**Library Volunteer Leaders - Notes**

**9/8/21 1:30 EST**

**Host: Wendy Johnson, Indianapolis Public Library**

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Hello, Friends –

This week we caught up on some of the miscellaneous unanswered questions that have been floating through my email and our conversations. We may have circled around on a few of these topics, but we always hear something to ponder for our library. “Thank you!” everyone for sharing their perspectives.

Please, take care!

Wendy J

Meetings will be held every Wednesday at 1:30 EST for an hour until further notice. We’ll use the same Zoom link each week. Please share the link with fellow library volunteer leaders…**the more smart people the better**.

Zoom:  [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85199850785?pwd=WHorb3h2ckgvZjhZT1BOVWxEMzhlZz09](about:blank)

Meeting ID: 851 9985 0785

Access Code: Volunteer

**Topics Discussed**

**Volunteers who are paid by an outside organization…Are they really volunteers?**

* If the library didn’t pay them and they are giving their time to the library, then “yes” they are volunteers.
* Examples: Teen programs to develop positive job habits, Area on Aging for older adults (worked in café as baristas), a company places injured oil field workers/airplane mechanics for light duty, Easter Seals job coach teams
* Screen the same (including background checks), we have final approval for placement, we can sign-off on the participant’s timesheet
* We treat them the same as a volunteer for application and screening, including background checks. Anybody not paid by the district (including interns and work-study) are considered a volunteer here.
* With the schools we partner with, we do not run BC on staff coming from the schools. The schools do a far more thorough BC than we would.

**Orientation Events…invite anyone interested in volunteering to learn about opportunities, on-boarding process, meet staff, etc.**

* We made a distinction between orientation and information sessions. Where orientation is used to prepare a volunteer for their role within the library. The information session is a good way to weed out those not interested.
* One-on-one, in person, with their respective staff member, masks required.
* Pre-covid – group orientation 2x/month one in the daytime, other in evening done after all of the screening has been completed. Post-covid, 50% of orientation will go online (Niche’ Academy) with different voices providing information and a knowledge quiz. The remaining 50% will be a branch tour, with real-life examples of the information delivered online to reinforce important topics.
* Taking orientation online via Niche’ Academy or another platform (Better Impact) is trending. We're using Niche for our covid safety training, new volunteer orientation (and welcome back to volunteering), and I used it just as a place to put a video for Summer Reading volunteers
* We also use Niche for training but switched to having the training links available on Better Impact since most of our volunteers are already familiar with the platform.
* To boost recruitment attend college service fairs, community volunteer fairs (or host one with other nonprofits!), visit neighborhood community centers
* I tried doing something like that, but our community is pretty small so it didn't make sense. I went back to doing it one-on-one with the interview being something of an orientation. However, the animal shelter I worked out prior to my library life hosted volunteer interest meetings twice a month because there were so many folks interested in volunteering.
* Several years ago we did a volunteer information meeting (VIM) 2x/month but it was soooooo labor intensive and only ended up having about 50% of people end up pursuing a volunteer position, typically because we didn't have enough openings. We shifted a couple years ago because we felt we were wasting volunteers' time with that model.
* Kristen Loblaw does information sessions. She has 3 or 4 specific programs for volunteers and she told me that it weeds out those who aren't really interested--they don't get the application link until after they attend the info session. I think she has been doing it virtually. (Thanks Karen)
* Consider travel/parking for potential volunteers to attend an information session in person. (single-branch vs. multi-branch might make a difference)
* We consider it an equity issue here, too. It's too difficult for many people to physically get to a library when they need to take multiple busses to get to a library that's not where they would be volunteering just to attend an orientation session for the benefit of staff.

