

**Superiorland Library Cooperative
Advisory Board of Librarians Meeting
Peter White Public Library
Marquette, MI 49855
August 16, 2016**

The Advisory Board of Librarians meeting for the Superiorland Library Cooperative was held on Tuesday, August 16, 2016 at the Peter White Public Library in Marquette, MI from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Persons Attending-Dave Bonsall from Simply Superior Consulting, Facilitating the Meeting
Andrea Ingmire, Cathy Seblonka, Tracy Boehm from the Peter White Public Library; Caroline Jordan and John Schaeffer from the Superiorland Library Cooperative Board of Directors; Megan Buck of the Dickinson County Library; Elaine Erickson of the Ironwood Carnegie Library; Lisa Cromell of the Munising School Public Library; Pam Withow of the Forsyth Township Library; Carolyn Stacey of the Escanaba Public Library; Dion Mindykowski of the Tahquamenon Area School Public Library; Joan Schick of the Lake Linden Hubbell School/Public Library; and Superiorland Library Cooperative staff members Shawn Andary, Pam Malmsten, Pam Christensen and Lynn Brown.**

Christensen thanked the people present for attending the meeting. Introductions were made and Bonsall started the meeting with a brief discussion of why the group was assembled. He asked each person to be an active participant.

Question #1 Which services provided by the Superiorland Library Cooperative are most valuable to your library?

Comments included-Without the SLC and their services we wouldn't be here. Technology, software, Internet, computer maintenance and staff assistance are all very important. Each library could not provide this level of service with their own budget. "We have a \$140,000 budget-what I get allows us to be the library we are. The cooperative purchasing power for databases, overdrive, equipment, etc. is very important to us. The consultation of SLC helps us do more. The ALS and SIRSI Dynix systems help us serve the public-there is no way we could each operate our own system. All SLC services are necessary. The Downloadable ebooks and audio books are a service we have because of SLC.

The advocacy and marketing for all of us is important. The SLC is critical to our operation and survival. SLC keeps us relevant in the community. SLC helps us take advantage of technology and prepared for the future. SLC activities in MLA, Cooperative Director's Association, Library of Michigan, RIDES, COSUGI, etc. help SLC and member libraries stay current with library-related activities on a regional, state and national level. Advocacy and legislative information is also important to SLC member libraries.

Technology support is #1-we could never do this on our own. The Overdrive ebooks and audio are big. ILL is bigger than each library and SLC—it is so important and provides all of our patrons access. They are interconnected to libraries in our region and the state of Michigan. They don't know how it works, but they love ILL. The interconnectedness keeps us relevant to our patrons and the region. SLC lets each library be what it needs to be for the community. The shared catalog lets everyone reach out and get what they want now. Downloadable audio and ebooks help expand our collections-everyone

has access. ALS technology and purchasing power is so important. It is the difference between night and day being on the ALS system. Each library could not anticipate the changes or the new innovations on their own—the SLC staff keeps us current.

The administrative power of the SLC staff is all behind the scenes. We don't even know what all they have to do to serve us, but we know we could never do it on our own.

Negotiating with SIRSIDynix, database providers, vendors, Overdrive—the SLC members don't have the time or knowledge to do this, but it is critical to our success.

The libraries in SLC are so poor and devoid of resources, SLC transforms what we can offer to our patrons and many of them do not even know how it works. It is so seamless. It is what people have come to expect. The computer and technology augment what each library can offer on its own.

How many of the users use ILL. Do we have percentages or what percentage of circulation is due to ILL?

SLC is so important for advocacy, education, legislation—SLC staff keep us up to date, but also advocate on our behalf. Director's travels keep SLC members visible and allow us to know what is going on around the state. SLC is a strong reflection on the UP and northern Lower Michigan libraries. Many of us don't feel that people in lower Michigan care about us. SLC helps us keep up with new innovations and helps with advocacy and marketing.

Thanks to SLC staff we can get statistics and reports. Reports are easy thanks to Shawn. We don't need to know how to do it. Reports are just one more thing we don't have time to do, thanks to the SLC staff we have this information all ready for us. Help is just an email away.

The Great Lakes Talking Book Advisory Center also lets us provide services to those with disabilities. It is good to have a local contact for these services. Just one way we can better serve the UP and Northern Michigan.

Question #2

Which services provided by SLC could be reduced or eliminated in order to free up resources for other initiatives?

The SLC staff is very efficient and do an incredible amount with what they have. I would hate to see anything go away.

