

Michigan Cooperative Directors Association Report for Library of Michigan Board of Trustees May 2020

MCDA Activities:

The Michigan Cooperative Directors Association continues to communicate regularly during the COVID-19 crisis. We compare questions and concerns we are receiving from our member libraries and work together to provide guidance. We have created and continue to add to a guiding document, ***Michigan Public Libraries: Re-opening Considerations after closures during the Covid-19 Pandemic***. It is available to the entire Michigan library community as we move toward re-opening and the provision of safe library service under what we know will be new conditions: <https://tinyurl.com/mcda-covid>

Detroit Library Cooperative – JoAnne Mondowney, Director

Financial Update: DPL's Finance and Business Office staff and Library Administration is currently evaluating the potential fiscal impact of revenue losses due to COVID-19 for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021. We have received preliminary information from the City of Detroit's Treasury and Budget Departments. We are also awaiting a response from Wayne County regarding an estimated impact of losses of delinquent property taxes and penal fines for Fiscal Year 2020.

Digital and Public Services: Since the March 13, 2020 closure of all Library facilities, staff continues to engage and serve the public using a variety of digital tools and resources:

- Item due dates and library card expiration dates are extended
- Additional e-books have been added to the collection and the monthly checkout limit for movies and TV shows on Hoopla is now 25
- The Ask-A-Librarian service and agency librarians continue to respond to e-mail requests that are answered using on-line resources
- DPL children's librarians are starring in their own YouTube videos, reading stories, making crafts, and conducting science experiments from their kitchens and living rooms
- Adult librarians are using their expertise to compile lists of recommended websites such as museums that are offering virtual tours or musicians who are performing live concerts online

Administrative Support Staff: During our closing staff is also providing administrative support as follows:

- Security Operations
- Building engineers monitoring the HVAC systems
- Mail pick-up from the post office
- Human Resources/payroll administration and online training and development
- Business operations, invoice processing, RFP reviews
- Information systems – monitor the server, set-up virtual meeting platform, download and transfer of desk files, upload of software for laptops
- Marketing -- web site management, newsletter support and planning
- Staff in the Executive Director's Office is maintaining communication with and facilitating virtual meetings for the Detroit Library Commission, as well as for the DPL Cabinet

Virtual On-line Staff Training: The Human Resources Department will conduct a four-week online training program for all staff entitled "Customer Service and Self-Care in a COVID-19 Environment." Topics include Lessening Anxiety, Temperature Taking Protocols to Enter the Building, Social Distancing, The Use and Care of Personal Protective Equipment and Protecting Your Own Health, etc.

Re-opening Considerations: We have been in on-going discussions pertaining to the challenges and complexities surrounding when and how to re-open and provide the best of services to the people of Detroit. Fortunately, there is a wealth of suggestions and recommendations from across the nation. The Institute for Museum and Library Services has provided funding for a study to explore how long a virus could remain on library materials.

Lakeland Library Cooperative – Carol Dawe, Director

Our 42 member libraries have offered unique services and programs during this current crisis: online registration of library cards, a variety of story-times for all ages, Mad Science Mondays, Online Book clubs via Zoom, board and staff Zoom meetings, videos and photo montages of staff and patrons, adding Hoopla, allowing Ancestry.com access from home, working on Summer Reading Programs with Beanstack, ReadSquared and Wandoo.

The libraries meet weekly as a group and are currently addressing reopening plans including quarantining materials, when to resume delivery and curbside pick-up, when to stop and restart fines of materials and group purchases of PPE.

Lakeland staff has:

- provided over 75 connections with Zoom for remote meetings in the last several weeks
- distributed approximately 20 laptops available for use by member library staff in their home
- updated due dates in the ILS multiple times.
- added holdings for RBDigital, Overdrive etc.

Our delivery department will be ready to resume services. Trucks and delivery bags and bins have been sanitized by our dedicated drivers.

The Library Network (TLN) – Jim Pletz, Director

No report

Midwestern Michigan Library Cooperative – Eric Palmer, Director

Eric was working with Lapeer District Library on their Director sSearch, but that has been postponed due to COVID-19. We are planning to restart with phone interviews in the beginning of May.

