NIOGA Meeting Sessions – Compilation Summary of Responses

June 2016

1. In recent years, what are some of the things that Nioga has provided or worked with your library on that went/go particularly well?

   • With re-charter Nioga has been so helpful.
   • Staff help with computers and for example, connecting to WiFi.
   • Alms
   • Staff with the cataloging help
   • Staff helps too with purchasing of licenses, discounts through Nioga. Help with installation and basic troubleshooting.
   • Eservices
   • Digital library
   • Small libraries do have a lot of the resources that do go out.
   • Nioga has helped with grants. Their advocacy with legislature (on state level, local level), etc. They are good at asking directors and trustees to advocate for the libraries.
   • State construction grant. Making sure grants that library is receiving is okay.
   • Making sure unused funds are used.
   • Interlibrary loan system is fantastic.
   • All technology that goes through Nioga system that helps larger libraries help small libraries.
   • Helpful with a new director.
   • Construction grants.
   • Computer classes.
   • Btop is big for us and our building.
   • Help to Re-charter to become a public library.
   • ILL and Tech services.
   • Btop services are nice but the five person requirement for them to even have is too hard to do.
• Help with weeding of books (cataloging or technical services) - Circulation system help from staff.
• Delivery
• Tech services. Remote help for IT is good.
• BTOP
• Delivery
• Increased use of DVDs and books
• Staff training
• ILL
• Delivery
• Trustee training & Support
• Construction Grant assistance
• Workshops are helpful and beneficial
• Sharing of knowledge by Nioga staff

2. What needs improvement?

• Administrative staff are overextended. Trying to call and get ahold of people sometimes is difficult.
• All staff are overextended.
• Legal help - When doing policies, creating, etc. it would be nice to have legal support to sit with library to develop.
• Better resource for help writing/sharing policies such as about computer use, legal, etc.
• Access to legal representative
• Better communication. Sometimes what one library hears is not exactly what has been said.
• Better reporting data for statistics and presentations to boards. I.E. pie charts. A little more sophisticated presentation of data.
• Nioga seems a little short staffed.
• Bring back a full-time children’s librarian/library, an assistant director, and add a public relations person.
- Someone to help get Nioga in the news and in a broader area.
- Children’s books are important to be seen. Harder to order children’s books because you really need to see what you are ordering, not just picking off of a list.
- Hard to get a hold of someone at Front Office at Nioga. This is because they are busy though.
- Funding for staff. More staffing. Response time is sluggish.
- Defunding proposal was difficult.
- Btop five-person requirement for us is too hard to do.
- More staff at Nioga for Btop.
- It should be that libraries are Nioga’s patrons – role of Nioga needs adjustment
- Inconsistent delivery notification – need back up plan for delivery problems
- More staff classes – especially technology training - e.g. Windows 10 and utilize lab more
- Responsiveness of Nioga staff
- Redundancy of some communications
- Staff access to ALMS Communique, Board meeting minutes and 5 year plan
- Use Announcements for communications – need to improve delivery of messages to staff at libraries such as new services, change in FAQs, updates on buying equipment, etc. Sometimes communications and messages go to Director but not to the other staff.
- Easier access to Stats, FAQs – why are stats not available online?
- More staff needed at Nioga
- More awareness of services offered by Nioga
- More trustee training.

3. **What services would be helpful to you that you don’t have access to presently?**

- None at the moment.
- Legal. Policies and procedures. Sharing and better resources.
• Sharing policies between libraries
• Legal questions – for example, can we have our election on Thursday? Not sure if this was possible.
• Marketing coordinator would be helpful for library services and programs.
• Website person too separate from marketing/public relations person. Another example – open source website for library that was maintained by programmers.
• Nice to have some sort of consolidated list of library designers, architects, etc. Doesn’t have to be just WNY. List of resources of different things library might need by category.
• Legal representation. Great to have if this were possible. It would be nice to have in the handbook what we absolutely have to do to have a legal election for the board. We just winged it but not sure if what we did was right.
• Did use the legal service Nioga pays for and was helpful with defunding proposal
• Legal services on retainer
• In general, the smaller libraries get more out of Nioga’s services
• Grant for technology trainer to assist patrons
• Not enough funding – we need more funds
• Website services – we don’t have a website

