Exhibit 5.c.

NORTH SUBURBAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2-22-10

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Background

The 2009 - 2010 fiscal year started calmly enough. Our work plan for the year focused on four key areas and we established external and internal goals for each of these areas:

Community Presence

External Goal: Help NSLS members have a stronger presence in their communities.

Internal Goal: NSLS to develop a stronger presence with our community of members.

Streamlining/Updating Work Processes

External Goal: Help libraries streamline their services to make them easier for library users.

Internal Goal: Streamline NSLS internal services to save money and staff time.

Focus on Future Survival

External Goal: Establish a model for the Library of the Future.

Internal Goal: Establish a future for NSLS by looking for ways to generate additional revenue.

Collaboration

External Goal: Help libraries work more collaboratively in order to face economic and technology challenges and changes more effectively.

Internal Goal: NSLS collaborate as much as possible with other library systems and the Illinois State Library.

Each of these goals had a number of specific activities assigned to them that we planned on completing during FY2010.

On August 13, 2009, we were forced to make an abrupt change in plans when we were notified by our principal funder, the Illinois State Library, that library systems would receive a 16.5% reduction in state funding. For NSLS, this meant a reduction of $406,192. We immediately took a number of steps to preserve our dwindling financial resources. As we looked for ways to streamline our work and do more with less, we were forced to abandon many of the items in the work plan.

As I reflected on my accomplishments over the past year, it was interesting to note that although NSLS took a much different route than originally anticipated, we ended up accomplishing almost all of the goals outlined in the work plan, despite the huge financial burden that was placed in our path. The following list of accomplishments for FY 2010 includes details on how these activities met the goals established in our original work plan for the year.

Accomplishments, FY 2009 - 2010

Keeping NSLS Afloat Financially

By far, my biggest accomplishment since the August announcement about our budget cut has been doing everything possible to preserve our dwindling financial resources without losing the reputation we have with our members (and throughout the country) for exhibiting leadership and innovation. Immediately after the announcement, we took a number of steps to cut staff costs, including cutting out staff raises, abandoning our full-time receptionist position and drastically cutting down on travel, paper mailings, and supplies. We also began investigating options for streamlining our offerings. As a result, we discontinued our Foreign Language Standing Order program and began to seriously question the future of our Digital Past program.

As time progressed we also cancelled the March 2010 Membership Awards Banquet and took out a line of credit with a local bank. The NSLS staff is by far our greatest asset. Though other systems began planning layoffs immediately after the budget cut announcement, we looked for every possible way to cut costs without reducing the number of staff. Unfortunately, these measures were not enough and we were forced to make the very difficult decision to lay off four of our staff members in January 2010. Obviously, our staff have been deeply affected by our financial situation and the layoffs only added to their angst. Since that time however, they have risen to the occasion and are working as a team with the common goal of keeping NSLS strong and relevant to our members.

Throughout these last months, we have also made it a priority to encourage member input and feedback as much as possible. NSLS makes an ongoing effort to get input from staff at all types of libraries through general surveys, surveys on specific programs and services, interactions at networking group and other meetings, and telephone calls to individual members to find out their current concerns. To make sure that NSLS is staying true to member needs during these difficult times, we are currently conducting a needs assessment survey of the entire membership. The survey is designed to find out which of our current programs and services members value the most and what challenges they are facing that NSLS may be able to help them with. We will study the results of the survey very carefully and use them to guide decisions about our future offerings.

Work Plan Goal Met: Our financial crisis forced us to streamline our internal services to save money and staff time.

Campaign to Save Illinois Libraries (and Library Systems)

Though we knew we needed to take drastic measures to reduce our spending, we did not want to quietly accept the budget cuts without some form of protest. To make

sure elected officials and Illinois taxpayers knew about our perilous situation, we launched a statewide campaign in October 2009 to get the word out to elected officials about the importance and value of libraries and library systems. We wanted to make the point that Illinois libraries were being used at record levels and that cuts to library and system funding would result in grievous harm to Illinois residents.

Additionally, we planned to ask legislators to sign a pledge stating that they would not support any new initiatives/projects until libraries got full statutory funding. We made plans to launch a targeted, viral electronic campaign to run from October 9 - 16, 2009. We established a "Save Illinois Libraries" website, which included an easy electronic way for library supporters across the state to contact legislators and to ask their friends to contact legislators as well. The legislator pledge was also included on the site. We also established a Facebook page and invited people to become "fans" of Illinois library systems.

We kicked off the campaign with a rally at the Illinois Library Association's Annual Conference in October in Springfield. We set up a booth to demonstrate how easy it was to participate in the campaign via the Save Illinois Libraries site. We also had a rally in the exhibit hall. Secretary of State Jesse White was in attendance, and I led a cheer for the Secretary in recognition of his attempt to increase funding for libraries. After ILA, we led the other Illinois library systems to encourage their members and other people across the state to conatct their legislators. The response to the campaign was overwhelming. Messages were sent to all 177 members of the General Assembly and 17 of them signed on to the pledge. I was pleased and proud to note that of the ten Illinois library systems, eight of the pledge signers and nearly 1,500 of the almost 4,000 e-mail messages were sent to NSLS area legislators.