On March 13, the Mott Foundation closed their building in downtown Flint. Since the MMLC office is in the Mott Foundation Building, both Eric and Irene have been working from their respective homes. Eric has been busy staying in contact with members mostly through phone calls and emails. Eric has attended about 25 zoom/webinar meeting during the pandemic and then forwarding the information to members. These includes meetings with CDA, LM, MCLS, ALA and MLA

Eric hosted a CALL Zoom meeting and we discussed the MCDA reopening document and what it will mean for their libraries.

Eric has had several phone conversations about Boards, reopening, HR questions and more.

Due to COVID-19, Irene has had to cancel around 300 programs so far as well as canceling the Performer Showcase in August. We are working with the performers on how to do their programs virtually for this summer and do a Virtual Showcase later in the Summer.

Mid-Michigan Library League – Sheryl Mase, Director

The Up North Digital/OverDrive consortium is doing well under reorganization, with 26 MMLL libraries participating. The RBdigital unlimited collection of over 30,000 instantly downloadable eAudiobooks is available to all members of MMLL.

Both rounds of the mini-grant program have been conducted, with close to \$15,000 going to member libraries for staff support and library projects.

The Pentwater Township Library celebrated 165 years of existence as a library! The reception was held February 12th and was well attended by appreciative members of the community.

Many of our member libraries have gone or are planning to go FINE FREE.

Jane Gyulveszi, recently retired director of the Bellaire Public Library, received the Community Programming Innovator Award, which would have been given at the Loleta Fyan Small & Rural Libraries Conference.

During library closures, we have had weekly Tuesday morning check-ins with the directors via Zoom.

Northland Library Cooperative – Linda Adams, Director

Plans were in the works to bring a bus load of librarians to MLA's Advocacy Day and to send three to the National Library Legislative Day. Both were cancelled, but I have continued advocacy efforts with virtual trainings, calls and letters to area legislators, and consistently urging members to do the same.

The eRate contract supplying internet connectivity for nine NLC libraries for 2020-23 has been accepted. Four bids were evaluated.

To date: 12 of 24 libraries have submitted and been awarded grants for special projects: digital content, programs, collections, and more.

Up North Digital: This Overdrive consortium serves 20 libraries in Northland. The Cooperative is responsible for the contract and billing to the individual libraries.

Before the Stay Home Stay Safe orders, I was visiting member libraries to discuss their issues, see all the wonderful things they are doing and offering guidance. By talking to the directors, I can link them together as mentors on key issues. It is also helpful in determining continuing education needs.

Since mid-March, NLC has hosted a weekly Director Chat via Zoom. Initially, we discussed whatever the concerns were of the day. Now the meetings have more structure with topics for each session: Re-opening, Advocacy, Summer Reading, and budget issues.

I am finding that the consulting services offered by the coops is more important than ever as the individual library directors struggle with difficult decisions. Calls from directors ask for information on budgets, boards, millages, staff, and how to handle changes brought on by the Stay Home Stay Safe order. They all want to re-open as soon as it is safe. Much of my time since the outbreak has been spent going to Zoom meetings and webinars, summarizing the most important points, and sending those summaries to the directors. This saves them valuable time and offers a reliable culling of information.

Southwest Michigan Library Cooperative – Andrea Estelle

The Southwest Michigan Library Cooperative has seen an exciting uptick in member participation both before and during the COVID-19 crisis. We have had an average of 25 members at almost every meeting, including our weekly Zoom chats. This is very encouraging as participation used to be very low.

I have been working on cleaning up and/or updating:

- getting the cooperative onto SIGMA so state aid can be paid electronically
- updating our web site and logo
- opening a Facebook page for the cooperative
- developing a training plan

I visited 10 member libraries before the crisis began. It was wonderful to meet the directors, chat about the cooperative, and see the awesome facilities. There is much to be proud of in SW Michigan libraries and I am excited for our future.

