Central New York Library Resources Council

Legislative Committee

February 11, 2013

3:00 p.m. at CLRC or conference call

**Present:** Carole Kupelian (Retired school librarian), Chair, Mike McLane (Library Consultant and retired librarian), Wanda Bruchis (Mid-York), Sue Kowalski (Pine Grove School), Bob Manning (OCPL), Christine Richie (OCPL), Matt DeLaney (Tully Free Library), Mary Tiedemann (OCM BOCES), Anna Dobkowski (CLRC), Deirdre Joyce (CLRC), Debby Emerson (CLRC)

Carole Kupelian called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Mike McLane made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 1, 2012 meeting as presented (S/Approved unanimously).

**Action Items: Email Wanda to let her know what we want her to do to help with creating the video for the leg breakfast.**

**Agenda Items:**

1. **Legislative Breakfasts wrapup.**

Debby reported that both legislative breakfasts went very well. The Legislative Committee had a quick conference call during the week between the two breakfasts to discuss any adjustments that might need to be made. One suggestion was to have some extra tables set up to accommodate people who might attned without signing up. It was good that we did that, since Sam Roberts’ office sent a representative unexpectedly. We had 77 people signed up for the breakfast; Anna thought there were possibly seven or eight name tags that weren’t picked up. There were representatives from all types of libraries. Debby observed that the conversations she overhead were good, and upon leaving many of the legislators indicated they liked the format. Mary Tiedemann said that as a participant, she really liked the format. She felt that everyone had the opportunity to be heard. People appreciate having the bell ring, indicating it’s time to move around. There is no opportunity for anyone to monopolize the conversation. The downtown location in Syracuse, within walking distance for most of the legislators, was a big plus. One library supporter was displeased with the challenges of parking downtown and felt the event should be held in a library, but most people liked the CNY Philanthropy Center location. The Philanthropy Center was easy to work with, and let us bring in our own food. If people arrived early enough, they did not have to pay for parking. A few years ago the Syracuse area breakfast was held at the Everson. That was also a convenient location, but we were required to use a specific caterer for that event and it was prohibitively expensive. The committee agreed we would like to go back to the Philanthropy Center in future years, if possible. Debby has written thank-you notes to all the legislators who attended the breakfasts, and to Starbucks for providing the beverages for the Syracuse breakfast.

1. **Library Advocacy Day**

Anna reported on the arrangements for Library Advocacy Day. She has set appointments with all the legislators. There are a few conflicts, but these were unavoidable if we wanted to see the legislators themselves. There is a conflict with the rally; both Assemblymen Roberts and Finch wanted to see our groups at 11:30 and that is the time of the rally. The group agreed it is more important to see the legislators than to attend the rally. Senators Seward and Griffo both wanted our group to meet with them at 1:00 p.m. Each of them is having all the library advocates meet at one large group appointment, rather than making separate appointments for each geographic region. Unfortunately the two appointments conflict with each other. This also cuts into the usual lunch hour. Advocacy Day attendees from previous years had suggested we start our afternoon appointments at 1:30 p.m. rather than 1:00 p.m., as it is difficult to re-enter the security area in time for a 1:00 p.m. appointment. The 1:00 time slot is the only option that was offered, so groups attending those appointments will need to plan accordingly. Meeting with the library groups together makes sense from the legislator’s point of view. Bob Manning suggested that we ask Kathy Osmond at OCPL to distribute information about Advocacy Day in her communications with the OCPL directors and also the trustees.

Deirdre mentioned CLRC’s Persuasive Speaking class on February 27. This would be ideal training for group leaders and advocates. The speaker is Peter Iglinski from Speech Repair in Rochester. Those who have volunteered to be group leaders can attend at no charge, and those attending Advocacy Day can attend for half of the regular price.

Carole asked if all committee members are going to be attending Advocacy Day. Sue Kowalski hopes to bring students on the bus, but there is testing that week and she is not sure she can get clearance to go. Mary Tiedemann will be attending and is willing to be a group leader wherever needed. So far Anna has the following group leaders:

Matt Delaney – Al Stirpe

Wanda – Brindisi

Christine – DeFrancisco (Christine will have children with her)

Jennifer Recht – Magee

Heather Urtz – Marc Butler

Elizabeth Dailey – Finch?