What is the Preview Center—could that be discontinued to shift resources to something else? SLC staff explained that Preview Center is coordinated by a volunteer. SLC provides space and the books received by the Preview Center are then distributed free of charge to member libraries. Several people said they love the Preview Center.

Pay Pal—does that take a lot of effort. SLC staff mentioned that Pay Pal is actually a UPRLC service, but SLC staff administers the Pay Pal account for UPRLC. Pay Pal payments are building in popularity. Perhaps we should market that donations can be made via Pay Pal. We don't use Pay Pal, but we know others do, we would like the option if we need it, not a good place to cut.

Is there a way that SLC can establish committees to help SLC staff research idea, help plan cooperative programs, investigate what other libraries are doing etc. to free up SLC staff and make members feel more involved in the cooperative? Maybe we can identify SLC members who have expertise in areas and they can share ideas, mentor, chair committees, etc. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. Is there a way to develop a community of practice or Best Practices with all SLC members. Can we do YouTube videos and share our knowledge.

Would like to see SLC do more marketing for entire Cooperative—how can we do this? Quarterly newsletter coming out soon. Would like to see SLC coordinate joint programming in UP and N. Lower Michigan. Make contacts with the presenters, authors, performers, etc. and help with travel costs, do publicity and develop schedules. Joe Heywood was mentioned as an author who would have a big draw for us. Can SLC write grants for author tours or provide funding for programming in our cooperative. Can we make better use of teleconferencing equipment and our fiber network to share programs and continuing education? Access Tours from the Smithsonian should be investigated. SLC members need help with all of this. C. Stacey, D. Mindykowski, E. Erickson and M. Buck would like to serve on a programming committee to explore ways we can all work together.

Libraries should share information about upcoming programs—when being booked, so others can take advantage of performers, authors, etc. who will be in area, also let people know what is happening. Could we develop a shared calendar or Google calendar to list all SLC member library programs?

Question #3

What are one or two services that SLC could offer that would be the most beneficial to your library?

Marketing and branding are both needs for SLC libraries. Do we need a person to coordinate this or can SLC staff and a committee do this. It was mentioned that marketing and branding are both being covered at the UPRLC Annual Meeting. SLC members would like more info on using social media. Could we develop a newsletter---Christensen explained this is in the works and will be coming out in early October. Advocate for libraries in their community. Let residents know what services are available and how they have access to the same things many other libraries (many larger) are offering.

A presentation on Rural Libraries by former Ishpeming Carnegie Public Library Director Cindy Mack encouraged members to use Mail Chimp, and other promotional tools, but the implementation and use of them has been harder than expected, and has not been effective. SLC libraries would like to take of Mail Chimp and other social networking tools to inform and engage patrons. Perhaps templates could be used for a variety of promotion.

Suggested a Google Calendar or Edmodo be used for collaboration.

SLC member libraries should take every opportunity to share the services of the cooperative. Speak with one voice, let people know that cooperation stretches library budgets and provides many services we wouldn't have otherwise.

Libraries have a new image due to technology. We are interconnected. We need to educate people not only about their library services, but also the cooperative. Shared services—we all contribute, and we all have access to things we could not do on our own. Cooperative membership is cost effective. Shared services a trend in government, and we have been doing it forever. Explain that Great Lakes Digital Library is a service that we all joined so we could do more. Access for all. Without the shared buying power of SLC libraries this service is too expensive and the collection would never be what it is today.

Maybe we should do a poster contest to inform people about ILL and other services. Map with push pins for libraries that have loaned or borrowed books via MelCat should be posted in each library. We need to get statistics about how many items are available in UPRLC catalog and MelCat and make people realize how everyone works hard and together to give our patrons the best. Should we have a Wiki? We all contribute to these shared services. We could never do on our own.

Read posters are popular—create for each site with local celebrities, library Board and staff. Customize them—have students design. Graphic arts students can do as part of service learning. Literacy campaign in each community. Have students or libraries design things we can all copy—don't recreate the wheel.

Shelfies are a cute idea. Use ALA and MLA promotional ideas. Put on library monitors, posters, fliers, newsletters, etc. Book Face Fridays.

Would like SLC staff to do grant writing for BIG grants that could make an impact on the Cooperative as a whole. NEH, etc. A committee could help with researching and writing grants. We have some pluses—we collaborate very well, we are cooperative and we are small, rural and in many areas have low incomes. LSTA Teen Tech grants, etc.

Would like more support for continuing education for Board and staff members. Many of the SLC members have \$0 funding for this. Can we get more stipends, scholarships, etc. Could we have staff in-services in several locations or video conference? SLC staff can present at staff in-service days. It is nice if libraries that are close by are also invited to attend. Continuing ed and staff development is so difficult for small-staff libraries. Sometimes the money and travel is not as bad as trying to get coverage at the library.