**Background checks for volunteers….what do you check, what tool do you use**

* Check with your state/local regulations for what is required
* Oklahoma checks: Conduct a Background Check prior to volunteering and repeated as needed based on role. As with MLS Employees and paid presenters, volunteer background checks will include: Multi-county criminal search for Oklahoma, Broadscreen verify which searches multi-state criminal, national sex offender, OFAC and government watch lists, and Social Security or ITIN number validation.
* Only doing BGC for people who are working with kids or vulnerable populations on their own and staff will not be around
* Criminal background and Sexual Offense
* We use Sterling Volunteers for criminal record checks (not full background checks), driver’s license checks (if they're driving as a volunteer), and international criminal record checks if they live out of the country
* BGC depends on the volunteer position
* Do run a BGC after a year, 3-years, etc.?
  + One and done
  + Aligns with staff, who don’t get regular checks either
  + Nope, unless they have been inactive for 2+ years.
  + We only do background checks at the beginning. I did feel the need to reach out to the local police when a volunteer (they weren't on the clock at the time) was overheard talking about being arrested. Turned out it was all bluster.

**Favorite Volunteer Recognition…more than 1 or 2 times a year**

* What didn’t work…system-wide volunteer gatherings to chat
* Loved the behind the scenes tours. Special collection, library resources, what’s coming next (sneak preview). Material handling, They become better advocates for the library
* Book plate every year in favorite genre
* Volunteers get access to the book sales an hour early
* Teen volunteers loved being in the library after hours to decorate for the holidays. The staff loved walking in the next day to see what they had done.
* I had all the staff (we're also a small, single library branch) participate in making the sharpie mugs. Then I took them home and baked them to set the designs.
* Small, seasonal gifts throughout the year.
* We haven't tried this yet but a volunteer suggested a sticker or decal that says "Proud volunteer of ….." LIke you see for the schools, "Proud parent of honor student." OR Logo with the word Volunteer on a waterproof sticker
* We have a tribute program, where donors can recognize staff or volunteers with their donation
* We also had a "design a bookmark" contest for volunteers and then printed up the winning designs and gave them out to volunteers one year. That was pretty popular!
* Write a letter to the volunteers boss/family sharing the impact the volunteer is making.

Bonus: 10 questions “All about you” to tie down personalized recognition. “I love the library because…” “My favorite book is...” Chauna will share.

Bonus: [101 Ways to Recognise Your Volunteers](https://volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/VA-Managers-101-Ways-to-Recognise-Your-Volunteers.pdf) from Volunteering Australia

**Gift Cards…**

* Regular gift cards (visa, Starbucks, etc.) are tough to administer. “Here’s your gift. Now sign this legal document.” Auditors are not a fan.
* IRS declaration of receipt of a gift card (there’s a $ limit) Check the federal/state/local laws
* FOL gift card for $5 to coffee shop or book store
* Caution: could the card be considered a form of payment making the volunteer an employee or contractor
* A few years ago, the City here gave staff $25 or $50 gift cards for participating in a wellness challenge and on our next paystub it was listed as income and we were taxed on it.
* Our Friends gave staff "Good for 1 free item" coupon for birthdays. Those were not included in pay--maybe because they were donated?
* <https://tobijohnson.com/volunteer-stipends/>

The following is considered taxable income:Cash – except for infrequent meal money to allow overtime workCash equivalent (for example, savings bond, gift certificates, gift cards)Certain transportation passes or costsUse of employer’s apartment, vacation home, boatCommuting use of employer’s vehicle more than once a monthMembership in a country club or athletic facilityAny item that exceeds a value of $100

**Compensation Survey - Resources for the same information**

Several weeks ago we talked about conducting a compensation survey among our group. Instead of a 3-5 question survey, it turned into a monster. It’s going to be more effort than value. Therefore, let’s gather compensation information from verified sources.

Sue is going to check with [MAVA](https://mavanetwork.org/)

Marcia with [NAVPLG](https://www.navplg.org/)

Liza with [AL!VE](https://www.volunteeralive.org/)

Wendy J will contact Tobi with [VolunteerPro](https://volpro.net/) (maybe chat with us)

Everyone, be on the lookout for compensation information. Send it to Wendy J for distribution.

