Ohio County Law Libraries January 2010
Survey Comments

Has your library closed (gone out of business)?  4 comments
1. To quote a retired local Judge on that option, "when hell freezes over!"
2. Association is gone, but now the [county name] County Law Library Resources Board
3. if you mean the private association yes. But we will function under the new laws.
4. However, we will be barely keeping our "heads above water" due to a 40% decrease in statutory revenue and the additional expense of paying my salary which was previously paid out of the county's general fund.

Has your library merged with another library? If so, which one?  0 comments

Do you expect your private law library association to be in operation after the end of 2010?  13 comments
1. It will continue as a Bar Assoc. committee.
2. I believe the future of the Association will be determined sometime in 2010.
3. My Board is planning a rules committee meeting and a membership meeting, because one is required to change the bylaws. I have no idea what they are planning to do after that. Frankly, they don't know what they are planning to do after that.
4. We have private funds (i.e. a private checking account and C.D.) Trustees opted to retain private funds, transferred public funds to new board, however, will still retain the old Board as well.
5. Not a definite decision but seems to be where they're leaning.
6. Yes, especially as they have private "association" funds to keep and administer.
7. The private Bar Association is still in existence, but does not operate the Law Library.
8. I think it will still exist and continue to collect dues as an emergency fund since we are not getting much statutory revenue. At least, that is what I would recommend to the private association board.
9. Yes, changing to a 501(c)(3). Will continue to do CLE seminars.
11. I don't know. I don't think they do, either.
12. I'm not sure
13. it's possible that they will continue but there's already talk that it will dissolve.

Have you experienced staffing changes in the past few months?  13 comments
1. As Law Librarian I worked part time in 2009 and have been asked to work full time in 2010.
2. I had a part time person resign after the last LLRB meeting. Since they only voted to retain the employees, not the positions, I have to wait until January 14 to get approval for them to hire someone else. I'm sure they will do so.
3. A slight increase in the hours of one of the two assistant librarians.
4. [County name]County started making staff changes after the passage of HB 66. At the beginning of 2006, we had one librarian plus 3 full-time & 2 part-time support staff. Now we have one librarian plus 2 full time support staff. We made these changes because we expected to get nothing from the general fund.
5. We will probably not be hiring any high school students to help with supplements in the summer.
6. Prior to Sept 2009 there was no law librarian. I was hired part-time (20 hrs/wk) to meet the needs of the new law
7. There are only two of us on staff.
8. We closed our little used branch library effective 1/1/2010 resulting in the termination of one part-time employee. The decision to close was long overdue; the Library Ass'n simply didn't have the will to not stop wasting almost $50K/yr.
9. Ther's only me.
10. Just title changes
11. replaced law librarian
12. We were both made parttime to accomodate the health insurance requirements. Neither of us gets the county's insurance.
13. I was lead to believe that staffing would remain as it had been. On Dec 28th I was told the part time position was eliminated and I was hired only as an interim director as they needed to post the position to satisfy civil service requirements even though the position is unclassified and to my knowledge no other library has posted their positions

Is your 2010 total library budget higher, lower, or unchanged from 2009? 14 comments
1. Due to income, not spending constraints.
2. But only because we transferred 100,000. of retained funds to the clrrb fund.
3. We do not know yet if we will be receiving money from the general fund. That will significantly affect our budget.
4. I increased it slightly to compensate for increase in book prices just to be on the safe side and plann to eliminate some publications in 2010 with the hopes of spending the same or a little less
5. It is approximately 17% higher than 2009's budget
6. Not sure where they (the Commissioner's) got the numbers!!
7. materials budget is lower as librarian's salary is now part of the clrrb budget.
8. Significantly lower. Our statutory funding in 2008 and 2009 was down a total of 30% from 2006 and 2007.
9. We have seen a decrease in fine money payovers plus our muni court still owes for November and December of 2009. We had to tap into our cancelled CD's to pay bills out of the CLLRB fund for January. We have not cancelled any additional publications since the beginning of 2009.
10. As in the past, funding is only provided by fine receipts. We experienced a 6% decline in 2009 and am budgeting for a 2% decline for 2010 but only for forecasting purposes. In other words, 2010's budget is for all practical purposes unchanged.
11. This is the first year I've ever had to do a budget. Previously I just spent what I had & sometimes had to use money from private funds. (This year I had to ask for $16,000.00 from private monies to tide us over).
12. I'm not sure on this either
13. This is an iffy statement. we were never given the money due us from the [county abbreviation] CMC funds which were sent to the county and never made it to our system. Oh auditor's here now.
14. The board took the last five years and averaged the budget amount. I personally believe they estimated to high as revenues were down for last year.