Question #4

What is your vision for SLC if it was everything that you hope it would be? (With no funding restrictions)

- Money for additional staff.
- More money for library stipends and scholarships for continuing education and professional development.
- More money for training and technology
- Technology petting zoo to use with staff members and the public. Let people get experience with a variety of devices.
- Make better use of the ITV equipment that has been placed at some of our SLC libraries. Perhaps training videos, YouTube materials or Vlogs.
- Would like an updated mobile laptop lab to use for staff and public training
- Technology training for library patrons—SLC staff come to my library on a regular basis to offer training on a variety of subjects.
- In-person training for new staff at my library. It is so hard to train staff while trying to run the library too. We could coordinate between regional sites.
- Support innovation and new ideas—help us try new things, to be cutting edge.
- Provide patrons, board members and staff a vision for the future—let them see what our library could be if we had more resources. Let them see the larger world, not just our corner of it.
- Provide a vision and unity for SLC member libraries.
- Help recruit, train and retain Trustees. A trustee manual for use by SLC trustee orientation, training and retention.
- Get more grants for the SLC as a whole and help us get local and regional grants.
- Build community support throughout the SLC region for libraries and library funding
- Develop a way to reward or give people a positive experience for using the library
- Help libraries that are not as advanced to move into the future.
- Help us transform our communities

- Find a way to strengthen our SLC libraries so they can stay open
- Help us send the message that libraries are an excellent return on investment—property values, new residents, businesses, etc. Quality of life issue—people look at library before relocating
- Develop surveys for SLC member libraries to use. Help us survey users, NON Users, decision makers, local officials, students, etc.
- Show how the \$\$ spent on libraries pays off. The chicken or the egg.
- Businesses in areas are often anxious to support kids
- Go Fund me programs for teachers, could we use in libraries, market our needs. Many teachers do this through and get donations from people who don't live in the area if the project is compelling.
- Interactive live video conferencing about what libraries do.
- Use ALA and Library Journal campaigns—Geek the Library, etc.
- Figure out a way to get former residents, who want to give back to the area, a way to support the library.
- Help us ask patrons what they want, but also to see the potential in the library and what it can do.
- Ask non-users why they don't use the library.
- Compare SLC programs to leases such as Netflix, Amazon, etc. They can use for free.
- Remember to use local social media—You know You Are From on Facebook really popular for many locales in the UP and N. MI.
- Help us keep in touch with people in our community—give us creative new ideas and things that will attract attention.
- Bring the libraries to the table when they want to collaborate, but may not have money to do so. They can't fund everything.
- Stress how libraries provide safety to people—we have a fearful society, but library is a safety net for so many.
- SLC is a miraculous institution—they need more staff
 - Technical Support and Training
 - Cataloging—small libraries, original cataloging and self-published items
 - Library promotion, education, public relations, public information, community engagement
 - On-line resources, training, etc.
- Grants might be able to help us all do more and meet additional needs

Question #5

What would make your library an even more valuable resource in the community?

- Dedicated workstation for job seekers—unemployment applications, resume preparation, applications for jobs, etc. Many of these people need one-on-one hand holding and help.
- Resources for helping people create resumes, practice for interviews, etc.
- Many need to develop additional computer skills
- Staff member to coordinate job seeker programs and assistance/training
- Send the message that volunteers can't replace paid staff—volunteers want to work on their schedule, want to take time off, aren't dependable. Also not always skilled in the ways we need.

- Hire a computer lab coordinator—to instruct, assist, maintain equipment and software
- Have access to ready-made tutorials for Overdrive, Zinio, Mango, common programs
- Develop virtual tours of each SLC library
- Technology support in my library
- More meeting space for library events and public meetings
- Better shelving---no need to have high and low shelves in use
- More space for all library activities—we are too cramped.
- Someone to help us with design of spaces—how to effectively use space and workflow
- Expand to offer things that appeal to people—Hunter Safety, Boating Safety, etc.
- Things that we don't have to bring in new users.
- Attract non-users
- More programming with high level presenters—people who have name recognition
- Have time to go outside of the library and our comfort zone to build new programs and support
- Work with new partners—farmer's market, comic book store, movie theaters to cross promote- not to take their business away, but create partnerships and introduce their customers to the library
- Have fun---do the unexpected, break the stereotypes.
- Provide meals, snacks, coffee, tea.....
- Attract summer residents and visitors—publicize what we have that they might want to use.