Diana Wendell – Claudia Tenney

Mike McLane – Barclay

Still need leaders for the others. Mary will do Valesky. Wanda will do Blankenbush. Carole will do Roberts. We need to coordinate with other groups to determine who will be the leaders for the joint appointments with Seward and Griffo. Jeff Wooldridge might be willing to do the Seward appointment at 1:00 p.m. Wanda will check with him. Finch is new to our area and represents a corner of Onondaga County. Anna will contact Elizabeth Dailey to confirm her willingness to lead the appointment with Finch. Senator Farley also represents a small portion of Herkimer County (Old Forge area) so is now in our area. Mike suggested we coordinate with CDLC to see if they are scheduling an appointment with Farley.

Anna has maps showing the new legislative districts. Blankenbush has an odd little sliver of Oneida County. Anna is looking for newspaper clippings about member libraries to include in the packets for legislators. She currently has a visual history of library aid to go in the packets. There is some helpful statistical information on the NYLA Advocacy page, but we have given them much of that information already. Please send appropriate articles to Anna by March 1. There have been several letters to the editor in the Syracuse paper; check with Kathy Osmond at OCPL about these.

1. **NYLA Legislative Talking Points**

Debby sent these out to the committee last week. The key talking point is restoration of funding back to the level it was at in 2007, $102 million. The Governor’s proposal for this year is for $81.7 million, which is the same amount that libraries received last year. This is actually good news, as it leaves in place the partial restoration we received last year. Bob asked if we could expect any additional restoration of funds this year. Debby said from what she has heard, expenses related to Superstorm Sandy will have a significant impact on the state budget and make it difficult to restore funding in other areas of the budget. Part of our message when talking to legislators should be “Thank you for remembering how important libraries are”, but at the same time we want to make sure they know we need restoration back to our previous level of funding. Wanda mentioned the importance of using the word “restoration”; we are not asking for an increase in funding, but restoration back to a previous level.

We need to be sure we know how our legislators voted for last year’s budget, so we address them appropriately during our appointments. Debby said she would check their voting records. [All legislators currently in office voted in favor of the budget proposal last year. One of our area legislators did not, but that person was not re-elected.] Bob Manning mentioned that legislators are very aware of the grades they get on the NYLA Voting Report, and are annoyed when they get a poor grade.

NYLA has significantly pared down the number of talking points this year. The NYLA/NYALS lobbyist has only one message: restoration of library funding to the 2007 level of $102 million. Wanda asked if the lobbyist will be present at Advocacy Day or the pre-Advocacy Day activities. Debby will find out. Wanda also asked about the talking point that refers to maintenance of effort. There is mention of libraries being able to request waivers for maintenance of effort; Wanda thought perhaps it should say library systems rather than libraries since that is more of a systems issue. Debby will contact NYLA to find out.

1. **OCPL Government Relations**

The key focus recently has been getting funding for the central library renovation. At a January meeting the County Legislature voted to fully fund the Central Library renovation. The RFP for the work has either gone out or will go out shortly. The library will move down to the ground floor and have new entrances. It has been 25 years since there were any renovations. This is part of the renewal of downtown Syracuse. There will be a bus shelter in front of the library that will be branded with the library. The Government Relations Committee met with Juanita Williams at their last meeting. She is very well connected and the group looks forward to working with her.

1. **Mid-York**

The Madison County board of supervisors voted to restore funding to all non-profits in the county. There were two very well-attended public meetings where the community came together in support of all the non-profits, and aid was finally restored to current levels. Wanda subsequently received a letter from the county saying there will be a detailed process for getting the funding, and even though the restoration was approved, organizations may not in fact get their funding. The county is meeting with each library individually, but has not called Mid-York to be involved in the discussions. This is a concern because Madison County has always been very cooperative and supportive in the past. Mid-York has applied for a construction grant to create an off-street parking area. They will demolish a portion of their building and put in a parking area. Assemblyman Brindisi has requested bullet aid on their behalf.

1. **NYLA/NYALS**

Lobbyist hired by NYLA-NYALS will only carry forth the message about restoration of library funding. As noted previously, Wanda would like to know if the lobbyist will be present at Advocacy Day or the PAC dinner.

1. **Other Business**

Marla Yudin (Oswego BOCES) was looking for information about the PAC dinner. Several people mentioned they did not get a separate announcement, and thought that was odd. Carole sent information to Marla.

Deirdre announced that the CLRC web page offers a link to a self-paced advocacy tutorial offered by PLA that is appropriate for all libraries. Deirdre will send out the link to the group. It is not just for librarians; it’s also appropriate for trustees and other library supporters. This is a good introduction to the process. [Note: You need to be an ALA member to log in.]

**NEXT MEETING: March 18, 3:00 p.m.**

Mike McLane made a motion to adjourn at 4:14 p.m., (S/Approved unanimously).

Respectfully submitted,

Debby Emerson, CLRC