**Training Opportunities**

* [ServeOhio annual conference](https://www.serveohio.org/News-Events/Ohio-Conference-on-Service-Volunteerism/Conference-Session-Descriptions), virtual, Oct 27 & 28, $50
* Niche Academy Library Online Learning Conference, January 21, 2022. [FMI](https://www.nicheacademy.com/library-online-learning-2022?utm_campaign=Library%20Online%20Learning%20Conference%202022&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=146863292&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--3cVBwJ-Q-lv0G6yXlSEDODwrLH6naND1JkxoEJ9XxptErrjMOwPp1TBWV-DM72TaQ2fTIryrwwBcq85sqF9WmpyvisA&utm_content=146525130&utm_source=hs_email)
* [MAVA Dismantling Inequities Conference](https://mavanetwork.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=286912&module_id=484644), virtual and interactive, Dec 9 & 10, 2021

**On-going Educational Resources**

* Volgistics National Peer Group – online – 2nd Tuesday of the month – free!

FMI contact Jessica Link, [linkj@crlibrary.org](about:blank). Recordings are available after you sign a release.

* Better Impact User Group – online – 1st Tuesday of every other month – free!

December 7, 2021, February 1, 2022, April 5, 2022, and June 7, 2022

Zoom link coming soon.

* Join the GetInvolved list serve by emailing Carla, [clehn@califa.org](about:blank). Fabulous resource with samples, current news & updates. <https://getinvolvedclearinghouse.org/>
* VolunteerMatch. Free sessions on many of the topics we discuss in this group: [https://learn.volunteermatch.org/](about:blank)
* Nebraska Library Commission – Ncampass Live – upcoming and recorded weekly sessions. Some volunteer focused. [http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/NCompassLive/index.asp?menu2](about:blank)

**Future Topics**

* Maker Spaces
* Handbook section by section
* Staff working with volunteers: tips
* Volunteer Orientation/Training
* Working with AmeriCorps/Vista
* Difficult conversations
* Opportunities without onboarding barriers? Pop-up volunteering, Informal Volunteering
* Teen Advisories
* Circle Back for updates:
  + University of North Carolina – Charlotte (UNCC) Class Project Update – Chauna
  + Our leadership role, what new things are we doing? Resources to share?

**Written Volunteer Policies/Handbook or Manual**

Identify which of the volunteer policies the agency maintains (check all that apply):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Policy** | **Included** | **Not Included** | **Not Necessary** |
| Abuse/Neglect policy (boundaries, gifts) |  |  |  |
| ADA compliance statement |  |  |  |
| Code of conduct (dress code, concealed weapons, non-smoking, cell phone use, and non-evangelizing policies, etc.) |  |  |  |
| Confidentiality statement (including HIPAA) |  |  |  |
| Conflict of interest |  |  |  |
| Diversity statement |  |  |  |
| Drug free workplace |  |  |  |
| Emergency preparedness response plan (fire, weather, disaster, etc.) |  |  |  |
| Equal opportunity employer |  |  |  |
| Evaluation |  |  |  |
| Expense & reimbursement policy |  |  |  |
| FAQs |  |  |  |
| Food handling policy |  |  |  |
| Grievance procedure |  |  |  |
| Harassment and discrimination policy |  |  |  |
| Hold harmless agreement |  |  |  |
| Mission & service overview |  |  |  |
| Organization history |  |  |  |
| Orientation & training requirements |  |  |  |
| Photo release |  |  |  |
| Position descriptions |  |  |  |
| Recognition |  |  |  |
| Roles & responsibilities of staff volunteer supervisors |  |  |  |
| Safety training & use of organizational property (computers, vehicles, etc.) |  |  |  |
| Screening Requirements (incl. background check & health screening) |  |  |  |
| Social media policy |  |  |  |
| Staff structure & contact information |  |  |  |
| Statement as to the role of volunteers |  |  |  |
| Time tracking & attendance |  |  |  |
| Volunteer rights & responsibilities statement |  |  |  |
| FAQs |  |  |  |
| Other: |  |  |  |