Part Two of the Campaign

Since the initial campaign was so successful, in Janurary 2010 we decided to renew it. This time we decided to target Illinois Governor Quinn and Comptroller Hynes. Once again we made it easy for people to participate by including an e-mail message template on the Save Illinois Libraries website. Site visitors simply had to enter their contact information and send the message. We again encouraged everyone to "go viral," and made it easy for them to invite friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues to participate in the campaign all with one simple click. In addition to the e-mails, many of our supporters followed up with phone calls and faxes to legislators. Some even made personal visits. The campaign also heavily saturated Twitter and Facebook. At last count, we have 4,411 Facebook fans.

We had set the goal of 3,000 e-mails each to Illinois Governor Quinn and Comptroller Hynes. In just over 24 hours, more than 20,000 e-mails were sent to the governor and comptroller. As an indicator of our success, the online rally began on January 20, and by the morning of January 22, most of the systems had reported receiving a partial payment from the state.

The idea to launch an online campaign to support a cause is not a new one. What really distinguishes a successful campaign are the hours spent on planning and execution. Never have I seen a campaign take off like this one in the state of Illinois.

Work Plan Goal Met: Our campaign efforts helped us meet our work plan goal of collaboration. In order for the campaign to be effective, we knew that we would have to work closely with other Illinois library systems and the State Library. Our

members joined our collaboration efforts by participating in the campaign themselves, as well as encouraging their patrons to do so by publicizing the effort on their websites, blogs and in their newsletters.

Return on Member Investment

Every year, NSLS develops a report card for each of our member libraries outlining the system services library staff took advantage of in the previous year. We assign an approximate dollar value to as many of the services as possible by looking at what members would have to pay if NSLS did not exist and they had to find similar services in the outside world. Last year, in spite of having to cut back on staff and some services, NSLS saved our libraries over $20 million compared to $9.6 million the year before.

Work Plan Goals Met: Since our report cards include all of the services that NSLS provides for our members, every work plan goal was addressed in some fashion through this effort.

Library Partnership Trust/Innovation Experts

Our work with the Library Partnership Trust (LPT) took on even greater significance this year as we looked for ways to generate additional revenue to deal with our budget crisis. Following on the success of our statewide consortial offers, we launched a new technology assessment service designed to assess a library's current use of technology and provide suggestions for moving ahead in the future. We tested the service on eight libraries. Though the service turned out to be very popular with participants, it was not cost effective for the LPT and we revised our technology offerings in January 2010. Since we know how important it is for libraries to learn how to promote their value, the LPT also made the decision to offer marketing training and assessment services. We will begin to publicize all of these services more heavily in March 2010.

In September 2009, the LPT Board made the decision to change the organization's name to Innovation Experts. The Library Partnership name was not memorable and libraries were having trouble finding our website. We also wanted our name to better reflect our work, namely, providing libraries with innovative services designed to help them move into the future. We plan to publicize the name change to Illinois libraries in March of this year.

In October 2009, the LPT hosted a booth at the Illinois Library Association's annual conference in Springfield in order to promote our consortial offers and other services.

Work Plan Goals Met: Our efforts to grow Innovation Experts helped us meet our Focus on Future Survival work plan goal. We are looking to generate additional revenue through Innovation Experts. We are also helping to build the library of the future by focusing our service offerings on areas that we feel will best help libraries prepare for and meet the future, namely, technology and marketing.

Professional Development (PD)

One of the things members value most about NSLS is our Professional Development program. They especially appreciate our keeping them aware of innovative developments in the field and providing hands-on training on using the latest technologies. The following are just a few of our PD highlights from FY2010.

Trustee Training Series: The summer of 2009 marked the fourth time we ran this popular series and we set a record for attendance. We made some changes to the format of the sessions based on attendee feedback, including condensing the number of classes from nine to six sessions to allow people to more easily fit all the programs into their summer schedule. We plan to run the series of six classes again in summer 2010, in response to popular demand.

Supervisory Skills Series: This series is intended for both new supervisors and those with experience who want to learn some "new tricks." We brought the series back for a second time this past year due to overwhelming demand from members and some non-member libraries as well.

Mobile Marketing for Libraries: Nancy Dowd, a national marketing expert from the New Jersey State Library (NJSL), came to NSLS to talk about a pilot program NJSL implemented to promote library services via the use of PDA's, cell phones, and other electronic devices. Mobile marketing is a hot new topic for libraries and a good example of how NSLS uses our PD program to encourage members to try innovative methods to better serve users and to attract new users as well.

