

**MLS REFERENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**JULY 12, 2006**

**I. WELCOME**

The MLS Reference Committee met at the Metropolitan Library System on Wednesday, July 12 at 9:30 a.m.

In attendance were:

Amy Affelt, Lexecon  
Sheri Daun-Bedford, Woodridge Public  
Dawn Bussey, River Forest Public Library  
Melissa Gardner, Glenwood-Lynwood Public Library District  
R. Toby Greenwalt, Westmont Public Library  
Vicki Maxwell, Saint Isaac Jogues School  
Leslie Warren, Moraine Valley Community College Library  
Tatiana Weinstein, Lisle Public Library

Absent: Megan Heligas, Flossmoor Public Library

Also present were Cherie Calvin, MLS Executive Secretary, and David Seleb, MLS Consulting and CE Director.

**II. REVIEW OF MARCH 14, 2006 MINUTES**

There were no changes to the Minutes of the March 14, 2006 meeting.

**III. REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF COMMITTEE CHARGE**

A Charge was presented to the Committee for their review.

David Seleb asked if there were any revisions.

The Committee felt a fragment of the Charge that states "*measure and evaluate, in more productive and relevant ways, the reference services we provide*" should be modified because it would be difficult to measure reference services.

Seleb asked if the Committee could be involved in investigating or recommending ways to better measure reference services.

Sheri Daun-Bedford stated the Downers Grove Public Library conducted workshops involving shadowing and evaluating reference services and suggested similar workshops should be conducted at MLS.

Leslie Warren suggested developing a tool kit with contact names and techniques to measure reference services and make it available to libraries interested in using it.

Seleb asked if the text of the Charge that states "*work to develop and provide continuing education and training that is useful to all member library types*" should be modified.

The Committee felt the word *provide* should be eliminated.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the Charge be revised as follows:

"The members of the Metropolitan Library System Reference Advisory Committee, collaborating with colleagues throughout MLS, work to develop continuing education and training that is useful to all member library types; to investigate and recommend more productive and relevant ways of measuring the reference services that we provide; to promote standards of professional practice; and to mentor our fellow librarians. Through this work, we confirm the importance of professional librarianship and reference work; we reaffirm librarianship's core values; we adapt our work to a technologically changing environment; and we provide vital and useful services to our patrons, clients, students, and customers."

Seleb stated he would revise the Charge and send it to the Committee electronically.

#### **IV. REVIEW OF VISION STATEMENT**

Discussion of the Vision Statement was deferred to the September meeting.

Melissa Gardner stated she would send the Vision Statement to the Committee electronically.

#### **V. DISCUSSION OF STATEMENT OF STANDARDS**

Warren informed the Committee that she could not locate the recent version of standards for instruction librarians. Warren stated the RUSA Reference Guidelines are very useful for a higher education setting and she started using them in her library's reference assessment project.

Warren also stated that reference guidelines from ACRL arise from different settings, i.e., guidelines for university library services for undergraduate students does include a small section about reference although it seems to be consistent with the RUSA guidelines.

Vicki Maxwell stated she uses the RUSA guidelines in her class and they are a good basic core set of standards that also work in an academic setting. Warren stated she noticed the RUSA guidelines are divided into sections and she is using the segment entitled Professional Competencies at her library for

the professional development of librarians.

Warren stated the Guidelines for Behavioral Performance is another document that would be useful in her library setting because it deals with reference interaction and measurement of reference transactions.

Tatiana Weinstein stated she saw a lot of text overlap in the RUSA guidelines and the SLS Reference Standards and suggested they be condensed and implemented.

Gardner suggested the standards be combined.

Seleb asked the Committee how they felt about providing one standard statement for all member types.

The Committee was in agreement that one standard statement for all member types be created.

Seleb asked the Committee was it in their scope to accomplish this task together or should a subcommittee be established.

Maxwell expressed concern about how the high school and elementary school librarians would feel about not having more input.

Seleb stated he could recruit high school librarians to serve on the Committee or assist in this endeavor. There is also representation on the Committee for public, academic, special, and school libraries as well as youth services; and any statement of standards developed is just a recommendation with no binding effect.

Warren stated she perceives the standards value as the purpose of professional development. If the Committee can identify what standards they are striving for, then they can determine the community's weaknesses.

Seleb stated once the weaknesses have been identified, the Committee will know what kind of professional development or training can be provided.

Gardner suggested that a survey should accompany the standards when they are sent to reference librarians as a method of determining a library's weakness.

Seleb asked if everyone should have the URL's for the guidelines and standards.

Warren stated the RUSA guidelines can be found on the ALA website at <http://www.ala.org/rusa> and there is a link in the sidebar menu for standards and guidelines. The two documents she referenced were entitled "*Professional Competencies for Reference and User Services Librarians*" and "*Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers.*" Seleb asked if it would be feasible to have everyone review the reference standards and work on developing the statement of standards at the next meeting or should a subcommittee be developed.

The Committee was in favor of everyone working together to develop the statement of standards.

Weinstein suggested that all committee members work on creating an outline and send them to each other electronically and then discuss at the next meeting.

Seleb proposed working on an outline for Reference Standards at the current meeting.

The Committee was in favor of Seleb's proposal.

Copies of the RUSA Guidelines and SLS Reference Standards were distributed to the Committee members.

Seleb informed the Committee that he is seeking ideas for future MLS reference workshops and asked for suggestions.

The following was suggested for potential CE workshops:

1. "Roving" Model of Reference Service – Elimination of Reference Desk
2. Space Design for Reference Service Areas(Reference with Barriers--Tablet PCs)
3. Information Literature at the Reference Desk
4. Challenge of Collection Development
5. Vendor Round-up
6. Virtual Reference; Reference Communities

Seleb asked for the Committee's input regarding the Reference Standards outline.

Content for the outline is as follows:

- I. Introduction (Scope, Purpose)
- II. Institution
  - a. evaluation
  - b. access
  - c. marketing
  - d. collection
  - e. staff support
  - f. personnel
- III. Professional
  - a. currency/professional literature
  - b. continuing education
  - c. certification
  - d. sharing expertise
  - e. mentoring
  - f. professional organizations

- g. collaboration
- h. ethics
- i. promotion of profession

- IV. Service Standards
  - a. approachability
  - b. privacy
  - c. confidentiality
  - d. responsibility/follow thru
  - e. accuracy
  - f. instruction

**VI. INVITATION TO SUSAN ROMAN, DEAN OF DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY SLIS**

Dawn Bussey will contact Susan Roman regarding her availability to attend the September meeting or a separate meeting.

**VII. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 26, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.

**VIII. OTHER**

To Do's:

- Seleb will revise the Charge
- Gardner to send Vision statement to Committee electronically
- Bussey will contact Susan Roman to attend the next meeting and discuss her visionary process.
- Committee will continue working on creating standards
- The Charge, Vision Statement, and Reference Outline will be sent electronically to the Committee members.

Warren asked Seleb if his role at MLS will change or remain the same in lieu of the restructuring at MLS.

Seleb replied that he hopes his role remains the same.

Warren asked if the new consultants will be organized by type.

Seleb replied no, the consultants will be organized by services and their roles will be to develop services for all members based on the MLS Strategic Plan.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Minutes prepared by,

Cherie Calvin,  
Executive Secretary