Answer this question only if applicable: If your 2010 budget is lower than 2009, which answer(s) describe your experience? Check all that apply. 16 comments
1. have to pay for all elected officials' legal resources now and commissioners and auditor did not give us all we asked for in our budget
2. And we know we won't recieve the interest on the funds.
3. Not counting the retained funds transfer, we have no general fund salary support. This is a 9% decrease assuming revenues come in as estimated.
4. We raised dues and many former members are not paying the new fee. It is unkown at this time if they will continue to hold off, or if they are not paying because there used to be a built in grace period for dues.
5. We are not paying rent as long as we purchase all county agency legal materials.
6. Before the Library hired 2 independent contractors. The new Board has elected to retain the 2 independent contractors, but with the change that the independent contractors are now employees of the [county name] Co. Law Library Resources Board, under PERS, etc.
7. The new board is changing library services. Even though we will now be paying for all county legal publications, they are budgeting less than what we have spent in the past because we have been able to return funds in Jan.
8. Unknown
9. We will be paying a portion of salary and benefits
10. Our county has not charged us rent for 2010 so far, but only because they have not made the repairs to the library from damage as a result of a fire in May 2009. Once the facility is repaired and we are back in the space, we will be charged rent.
11. Currently, I have a budget request in to the general fund for my hourly wage. If the commissioners deny that request, we may find our library resources being cut in order to fund my compensation.
12. We have just gotten notice of a meeting regarding Worker’s Comp and Special Fund accounts. Appears they are going to try to make this a fee of ours, not the county.

13. I guess-timated on the low side for a budget because I expect the LL income to still be lower than normal.

14. Until the recent OAG regarding rent, we would have checked all but “other”.

15. All county offices were decreased.

16. Because we have to pay all compensation parts.

**Answer this question only if applicable: If your 2010 budget has decreased, to which areas of your budget have you made reductions? Check all that apply. 6 comments**

1. the board increased my hours to 40 per week and decreased my salary over 30%, then county notified me i have until the weather breaks to reduce my space by 3/4!

2. to cut part time employee hours & no pay raises for 2010

3. We will continue to reduce print regardless of the budget situation.

4. If we do end up making cuts, it will be to our print library.

5. Because of my salary being shifted to be paid out of the fine money received, we had to cancel all our print subscriptions and downgrade our Westlaw plan. We are, for now, just a legal research computer and a law librarian. My board had to decide between me or the books - not a good conflict for anyone concerned. Hopefully, our fine money will start to increase and we may be able to update a few print subscriptions. In the meantime, I appreciate the helpfulness of my fellow county law librarians to send me any information that we may need as we travel down this rough road.

6. I have made some cuts in print materials already & will make more if necessary.

**Is your library paying for legal information materials for other county offices out of the county law library resources fund? (In other words, are you paying for county offices’ materials out of the library’s statutory funds?) 21 comments**

1. We will pay for most, but not all print materials, and we are negotiating what online services the CLLRB will cover.

2. At present, no, but it is anticipated that this will occur in the future.

3. All the courts & prosecutor's

4. No, we are not paying for their legal resource needs, but we are ordering materials for them at a discount and handling everything through our library.

5. Very nominal, no increase because of the change thus far.

6. We have always done this for a few courts and agencies and have not made changes in this area though we may do so in the future.

7. At this time we pay for only the Judges and Magistrates. And a westlaw password for the Clerk of Courts, Commissioners office one each

8. So far the Library has not received any requests for outside offices.

9. not yet, but I expect we will be doing this

10. We are currently $67,000 short in our budget

11. We have always paid for the online services for the county judges

12. Right now we are paying for Westlaw for all the courts and at 4 other county offices.

13. We have always paid for the judges’ Westlaw access. We do not purchase materials for any other county office so far.

14. We don’t provide any print materials, but we do provide ten passwords to Westlaw to the judges, magistrates and prosecutor of our county.

