s consortial purchasing, but this excludes those not in the consortium. Colgate’s budget is going to go further toward ebooks. Could become upwards of 5% of the monograph budget. Don’t know of any models that work in a mixed environment like CLRC . EBL has the type of model where there is a startup fee. Ebrary has a subscription model, but the cost for an academic library would indicate that the CLRC costs would be huge.
  + Diana later suggested that Britannica Images might be a good alternative database subscription with an appeal to a wide constituency.
* Mike noted that the attractive part of the Newsbank title was that it was regional and no one else provided this. Maybe the money needs to go back into regional digitization efforts as more people are ready to do this type of thing these days, with an emphasis on local history . Debby noted that the biggest roadblock CLRC sees as we discuss the issue with member libraries is lack of time or staff to devote to the project.
  + Mike suggested that CLRC might put some money into digitizing local papers that were out of copyright or would agree to be digitized. Déirdre and Debby noted that Northern NY is already setup to do this, and this is certainly something that we could look into.
  + DeAnn at SU on focusing efforts on digitization: how do we make it available and integrated across all of our constituencies? How do we layer an integrated search mechanism over the top of this?
  + CLRC can link out to the other silos, and we can index these here. We may be able to provide services that harvest this and create a better search. For some of the smaller publics and the school libraries, makes it available to use that.
* Discussion returned to Newsbank.
  + If the Newsbank package includes access to Syracuse newspapers, CLRC would continue subsidizing the subscription with a member chargeback similar to the 2010-11 chargeback.
  + Make sure that it is clear to them that the subscription is contingent upon the Newsbank newspapers, and write this into the contract if possible.
  + Obits and death notices will continue as part of the subscription.

1. CLRC website.
   * Déirdre asked committee members to send feedback on possible images to underlay the new CLRC website. Suggestions should be sent to the listserv.
2. Optimal Resume.
   * Peg asked about Optimal Resume and where CLRC was going with a possible subscription
   * Déirdre explained that some CLRC members had watched a presentation and CLRC would send out an individualized questionnaire to participants to help determine what type of interest there was in moving forward with a purchase.
   * Mike mentioned that he would prefer to rely on Waldo for this type of thing.

Adjourn at 10am (No official motion)

**Next Meeting: July 15, 9:00 a.m. at CLRC and via teleconference.**

Respectfully submitted,

Déirdre Joyce

Assistant Director, CLRC