Suburban Library Cooperative – Tammy Turgeon, Director

The Suburban Library Cooperative held its second strategic planning session on March 5, 2020 with member library directors. The session was facilitated by Midwest Collaborative for Library Services staff, and a final report will be issued in the Spring/Summer.

SLC continues to promote our library discount program, GoLibraryCard. The program provides discounts at participating restaurants and businesses when residents show their library cards. The website is golibrarycard.org and local businesses are being added regularly. We are also promoting Premium Discounts for venues like the Detroit professional sports teams, college and university sports teams, Detroit Opera House and more. Due to the COVID-19 situation, we are promoting businesses that are open and providing carryout/curbside services.

Since the end of March, weekly Zoom meetings have been held for member library directors to share what they are working on, answer questions from each other, and plans for reopening. Group purchases of PPE are being pursued with TLN as well as local vendors.

Superiorland Library Cooperative – Shawn Andary, Director

In the midst of all of this COVID-19 craziness, we still managed to train our new Great Lakes Talking Books reader advisor thanks to Zoom, a VPN connection, and assistance and good humor from staff at the Braille and Talking Book Library. A skeleton crew from Lansing continues to provide reading materials to patrons, and Tonia connects remotely from home and does outreach to patrons using a Tracfone. New applications are scanned and sent on to her via email.

Our ILS Administrator, Lissa Potter, has been working with many of our libraries to provide online patron registration. Patrons can input information about their residency and get a temporary barcode and pin that may be used to access their library's digital resources right away.

Like many others, we have been putting more funds into content development, and many of our libraries have contributed extra funds as well. Additionally, we have temporarily modified our authentication to all those with expired cards or fines to be allowed access to our digital collections to remove barriers to access.

For the past 6 weeks, Superiorland staff have been providing daily Zoom sessions for staff. Topics include

Overdrive/Libby, ILS training, weeding, meditation, how to use Zoom, and other topics. Additionally, our Superiorland member library staff were happy to attend MeL eResources sessions throughout the month of April. Theresa used our group to practice on as she is transitioning to offering eResources classes online.

Coping with COVID-19 Directors Chat – Our Superiorland group has a weekly “Coping with COVID-19 Chat” with library directors each Monday. It has been very helpful for all of us.

White Pine Library Cooperative – Kate Van Auken, Director

Staff is working from home. I go in one day a week as does one other employee. We are trying to go through over 30 years’ worth of files as we are preparing to move our office. I have really appreciated the Retention Schedule more than ever!

I am holding weekly meetings with my directors and have found it helps us all. Since we used to see each other every two months, seeing many of them once a week has been encouraging. They are struggling like everyone with their facility, staff, and boards. I am glad so they have figured out Zoom, so they can have meetings. Many are doing story times, a few have had performers via zoom, and they continue to hype their eResources at every turn.

I send an update/recap email every Friday to all my members with summaries of the meetings I have attended along with links for more content.

Sadly, I still have 10 libraries to visit in my Coop and I am not sure when that might happen, but I am looking forward to what the future holds!

Woodlands Library Cooperative – Kate Pohjola Andrade, Director

In early March, just before everything changed, our Children’s & Teen Services Committee assembled a day-long workshop, Youth Services 101, that drew attendees from all over the state. Our guest speakers were excellent, and reviews of the day were outstanding.

Woodlands offers Zoom licenses for our member libraries to use. Some are using it to hold virtual board meetings, while others are offering story times and programs. In March, 19 meetings held, featuring 121 participants. In April there were 44 meetings held, with 419 attendees and nearly 20,000 minutes of meetings held around the cooperative!

We infused funds into OverDrive to minimize wait times for new eBooks and eAudiobooks. Members of our active eResources Committee has been working hard to build the collection housed in the Woodlands Downloadable Library.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted yet again the need for rural broadband. We have many directors and library staff members throughout the cooperative who want and need reliable broadband access at their homes but are unable to get it due to lack of providers.

Our member directors meet via Zoom about once a month, but as cooperative director, I hear from Woodlands member directors every day, even on the weekend. There are major concerns about library board behavior and treatment of library staff during the pandemic. There is also a ton of fear and uncertainty when it comes to re-opening and staying safe.