4. How do you see your needs at all libraries changing over the next five years?

• For our community not sure where we will be as traditional generation ceases to use the library. Will these teens now in five years still be coming to the library? Will we even need desktop computers?
• Improve Ebook search - user found book in system but was using Nioga’s system. User cannot tell from listing if the Ebook is truly available. Some Ebooks are not sharable but user cannot tell that from system.
• Patrons see same thing for DVDs. They would see the DVD is there however if they clicked on it for example from North Tonawanda they would not actually be able to get.
• Trying to schedule Btop is extremely difficult – tech sessions need to be easier to book.
• Have digital catalog integrated with all other resources. Hoopla, overdrive, etc. integrated with system. Need one stop shop for print copies and electronic copies.
• Confusing to patrons. Would be better for patrons to not see listings that are unavailable.
• OPACS – online public access catalog. No one uses this anymore.
• Patrons get frustrated if they don’t have several things they cannot get.
• Wish there was a way to get bulk load of lap tops. Can’t teach big classes unless trainer comes with truck and laptops.
• Minimum number of computers for loan would be 8-10. Tablets or chrome books. PC (not apple). Could pick up at Nioga or be delivered. Then classes could be taught. Not worth teaching a class using only four PCs.
• **Training** - training for new and potential staff. Hard to get staff to do training.
  o Use webinars for training. There is no training for databases, workflows, catalog use. Directors are responsible to push staff if they have asked the right questions in order to help. If Nioga was willing to do in house or hire professionals to create video tutorials or something.
  o This is how you search something, this is how you place hold on account, etc.
  o Train about what novelist is. How do you get there from the catalog? Another video how to search novelist?
  o Videos geared to staff for work flows and behind the scenes things.
  o Could also have videos geared toward patrons. How to use Hoopla, etc. Videos on Nioga’s website currently are not helpful (ex. Overdrive)
Boards would have to have policy when advertising for position that training must be a part of this.

- If directors had some kind of introduction for new directors or people coming in to learn about the system.
- Explaining how Nioga works to new directors or librarians.
- Videos on Nioga’s website are not helpful (ex. Overdrive)
- Addition of Hoopla was a wonderful thing because you can use on any device and it is a simple log in procedure that actually works. You can choose audio books, music, tv or movies, etc. One place to go for all of these. Ease of use.
- More collaboration for resources. For example, summer reading program share resources.
- Librarians could benefit from essentially an inter library loan of equipment. Projectors, electronics, musical instruments, Wii, etc.
- Feel ALMS fee is relatively low considering what services they receive.
- Lockport community room is not big enough. Niagara county room is not big enough.
- Good idea would be to come up with inventory of what can be borrowed or used.
- Putting things on Facebook. Helped have better turn out.
- Sharing ideas more between libraries.
- Some larger libraries feel they are carrying load for smaller libraries.
- Would like libraries to be “warmer”. Back entrance has no signs where to go. No one is there to greet you. We also need a better teen area.
- Approach Tim Horton’s and make a public meeting room that you could get in building. More people are going to library to sit, eat, drink, etc. We need to do that. We need to be more responsive to how general public thinks.
- Need more spaces. Performance area for community groups.
- Young adult at Nioga who would hone in on attracting young adults and a young adult section/try to attract this age group.
- Marketing coordinator would also help.
• Hopefully they will still need books. How they get those books might be different.
• No teens at library. Need to get more of this group. If I had room I would have the chairs with charging stations on them.
• Help with social media.
• Continue to provide high speed internet access to patrons and people. Train someone to update the website would help the librarian. Training for website updates.
• Need at Nioga for children’s library. Market to kids to continue to grow interest.
• Improved access to materials – catalog
• Integration of websites – not all libraries have websites -why?
• “Search” should go to the catalog - needs to be improved
• Cumbersome, clunky search system at present should be a better system
• More Btop personnel
• Need more Btop – not available at the larger libraries have it all booked up
• Not enough time with Btop trainer
• Need to provide more technology training for older people
• Need more teen programs

