

COMPASS USERS' GROUP

DRAFT

Meeting minutes of Wednesday, January 21, 2009

DRAFT

Members present:

Paula Chapman/Aurora, Debby Bocnuk/Babbitt, Jodie Johnson/Carlton, Mary Lukkarila/Cloquet, Judy Sheriff/Duluth, Renee Zurn/Duluth, MaryBeth Kafut/Eveleth, Amy Hay/Gilbert, Linda Chappell/Grand Marais, Marcia Anderson/Grand Rapids, Ginny Richmond/Hibbing, Sue Sowers/Hoyt Lakes, Diane Adams/International Falls, Linda Wadman/NCLC, Julie Billings/Silver Bay, Nancy Maxwell/Virginia; Shari Fisher/ALS, Mark Koukol/ALS, Rebecca Patton/ALS, Jim Weikum/ALS

President Nancy Maxwell called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

Introductions were made by all present.

M/S to approve minutes of December 3 meeting/**Motion passed.**

COMPASS AND COMPUTER RELATED ISSUES

Questions or problems with Horizon functions: None reported

Horizon news, updates & upgrades:

- ALS is planning on upgrading to Horizon 7.4.2 on Friday, Feb. 6, starting at 8:00 A.M. The process is estimated to take about 2 ½ hours; Horizon and the IPAC will be unavailable during this time. Mark has not seen problems with the upgrade on the Horizon-L listserv, and the version offers several bug fixes and added features. Mark will share more information about new features via email.
- Mark will meet with the new SirsiDynix sales rep on Mon., 1/26. He plans to ask when Horizon 7.5 will be available and also to ask about what specs are required for the RPA server. (The RPA server works with OverDrive and with Telemessaging and is showing signs of needing replacement.)
- Cloquet Public Library and Grand Rapids Public Library have both recently purchased self-check machines from ITG. (The ITG machine, when ordered through SirsiDynix, was the most inexpensive of the machines they looked at; Grand Rapids P.L. paid just under \$16,000 and Cloquet P.L. paid around \$25,000 for the machine and new security gates.) ALS was not informed that the changes needing to be made to allow the self-check machines to work with Horizon would cause telemessaging to malfunction until further changes were made. Mark discovered that no telemessaging calls went out on Jan. 8-9 or on part of Jan. 10. Fortunately, the calls were delayed, not lost, and once Mark made the necessary changes, all calls were caught up. Barring the steps needed to make sure telemessaging continues working, the installation went smoothly and Mark would commend the ITG machine to any other libraries looking to purchase self-check machines. Mark warned that security systems have issues with magnetic tape media (i.e. videocassette tapes, audio cassette tapes, and possibly PlayAways). While the self-check machines can be set so they won't demagnetize (i.e. erase) local media (any media with the self-check machine's library's codes), any magnetic media from any other library (whether in-system or out-of-system) should NOT be checked out on the self-check or they may be erased.

ILS replacement process: update:

- The Circulation Committee has identified some useful changes to the borrower records. They recommend implementing these changes now—not only would they be immediately useful but it will also be easier to migrate cleaned-up records. A key area they have identified is the bstat field (the last field in the borrower record; its data currently mirrors the btype data unless the library has asked Mark to create unique codes for this field). The committee recommends that this field be used to identify if a patron lives within or without the taxing boundaries of the library they identify as their home library.

Having the bstat field so coded would allow libraries to identify not only the number of patrons from outside their taxing boundaries using their libraries but also to track the circulation statistics for users within vs. without their taxing boundaries. Mark will create new codes for this field as soon as possible. Once the codes are created, libraries can begin to use them. In some cases, borrower records can be changed en masse (for example, all records with a zip code does not match the taxing district of the library in the btype field could be changed in a batch). In other cases, libraries can add or change the code in the bstat field manually as they create new cards and renew or update existing borrower records. This field will not affect how the borrower records function but will be useful for statistics.

- The Circulation committee further recommends standardizing, as much as possible, the collection codes and itypes. There are currently over 900 collection codes being used; reducing the number and variation of these codes would allow the system to perform regional searches limited to certain types of materials (easy readers, DVD's, etc.). This would be very useful to patrons. The committee will contact libraries to get definitions of the local codes and will identify recommendations of which ones might be standardized.
- The committee also recommends, especially given the level of intralibrary loan within the region, that COMPASS libraries consider, as much as possible, standardizing loan periods and fine rates for different types of materials. Mark will collate data on the current loan periods and fine rates of member libraries for presentation at a future COMPASS meeting so that members can consider, and ask their Boards to consider, where these areas might be standardized across the region.

Update on installation of “uninterruptible power supply” (UPS) unit at ALS:

- ALS ordered the two units they need for ensuring an uninterruptible power supply. Unfortunately, one of the units sent was the wrong one. New units have been ordered.

Staff reports: Jim Weikum

- ALS is currently going through the e-rate process; their deadline for responding to bids is next week, and any changes will be effective 7/1/09. Having been given information suggesting that fiber optic connections could be competitively priced, they installed an experimental fiber optic connection at the Two Harbors Public Library and requested fiber optics information for the communities in which it is available in the call for bids. The fiber connection at Two Harbors, while it has had some glitches works well when it works and significantly increases the available bandwidth. To ALS's regret, when the bids came in, the dollar amounts for fiber were significantly higher (approximately double) the amounts for T-1 lines, have an additional and significant installation fee, and exceed the maximum cost of what can be covered through RLTA. Because ALS's budget does not allow the extra cost to be absorbed in this cycle, and because it is unlikely that libraries would be able to absorb the extra costs in the current economic climate, ALS is not considering fiber optic Internet connections for this e-rate cycle. They will go with the type of connections currently being used. (The exception might be Hibbing Public Library, which currently pays for a second T-1 line; for them, paying the extra fiber cost instead might be cost-effective.) ALS will revisit fiber in the next e-rate cycle.