15. Always have. Other offices that we have not paid for in past, we are still not paying for unless a benefit for all.

16. Our LL currently pays for all of the Courts’ legal materials & will continue to do so until we can’t afford to anymore. As far as other offices go, we’re not paying for anything extra until we see how the money goes this year.

17. We have purchased materials for our judges for years.

18. We supply online services to the Common Pleas Courts, County Prosecutor and Public Defender.

19. We pay for the three judges’ books for their offices.

20. We have not been approached as yet because I did not tell other offices and I know the Commissioners didn’t.
21. We do not have enough money to purchase for other offices

**If you answered yes to the previous question about paying for county offices’ materials, which answer best describes the reason for that?** 20 comments

1. Some of both.
2. Right now I pay for leg. info. svcs. for some Courts and have sent around a checklist to see what is needed. 5 of the 30 offices responded. I will be visiting each office and trying to pinpoint which of our resources can help that office.
3. Have always done so.
4. I was able to work out a discount arrangement with the publishers for the county offices. Our own budget is too small to be able to handle their needs.
5. This is not new.
6. see above comment
7. Have been asked to pay for materials and the board approved it.
8. The new resource board is staying with what the association has done at least for 2010 depending on funds what will happen in 2011.
9. We are continuing to pay for books used by the Common Pleas and Municipal Court judges.
10. It is that or pay rent.
11. Until the amount of our resources require a change in this we did not see a need to change yet.
12. We denied requests for book purchases since we are giving them free westlaw which is by far our most expensive bill.
13. The passwords are included in our plan. I don't know how much cheaper it would be without them, but it is definitely less expensive than each county official buying their own plan.
14. The Law Library Resources Board is approving requests, all of which, to-date, have received my recommendation to do so.
15. We have always done so.
16. We have historically paid for other offices.
17. The municipal judges are now requesting/demanding that we pay for at least their ORC print.
18. The LLRB elected to continue to pay for these publications for the judges.
19. Decision to pay made by County Law Library Resources Board.
20. The library is paying for offsite requests, but will bill any county office in the courthouse that wants to keep their books at their site. For this year we are only paying for the Jail and muni court. Everyone else is on their own.

**Is your library open to the public in 2010?** 14 comments

1. Not all the time and they must give us their id info to use facility
2. Unknown yet
3. Limited days and hours. We will recomm they call first because of the small staffing and to make sure we are open that day.
4. Open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00p to 3:00p
5. By appointment only.
6. The public may come in and view print titles, but they are not allowed to check books out nor access on-line resources. We will not offer research assistance to the public.
7. Open to the public only when the Law Librarian is in the library.
8. Limited to specific requests for access to research, but no physical location is open.
9. Three house a week.
10. The public can walk in and use the books during regular business hours. Only those paying the annual service fee may use the computers, and has remote access to databases, document delivery services and reference services.
11. It is open only during the part-time hours that I am here.
12. Always has been.
13. We don't advertise that we are open. If someone comes in when I am in the library, I allow them to use the reference materials.
14. Always has been. We post what hours we are open for public.
If your library is open to the public, is that a change from 2009? (Only answer this question if your library IS open to the public, please.) 2 comments
1. It’s not a change from 2009. I will still have discretion to set hours the public can come in.
2. We now have set hours for public use whereas in the past, the public could use it but they had to ask
   the individual we paid to keep the publications updated.

As compared to 2009, is your library now open...? 5 comments
1. My library was always open to members of the Bar Association. However, I am now here full time so
   help is available more hours per week.
2. By appointment only.
3. Since we are located in the rear of the Common Pleas Courtroom, the library hours are the same as
   the Court.
5. Our county is in a financial crunch. All budgets were cut to the bones. Furlough days and staff
   reductions have led to the courthouse and other offices closing at noon on Fridays.

