

**MLS REFERENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2006**

I. WELCOME

The MLS Reference Advisory Committee met at the Metropolitan Library System on Tuesday, December 5, at 2:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

Amy Affelt, Lexecon
Sheri Daun-Bedford, Woodridge Public
Melissa Gardner, Glenwood-Lynwood Public Library District
R. Toby Greenwalt, Westmont Public Library
Megan Heligas, Flossmoor Public Library
Vicki Maxwell, Saint Isaac Jogues School
Gretel Stock-Kupperman, MLS
Leslie Warren, Moraine Valley Community College Library
Tatiana Weinstein, Lisle Public Library

Absent: Dawn Bussey

Also present were Cherie Calvin and David Seleb.

Seleb stated he talked with Rebecca Scott, librarian at Downers Grove North High School, about serving on the Committee as a high school representative and she was still contemplating whether or not she would be able to serve on the Committee.

Seleb stated he will follow-up with Ms. Scott after the meeting.

II. REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 26, 2006 MINUTES

One change: On Page 1, under Welcome, second sentence--Glenwood, Lynwood Library District should be deleted.

III. REVIEW OF VISION STATEMENT

The Vision Statement was presented to the Committee for their review.

David Seleb asked if there were any revisions.

A discussion ensued and it was the consensus of the Committee that the Vision Statement be revised as follows:

“MLS, a multi-type library system, supports the integrity of the library profession by supporting member libraries reference and information services through continuing education, staff development, and member library collaboration.”

DISCUSSION OF STATEMENT OF STANDARDS

Seleb asked the Committee members to discuss their designated sections of the Reference Standards.

Greenwalt summarized the Institutional standards and stated the following:

There was a lot of overlap in the following categories and sub-categories:

- staff support
- continuing education
- personnel
- certification
- collections

Greenwalt stated it would be useful to know the definitions of each standard (institutional, professional, and service)

Seleb stated he remembered the Committee discussing the difference between the responsibilities of the institutional and professional standards.

Seleb asked the Committee for the viewpoint.

Warren stated that in regards to the professional standards, she was looking at things that are independent of the institution. She was not looking at the degree or certification because that depends on the institution you are at. She refers to herself as reference librarian and feels qualified to apply for jobs with responsibilities such as CE, participating in list serves, other sorts of professional dialog, staying current to emerging technology, etc., regardless of the company she works for.

Maxwell asked if the Committee is writing standards on behalf of MLS that the libraries will use.

Seleb replied that there is no guarantee that the standards will be enforced. They will probably be used as a guide for professionals and institutions.

Warren stated that the guidelines are of value.

Stock-Kupperman stated there is a need for the standards to be part of the System.

Seleb agreed with Greenwalt that there is some overlap in the categories and sub-categories and at some point you may find yourself working for an organization that expects more or less of your than another organization or colleague and vice versa and that is why there should be both institutional and individual professional standards.

Warren stated that the standards are a type of document libraries can use when hiring staff.

Seleb asked Tatiana Weinstein to discuss her section of the standards.

Weinstein stated she used the following sources: RUSA, minimum reference standards for all types of libraries, and the ALA website. The RUSA standards do not have any information pertaining to privacy or confidentiality.

Weinstein gave an overview of her section (Service) as follows:

- inquired if information about the reference interview or interaction should be included
- listed a goal and objective
- polled and condensed a lot of the RUSA and minimum reference standards
- used the term *User* and *Patron* interchangeably
- combined the confidentiality and privacy information

Seleb asked if it is important to have a consensus regarding the usage of terms (patron or user) for a consistent format.

Daun-Bedford stated the content should be worked on first and suggested creating a glossary of terms.

Warren stated she liked the format of Weinstein's document (Title, goal, and bullet points)

Seleb agreed with Warren.

Warren distributed and gave an overview her section of the standards (Professional) as follows:

- standards were an expansion of the standards written by Amy Affelt with some additions.
- inquired about the level of authority in the use of the of verb *should* or *must*
- suggested eliminating the verb *should* or *must*

Seleb was in favor eliminating the verb *should* or *must*.

Daun-Bedford stated that in Section VI of the Institution Standards (Personnel), the requirements for a person who has the responsibility for reference service was broken down by library type.