Providing Library Services to Polish and Russian Residents: Presenter Catherine Popowits is new to NSLS and offers a variety of programs, including this one that addresses diversity issues in libraries and the need to understand and market to specific populations. This program is an example of how NSLS strives to address diversity issues, another very hot topic for libraries these days, and we will be adding more programs by Catherine and others in this area the future.

Spring Ahead with a Library Degree: In February 2010, NSLS again hosted an open house for those interested in returning to school for a Master's degree in Library and Information Science. Representatives from Dominican University, the University of Illinois, and University Center of Lake County were on hand to network and answer questions.

What's New in Children's Books: Each year, we offer multiple sessions of this program featuring noted author, Dr. Peggy Sharp. The sessions continue to be a huge draw for library staff serving youth and schools. So far, 251 members have registered for the three sessions we've scheduled for late February 2010.

Work Plan Goals Met: By presenting an array of programs by leaders in the field on innovative topics, we are helping to prepare our libraries for the future.

Longshots Podcast

We celebrated a major milestone in December 2009 by recording the 200th *Longshots* podcast episode! The weekly podcast continues to grow in popularity and we regularly get positive comments from members and others in the library world.

In addition to many podcasts with NSLS members, some of the noteworthy podcasts from the past year include:

- An interview with Secretary of State Jesse White to talk about the value of libraries and his efforts to mitigate the severe budget cuts systems received from the Illinois General Assembly
- An interview with Al Gini, professor of Business Ethics at Loyola University's Graduate School of Business, on how to achieve a work/life balance
- An interview with Nicole Engard, Director of Open Source Education at ByWater Solutions, and author of *Library Mashups: Exploring New Ways to Deliver Library Data*
- An interview with Peter Lor, visiting professor at the School of Information Studies at the Universtiy of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, about his work to bring about change for libraries in South Africa after apartheid
- An interview with Rebecca Tolley-Stokes, from East Tennessee State University's Sherrod Library, about her recent article in *College and Research Libraries*, "Try on a New Pair of Sensible Shoes: What Libraries Can Learn from Zappos About Customer Service and Organizational Culture."

Work Plan Goals Met: Our Longshots podcast helps NSLS to develop a stronger presence in our community and beyond. Since many of the interviews feature well-known and innovative library leaders, they also help establish a model for the library of the future.

Van Delivery

Our Delivery numbers continue to skyrocket. In August 2009, NSLS acquired its first box truck for van delivery. The 15-foot truck holds 140 bins, compared to the 75 bins that can fit in a van. There is also a curbside door to make access easier for the driver, along with a door between the cab and the cargo area. As funding becomes available, all of our existing vans will be replaced with this new type of truck in order to deal with the increasing volume of materials being handled through our delivery service.

NSLS launched the third phase of our converting bags to bins project in December 2009. This brings the number of libraries using bins to 33. The bins have made a huge difference in the efficiency of our delivery operations. They are approximately 10% bigger in volume than the canvas bags and since they can be stacked, more bins can fit in a van or truck. The final phase of this conversion process will have to wait until we are able to purchase a second box truck. We are currently investigating possible fundraising campaigns to raise money for a truck, since we can not expect to buy it with the money we receive from the State anytime soon.

In October 2009, we learned that of all the materials transferred between Illinois libraries via the Illinois Library Delivery System (ILDS), over 15% were sent through NSLS. This is considerably more than any other library system in the state, and second only to the University of Illinois in Urbana in terms of total items moved. This proves that NSLS members are doing their part to contribute to resource sharing throughout the state!

Work Plan Goal Met: Our new box truck and our continued success with our bags to bins project meet the work plan goal of streamlining NSLS internal services to save money and staff time.

Construction Zone at NSLS

At long last, the replacement of the bridge between NSLS property and Hawthorne School, our neighbor across Buffalo Creek, is underway. This project has been in the works for several years, but kept running into delays. Now, thanks to stimulus money received through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the long-awaited bridge was delivered and installed on Friday, December 18. Final landscaping and removal of the old bridge will probably not happen until sometime this spring

"Imaginary Libraries" Art Exhibit at NSLS

NSLS held its first art exhibit opening on September 24, 2009. The event provided a networking opportunity for NSLS members and local Chambers of Commerce. On display were library and book themed works by Artist, David Gista. This renowned collection has been exhibited in galleries in the U.S. and Europe. The exhibit was supposed to end on October 30, but due to popular demand the artwork is still on display at NSLS. NSLS prides itself on the care and attention we devote to our building, and the artwork has been a very welcome addition. We have also received many compliments about the exhibit.

In Conclusion

It's been a difficult year and our future is murky. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of the NSLS Board and Staff, and the strong support of our membership, NSLS continues to provide the leadership and innovation our members have come to expect. We also continue to offer a wide array of programs and services that offer tremendous value to our members and gain us recognition throughout the library world. I thank the Board for your support through these difficult times and look forward to working with you as we continue to blaze a trail into the future.