What library services fees are you charging? You can check multiple boxes if applicable. Please
do not list all the details of your fees; we're just looking for a general idea. 10 comments
1. Currently we are not charging fees, however, that is something to be reviewed.
2. The only fee we charge is the $20.00 annual membership fee. Only attorneys living or working in
   [county name] County are eligible for membership. Only members may check our books. All other
   services are free to anyone who comes into the law library.
3. 15 cent per page printer/copier charged only to public users.
4. We do plan on initiating this in the future, when necessary to continue ops.
5. We will only be charging out-of-town attorneys for their use of the copier.
6. Qualification to the above response. The Board has extend as library privileges, law library
   association membership benefits to 3/31/2010 to members in good standing without a privileges fee.
   Memberships were set to expire 12/31/09. The Board is reviewing an annual fee-based practitioners' library privileges program for enhanced services before the end of March.
7. We charge only for copies made.
8. We charge a fee for 24 hours access to the library to members of the bar.
9. We're drawing up a workable solution to this. So far we do not have that many of the public. when we
   do though they are very time consuming and demanding.
10. board decided to wait and see if fees are needed

Generally speaking, are you satisfied with your county administration's efforts to aid you in the transition (in other words, to support you and orient you to the county's ways of conducting business)? 14 comments
1. If you can not say anything nice, you should say nothing at all.
2. So far they have pretty much left me alone but have helped put me on county computer and will soon
   teach me MUNIS but have already told me they cannot comply with the statutory requirement for
   issuing payment- 10 days minimum IF the County signs off on the payout promptly.
3. so far they have been helpful.
4. The present county official are actually working well with the board
5. I feel that I have been VERY lucky with all the assistance I have received from my county
   administration (especially after reading some of the horror stories on list.) The commission
   Clerk/Administrator is on the new Board (along with one of the three county commissioners) and she
   has been extremely helpful. I feel very lucky with ALL the assistance I've received from everyone on
   the Board, the Clerk/Administrator and the deputy from our Auditor's Office.
6. As of today, the last meeting I was told nothing is going to change....We will see at the next meeting
   on January 14th!!
7. Yes, though we were a little late getting started with this and are therefore off the implementation
   schedule I had planned.
8. It's all about money. What can be cut. What is the smallest space we can fit this into outside of the
   courtroom.
10. For now, but then we did not ask for any money from the general fund. That will be the real test.
11. Our county auditor told me one thing in April and then another in December concerning setting up the CLLRB fund. I've found little consistency in asking the same question to different people. Finally, I figured this payin and voucher/PO thing out by pooling the answers!
12. The Auditor's staff have been very patient with me.
13. I can't be more pleased! They have been fantastic.
14. You can only imagine what games I like.

**In your opinion, generally speaking, is your library better or worse off than a year ago?**

17 comments
1. i will be forced to house collection in one small room without room for attorney conferencing or researching space. i expect to run out of funds.
2. Who knows what the County will do next- they are terribly short of money; also, our Board has met 3 times so far and only had enough attendance to transact business the first meeting. The pros.' nominee and the Cty. administrator have been absent the most. Also the attys' nominee.
3. Too early to tell.
4. I don't know yet. This year will tell.
5. taking salarries out of the statutory funds now will decrease our funds for materials which will be cut to compensate and statutory funds have decreased every year so of course its worse.
6. I think business risks continue to be much the same as they have been for the last several years (i.e., since the introduction of HB66). I think the political risks county law libraries face continue to be severe, both in terms of relationships within their individual counties and from external agents.
7. The new Board has made the transition as smooth as possible and have stated that they would like to see the Library continue on as it had in the past, with as few changes as possible.
8. By becoming a county agency, the law library is now subject to the many rules, regulations, and red tape common to all governmental agencies. Goods and services that I could order either on my own or with simple Board approval now has to be subject to scrutiny & approval by the prosecutor, auditor, and/or the commissioners. While such scrutiny & approval is currently benign, the library has lost its independence.
9. The new Board has a totally different vision and understanding of the library.
10. We are now at the mercy of the Commissioners for future budgeting.
11. Private funds are no longer available to supplement the fine monies.
12. Less dollars to spend on materials after salaries are paid. Less statutory funding and no investment income anymore.
13. 2009 was a great year. I was once again a county employee being paid out of the general fund. I was also able to pay bills in a timely manner instead of relying upon the commissioners to approve them. Now it is wait and see how this all comes down.
14. $250K in additional expenses but there are plenty of ways and means to save collection costs since many library print titles haven't been touched by human hands (expect for staffers filing). Instead of behaving like a bar association library funded 100% with public monies, we are helping county offices, county and muni courts, and muni law departments by saving them money using public funds while re-creating a more practitioner-oriented collection of print and online services in-house.
15. We do feel slightly more secure in expecting to continue to exist.
16. We have cut back on some subscription costs.
17. Since the State Auditor came in things are doing somewhat better. Only time will tell.