5. What services do you think will see increased use by patrons?

• online services and resources – need how to tutorials or videos.
• DVDs are hot still. Expand as much as possible.
• Print is not dead. We need to invest in titles that are popular or trendy or NY Times bestsellers versus some of the older ones they have currently. Focus on more popular titles. Spend the money and get the new titles.
• Step up promotion in order to attract people to electronic titles.
• Hoopla
• Netflix
• In the future we will have to provide tablets, iPads, lap tops, etc. Need to provide more than just the desktops and WiFi space.
• Increased sharing/collaborative use between libraries so collections can be smaller, but sharing would be increased.
• WiFi - We need better connections because more people are using Netflix, streaming, etc.
• Also think people are going back to books. I think we will need to put more money back into books/print.
• Continuing Education - What about making library place for older generation or people who do not have high speed internet.
• Buying technology and having it at library and then showing people how to use it.
• Tech time. Hard to have staff to be able to have this.
• Access to online classes might be nice. For example, where Nioga buys it in bulk.
• Done via Nioga with Btop. Limited due to money.
• Lockport library does have some classes on this. If this one done on routine, rotating basis this would have a better turnout.
• Need more spaces. Performance area for community groups.
• Young adult at Nioga who would hone in on attracting young adults and a young adult section/try to attract this age group.
• Marketing coordinator would also help.
• Teens - need to get more of this group.
• Help with social media.
• Continue to provide high speed internet access to patrons and people.
• Train someone to update the website would help the librarian.
• Need at Nioga - children’s library. Market to kids to continue to grow interest.
• Training for digital services
• Education about technology

6. What services do you think will decline in use?
• ILL (Interlibrary Loan) from outside the system. Only have done one in 13 months.
• Didn’t even know that many of these services existed until survey
• If there is no updated movies or books on HOOPLA no one will want to use it then.
• Central services - what do they really do?
• Job search not used much.
• eBooks seem to have levelled off.
• Reference materials that are hard copy.
• Online databases.
• Consumer reports.
• Electronic services that never get looked at.
• Less DVDs, CDs. More people are using Netflicks, streaming, etc. People who are considered below standard salary don’t have a phone you can get Hoopla on.
• Collections might look smaller. Keep them from being passé.
• Role of Central library services in Niagara Falls – they are irrelevant to us

7. What do you think would grow circulation and patron visits most effectively?
• Have café in library. Mornings and after school a little bit.
• Needs to do special events in the summer otherwise she doesn’t turn a profit. Attendance would drive circulation.
• More registered borrowers.
• New DVDs will always be popular.
• More people.
• DVDs are still big. Blu rays and DVDs.

7b. In reference to your libraries, finish these statements about the future:

I want the technological services to be
• more accessible
• better, faster
• bigger, stronger
• Integrated
• Create little quiet areas - separate area from kids, and a coffee area.
• cutting edge
• up to date
• easier to find
• I want the technological services to be integrated
• I want equitable sharing of Justin

Concerning electronic services, my patrons

• Are still learning.

The amount of digital content available is

• could be improved
• not enough

8. What do you think would grow circulation and patron visits most effectively?

Cleaning out collections

• Librarians need to weed out titles from 60s. Don’t have ten books on herbal remedies, you have one newer one, electronic and then ILL.
• Maggie does support but you have to bring it to her to get help.
• Mobile Circ.
• A different version of workflows that you can pull lists from. Run lists of what hasn’t circulated in ten years and pull from that list.
• Needs to look more like a bookstore - look good in order to attract patrons.
• Get kids to come to story hour.
• Civil service is outdated. Times are changing and communities are different.
• Our library doesn’t have a budget to replace tons of books.
• Nonfiction section on display is outdated and not appropriate to have on shelf. This is bad visual. Need assistance making collection attractive to patrons.
• There are resources to help to weed out but not many people know about it.
• List of weeded out needs to go back further and clear out old titles that aren’t going out.
• More programs about entertainment and education
• Be more user friendly
• Better availability of resources
• Areas could be made user friendly to a new user/new patron. Patrons are overwhelmed sometimes with book selection.
• Used to have money in funds that made us money on interest. Used to have full time business manager.
• Don’t get nearly as much from state/state legislature as schools do for funding.

