

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

June Board Meeting

An unavoidable conflict has arisen with the date of the regular June Board meeting. I would like to request that the Board change the date but have no particular preference as to which date – it is only the 26th that creates a problem. Would holding the meeting on June 19th work for Board members?

Year-End Statistics

A statistical report for 2006 is included in your package. The statistics that RPL gathers for this report are considered standard for a public library. Their usefulness, however, is limited and I hope to be able to fine-tune the statistical reporting through 2007 and 2008. As I prepare information for the presentation to City Council, I will add some history and trend information to these figures and will certainly present that information to the Board as well. In comparison to last year:

- Circulation is down by just over 1%. As noted in earlier years when circulation has been up by this amount, a change in the range of 1% is not particularly significant. Once I look at the trend in recent years, I expect to see that circulation has been hovering around 2.7 million items each year.
- Client counts are down by 2%. This number reflects the approximate number of people who have come into libraries over the past year. It is consistent with the reduction in circulation but RPL does not currently gather the depth of statistics necessary to pinpoint what people do when they're in the Library so it is difficult to say with certainty what a change in this figure represents.
- Reference questions are down by 5%. A reduction in reference questions is consistent with trends across the county. It is interesting to note from a service perspective that while the total number of questions is down, the number of questions submitted electronically has more than doubled.
- TeleCirc activity is down by 10%. There is no clear reason for this decline other than, possibly, increased use of the web to access personal library accounts. The Library does not measure web accesses to this level of detail.
- Internet Activity statistics are not useful for 2006. Throughout the year, the systems unit has been working through the Branches and Central Library to change to software that is used to allow and control public access to computers.

The change has led to significant gaps in statistics gathering and the year's totals are not meaningful. I will attempt to review them to see if annualization will produce useful results for the Council report but at the moment, the figures are not reliable.

- The number of programs is up while the attendance is down. The most significant change in programming attendance is the marked decrease in attendance at DAG programs (primarily exhibition attendance). The decrease is understandable but it is also interesting to note that the number of DAG programs is down drastically. The net result is that there are significantly fewer programs but, on average, each was much better attended than in 2005.
- Interlibrary Loans have remained relatively flat. RPL is typically a net lender, that is, RPL borrows fewer items from other libraries for RPL patrons than it lends to other libraries for their patrons. The statistics indicate a relatively stable situation in comparison to last year but the gap is slowly widening and RPL's role as a net lender is becoming more pronounced.
- Active client cards are up slightly. The number of active client cards is an awkward statistical count for RPL. In many library systems, it reflects the number of current users of the library. Because RPL has a long tradition of transferable cards, this count does not give us a good sense of how many Reginans are active users. Nonetheless, as a general indicator, its consistency over time provides some information and, while the count is up in 2006, it is a modest jump and is not in the range of being significant.

North Central Co-location Project

This afternoon (Friday) I will attend a meeting of the North Central Co-location Steering Committee. The meeting times have been adjusted slightly to accommodate a news conference at 2:30. I do not know the nature of the news conference but have been told that it will be good news. I will be able to report further at the Board meeting.