**Do you have any outstanding issues or concerns related to the transition in governance?**

36 comments
1. yes
2. Don't get me started!
3. no
4. Right now we are ok. So far, so good. Thank you for asking. Anxious to hear about others. How can I get these people to attend and do business?
5. Tons-almost nothing is done due to delays in the creation of the CLLRB.
6. They took what was working great in our county & broke it. I don't like the ritual I need to do to deposit monies and pay bills.
7. None at present
8. Will see.
9. Only regarding what if any money we will get from the general fund. Without this we will be in trouble.
10. No
11. No
12. Still too soon to tell exactly what problems we are going to face.
13. Commissioners refused to allocate any funds for librarian's compensation or for purchase of books and online legal research for other county departments, so we are using carry-over surplus temporarily while we try to renegotiate for some funding from county general fund.
14. I don't know why the fixed something that wasn't broken !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
15. My staff has been forced to work an hour per day longer with no pay increase. This is what most county agencies do, but it is allowable statutorily for us to work the same number of hours as before. My Board is under the impression that if we act like all the other county agencies, the county may decide to put money back into the library. I have talked to the county and they have basically said, when Hell freezes over. We have lost a lot with this transition.
16. Our first meeting of the new year is Jan 14. We are still working on policies and procedures, which is being drafted and presented at the next meeting. Hopefully, most everything is finished.
17. Nobody knows what is going on. Everything I tried to discuss for the last six months is still not resolved. Now, I'm just winging it.
18. Sure. The most pressing is the integration of the library into the fabric of the county's administrative processes. As noted before, while everyone is helpful and friendly the library is not anyone's top priority and the integration process is taking to long to suit me. Perceived inefficiencies may cause county decision makers to withdraw or modify their support of the library.
19. The only concern is will the new Board continue to pay for online research services for the Law Library? The old Bd. of Trustees did prepay one year subscription for our online research, however, we are not sure if this will be the case in 2011.
20. Trying to get the book companies to consolidate all county accounts into one account. Getting the elected officials/staff members to run their purchase requests through the Library BEFORE they purchase and then send us the bill.
21. Uncertain as to whether or not a judge or an employee of a court is considered a member of a county office ... I suspect not, but would like a clear written definition about that.
22. Are we or are we not paying rent? When is this issue going to be cleared up?
23. no
24. Handling the additional work load
25. Not currently.
27. Just the part about the salary. If the law says we are to have CLLRBs staffed by a law librarian, then they should have made sure that there was a way to pay that librarian and not to the detriment of the library, itself. I also feel bad for the law libraries that have to pay rent because this is also a great impairment to the future operation of county law libraries.
28. Not at this time
29. Just in trying to get everything done that I'm supposed to be doing while learning to do all the extra paperwork that county government requires.
30. No. We have great support in our county.
31. Not yet, but I expect some will arise.
32. No
33. Our library has had perfect state audits for the last twenty years. We knew what was permitted and followed procedures accordingly. Change is never easy but from comments on the C-list and my own experience, it seems that there is no consistancy on how matters are handled. It seems to depend more on how each county's commissioners and auditor operate. The fact that we will be sending two percent of our money to the state in 2011 will decrease what little money we have and adds to the problem of maintaining the level of service that we would like to provide. I'm concerned that the commissioners will not give up until the statutes are changed so they will be able to get to our funds one way or another. How we ended up with appointments to the clrb made by the very people that were not permitted to be members of a law library board (due to conflict of interest) is beyond me. It is clear that everyone on the board has an underlying agenda based on who appointed them.
34. NO
35. No.
36. The sheer size of the CLLRB and the open meetings requirements hamper getting the job done. We cannot be as flexible as before when 3 of the 5 trustees could make a decision in a meeting that required no advance notice to the public.