Affelt gave an overview of her section of the standards (Professional) and stated the following:

- instead of using a guide, standards were written based on what she would have for herself
- standards were written as a guideline that someone could use to lead by example

Seleb asked what should the next steps be and proposed two options: 1) the committee review, and revise their standards and present them at the next meeting or 2) consolidate the information into a single working document.

Daun-Bedford stated their question regarding defining the types of standards needs to be addressed.

The Committee was in favor of using the format in Weinstein's document as a model for the standards (Title, goal, and bullet points relating to goal)

The types of standards were defined as follows:

Institutional

- The organization supporting or employing the professional librarian
- The organization providing reference and information services

Professional

- The individual providing reference and information services to users

Service

- Work ethic and practice
- Professional behavior
- Interaction between professional and user

Greenwalt stated the RUSA Standards listed major planning efforts and suggested creating a reference plan for all types of libraries.

Warren stated a strategic plan that addresses reference services is also important.

Seleb stated that a lot of institutions are doing strategic planning differently. Strategic plans are now short term documents that concentrate on specific actions or strategies that an organization would like to accomplish within a short period of time (1 to 3 years).

Seleb also stated that to say an institution should have provisions for reference service in a long range or strategic plan is not what we want to accomplish and suggested saying an institution should have policies or procedures established for a provision of reference service.

Seleb asked the Committee for their opinions regarding his suggestion.

The Committee was in favor of Seleb's suggestion.

Stock-Kupperman asked Seleb if the Committee was looking at the core reference list as part of this process.

The Committee was not in favor of using the core reference list to create the standards. The list should be updated and discussed at a future meeting.

Seleb suggested adding the core reference list as an agenda item for the next meeting.

The Committee was in favor of Seleb's suggestion.

Seleb informed the Committee to update their sections of the standards and forward their document to Cherie Calvin. The information will be consolidated and presented at the next meeting.

DISCUSSION OF COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE/REFERENCE EXPERT DATABASE

A document regarding Communities of Practice was distributed to the Committee.

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of individuals with a shared interest who come together to share ideas and information around that shared interest. These individuals can come together in a face-to-face format (networking meeting), an online environment (yahoo group, MLS mail lists), or a combination of both (i.e., a networking group that meets formally four times a year, but discusses ongoing issues via a yahoo group).

Stock Kupperman stated that she had spoken to several academic, special, and public librarians regarding a need for an expert in collections database.

Stock-Kupperman stated that she had the idea of creating a Wiki for this information and it could be valuable tool to evoke conversation between the different types of libraries.

Stock-Kupperman asked the Committee for their input.

The Committee provided the following suggestions:

- creating an outstanding questions area where people can post questions
- creating an RSS feed for the Wiki that could send e-mail alerts to the consultants

Gretel stated she will develop a basic structure of sample articles and send them to the Committee for discussion at the next meeting.

SYSTEM-WIDE REFERENCE MEETING

Seleb asked if the Committee should begin planning for a system-wide reference meeting for all library types and what kind of meeting would benefit the member reference librarians.

Maxwell stated we should probably discuss this issue after the reference standards have been completed.

It was the consensus of the Committee that this issue be discussed at a future meeting.

OTHER

Warren stated that Moraine Valley is planning their Information Literacy Summit and their goal is to have more public librarians involved. The event will be held at the Moraine Valley Campus on April 19, 2007. The theme will be "Working Together" and a keynote panel will be featured. Warren stated that suggestions are welcomed, they are looking someone to lead a break-out session, and volunteers are needed.

Seleb stated MLS is working on their spring and summer CE calendar and he has contacted Leslie Williams, at the Evanston Public Library, for some ideas regarding a half-day workshop.

Stock-Kupperman asked the Committee to contact her if they know of any one with expertise in science and interest in teaching a reference workshop.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 13th at 2:00 p.m.

Seleb requested that the Committee submit their updated sections of the Reference Standards via e-mail to Cherie by Tuesday, February 20th.

TO DO'S:

- Cherie will add Core Reference List as an agenda item for the March meeting.
- The Committee will submit their updated documents to Cherie by February 20th.

- Cherie will contact the Committee members to confirm the March meeting date.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Minutes prepared by,

Cherie Calvin,
Executive Secretary