Other: None

LIBRARY ISSUES

What's happening at your library? Budget issues, LGA cuts, etc.

- Jim W./ALS: The House Tax Committee was scheduled to consider eliminating the elimination of the county Minimum Level of Support mandate. If the Tax Committee passes this, it will go to the floor. Meanwhile, there is discussion of eliminating various mandates, of which maintenance of effort is one.

The Regional Director's group is hopeful that the state legislature will adapt suggested compromises on Maintenance of Effort language (including tying MOA requirements to LGA cuts, provided that libraries are not cut at more severe rates than other City departments are cut) rather than eliminating Maintenance of Effort.

- Aurora—City departments have been asked to develop a FY2009 budget proposal reduced by 10% of what was previously approved—and to eliminate as much spending as possible until actual LGA cuts are known.
- Duluth—City departments are being asked to look for ways to be more cost-efficient, to look for ways to generate revenue, and to freeze hiring.
- Hibbing—City departments were told in September to reduce spending. Hibbing Public Library currently scans the library cards of library cardholders before they use library computers. Any persons with fines exceeding Hibbing P.L.'s block level must pay their fines below the block level before using the library computers. This has generated noticeable revenue.
- International Falls—City departments have been told to reduce spending. The City is holding off on purchase of equipment and on renovations to City buildings.
- Virginia—Virginia P.L. reduced their library card block limit to \$1; this has brought in more revenue.
- Cloquet—The City is concerned that LGA will be eliminated completely; they have not yet given their departments any numbers by which to reduce spending.
- Hoyt Lakes—City departments have been asked to be prepared to reduce their budgets by 10% and to put aside capitol projects.
- Silver Bay—City departments are being asked to reduce their budgets by 10-20% and to increase revenues. Silver Bay P.L. is currently leaving an open position unfilled; this is putting considerable stress on other staff to cover the hours.
- General conclusions: A significant problem for the state is that reserves have been used. The current uncertainty of what the cuts will be is a problem for Cities and consequently libraries. Advocacy from all levels re: LGA and its importance to City and Library services is very important. The national news coverage about the surge in library use in times of economic hardship has been timely. The governor's proposed wage freeze for all employees whose cities receive state monies (LGA among others) creates significant problems for communities with pre-existing contracts.

Update: additional licensed databases:

- ALS will acquire the Small Engine Repair reference database (also available online to offsite library card holders) and will acquire updates to the Scholarships and the College Blue Books e-reference books. Because Rebecca has been unable to contact a Heritage Quest sales rep able to sell the product to ALS, it will not be purchased. The RASAL committee will reconvene to consider an alternative database to recommend. Libraries that currently subscribe to the Small Engine Repair database should contact Ebsco to discuss a refund or credit for fees paid. The new database and updates will be available as soon as licensing and implementation can be worked out.

Update: OverDrive downloadable audio books

- A limited number of titles are now available in the iPod-compatible downloadable audio book format. At this point, OverDrive must contact each publisher to get permission to release titles in iPod format and publishers are giving permissions only on certain titles or types of titles. Since the presently available titles are older/less high-demand, ALS has not purchased an extensive number in this format and has not done a broad publicity campaign. ALS does have a press release from OverDrive that individual libraries can send to their local papers or request ALS to send to their local papers if desired.

Staff reports: Rebecca Patton

- There is a Marketing Workshop coming up on Feb. 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the ALS headquarters; please bring \$3.50 for a pizza lunch.
- ALS now has handheld GPS devices; contact Rebecca if you would like to borrow one for a library program.
- One Wii consol , purchased with LSTA funds, has arrived and a second, purchased with ALS funds, is on order. Let Rebecca know if you would like to borrow it for your library so she can schedule it.

Staff reports: Shari Fisher

- Shari has received a quote for libraries that previously expressed interest in purchasing movie-licensing rights for showing movies in the library. If you had expressed previous interest and are no longer interested, or if you were not previously interested but now are, let Shari know. ALS has a screen they can loan.

Staff reports: Jim Weikum

- ALS is anticipating receiving the final evaluation of ALS Technical Services department from OhioNet. They are waiting to permanently fill the cataloging position until they receive the report.

NCLC:

- Because of the anticipated cuts in library aid, NCLC did not send out a survey regarding which databases libraries might be interested in having NCLC purchase.
- NCLC is offering another round of 23 Things called “More Things on a Stick.”

Other:

- The “Minnesota Crime Wave” have released a new anthology of mystery short stories set at the State Fair called Murder on a Stick.
- Marcia from Grand Rapids offered interested libraries discarded plastic magazine holders; Ginny from Hibbing added an offer for cardboard magazine holders being discarded by Hibbing P.L. Mary from Cloquet has extra DVD cases available to interested libraries.
- Jim W. reported that Marble Public Library is hurting with current heating costs and may be looking to lease space at a vacant school.

Meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Next meeting date: Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Chapman, Secretary