9. What service do patrons ask about or comment that would like or need?

• ILL or DVDs
• Immediacy. They want a tech program at their immediate demand.
• Have to wait too long for new materials.
• Better catalog
• Upset that Freegal is gone
• Complaints about delivery – efficiency and delays – poor communication when problems or when there is a delay
• Online services like Hoopla
• More E-services
• More children’s programs
10. I am going to read some random comments from the survey responses.
Please respond:

- Create some standard items for all to use - Nioga put them on their server and libraries could pull stock, templates, use server space to share between libraries.
- Have central place that librarians could go to see what Nioga has – items for programs like Nioga used to have.
- Updating the accessibility of templates, flyers, etc. for newsletters.
- Centralized database or template. Advantage to smaller libraries especially.
- Monthly newsletters/flyers would have been helpful to have a service to share this resource.

11. Suppose that you were in charge and could make one change that would make the library system or Nioga’s services they provide better. What would you do?

- Picture central library and each library is branches. Fines would be same, collection is equally loaned out, uniformity.
- Sometimes feel at Nioga we are not heard or meet big people.
- Truly open lending of all materials.
- Working together so that we could grow.
- Having a view into the Nioga library system.
- A better communication of directors with Nioga people.
- Director training of trustees via webinar?
- Someone to use Social media for all libraries in system – Facebook ads, Instagram, target audiences, etc. target zip codes, ages, etc.
- More trustee training. Some trustees don’t know what should be expected of them. There are new roles now and they don’t even know the rules. (must attend meetings, etc.) This would be an advantage to the whole Nioga system.
- Webinars training made mandatory for trustees.
• Back up/replacement/second driver for other things like vacation, sickness, etc.
• More public relations on what Nioga and the Nioga libraries offer in general (from Nioga).
• Use some central library funds to hire another delivery driver. Currently get two deliveries a week.
• Webinar on new trustee handbook was great. Webinar was a good format so maybe this could be mandatory.
• Help some libraries get their own websites
• Help libraries grow, not help Nioga grow. Nioga should be supporting libraries, not growing itself – focus on libraries not Nioga
• Different system for ILS – with innovative interfaces
• Help with the large vs. small library issue
• Better communication – like with Checkout Challenge. The program’s Social Media package was not shared with the libraries in timely way. Why?
• Nioga is confusing people – people are beginning to think Nioga is a library. For example, why do a Facebook page for Nioga? No, Nioga should be helping the libraries with their Facebook pages.
• Help us by providing materials for Social Media that we can use, not promote Nioga. Help us promote each of our libraries
• More staff at Nioga. They are stretched too thin.
• Increased accessibility to staff at Nioga
• Need policy and advice for trustees – trustees often need clarification for questions about the library
• Provide technology workshops for staff – technology is an issue with our low-paid, part-time help

12. How do most people learn about any of the services that are available at your library?

• Flyers at the circulation desk are the best. Give to the school to give out.
• Each member library transmits information differently. Nioga needs to distribute information to each individual library/board and then that library can communicate to their patrons.
• Nioga --- Boards --- Patrons (Chain of communication)
• Communication needs to be better.

13. How could that process of sharing information about these services or how to use some of these services be improved?

• Trustees - Top things trustees should know are policies and long range plan.
  o Global view of how library operates and what the focus there is.
  o Trustees are living in old world and do not understand how things really operate.
  o Board must all be aware and on the same page. So much trustees are unaware of what goes on. Ex. Bookkeeping, finances, marketing, policies, procedures, etc.
• Programming – just don’t have people for adult programming because we don’t have people to come out for it. Not worth it. They come to check out books, DVDs, etc.
  o Could we partner with Cornell Co-op or other groups doing programming
  o Online programming. Example – where you check in, collaborative online program.
• NILA conference – need more to attend
• Improve relations between big libraries and small libraries.
• Connect with schools, churches and community leaders
• Newsletter - Template for Nioga newsletter with each library section. Would be nice to have template or resource through Nioga to get out.