

COMPASS USERS' GROUP

Second DRAFT

Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, February 22, 2006
Mt. Iron, MN

Second DRAFT

Members Present:

Shari Fisher-ALS, Sharon Kangas-ALS/MAB, Mark Koukol-ALS, Shelley Rogers-ALS, Jim Weikum-ALS; Paula Chapman-Aurora, Debby Bocnuk-Babbitt, Mary Lukkarila-Cloquet, Jan Simmons-Duluth, Mary Beth Kafut-Eveleth, Ginny Richmond-Gilbert, Janet Coy-Grand Rapids Public, Terry Moore-Hibbing/Chisholm, Sue Sowers-Hoyt Lakes, Diane Adams-International Falls, Sue Thompson-Two Harbors, and Linda J. Wadman, NCLC.

President Mary Lukkarila called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The minutes of the January 18, 2006 meeting were presented. Approved by declaration.

COMPASS AND COMPUTER RELATED ISSUES:

Questions or problems with Horizon functions: Mark Koukol discussed firewall problems, noted that an average of 2,000 items are In Transit between libraries at any given time, and stated that 8.x versions of Horizon are still in Beta testing but the company is still claiming we will the new version (8.1 for current customers) this summer.

E2T2 Grant: Shari Fisher reported that the Enhancing Education Through Technology grant contract is now in place. ALS is advertising for a Project Manager (short term, no benefits). Schools to be added are: 3 in Eveleth-Gilbert, 1 Nett Lake, 2 Cook County, and 1 Ely (adding elementary). Koukol reminded us that we lost a number of schools from Greenway so that the net gain is one site. Timeline allows for work to go through November 2007 but Fisher hopes to be done sooner (12 months?) Summer may affect timing. Conversion will be the largest part of the cost but money was also budgeted for substitute staff in the media centers. Many ALS staff will participate in the training aspects.

Network changes starting July 2006: Jim Weikum handed out a spreadsheet showing proposals from three vendors: CP Telecom and Quest plus our current NeNET. Both of the new companies proposed lower rates. CP Telecom was the best price, a savings of \$28,000 for those moving to broadband and another \$23,000 over NeNET for a total of \$53,000 (in e-rate dollars—indirect savings). It is hoped CP Telecom will stabilize or even improve our internet connections. Downsides may be in relations with NeNET/NESC and loss of ITV access for programming.

Staff reports (re: COMPASS and computer issues):

Mark Koukol: nothing additional

Shelley Rogers: A gentle reminder...Please remember to change location codes when new rotating collections arrive at your libraries.

The first 98 story telling kits are cataloged and she is still working on more.

Also clean, complete records are being done for AV materials (audiobooks, DVDs) that were previously entered as Fast Adds. Discussion followed about how Fast Adds are marked and appear in catalog. Some places get all items sent back to processing upon Check In, others don't.

Apparently there is an Option in the Collection Codes chart that Mark can toggle to "No special handling at Check In". So each library must decide for each of their collections what option they want for Fast Adds (and let Mark/Robert know if changes are needed).

OCLC records: items downloaded will be counted for each library. As libraries get close to their allotted maximum for the year, Rogers will keep us informed. The only time this is really a problem is if, as a whole, we are getting close to our ALS maximum. It is possible that libraries would be charged by item if we go over. Discussed advantages to whole group when the first library brings in the record, thus saving others the time to go outside ALS to search and retrieve a new record.

LIBRARY ISSUES (non-computer):

Legislative update –2006 Legislative Day is Thursday, March 30. The new reference librarian from Grand Rapids will be attending (Marcia Anderson). Jim Weikum handed out an email from Elaine Keefe dated Feb. 21 in preparation for session opening on March 1.

Linda Wadman noted that some counties are short of funds due to Medicare/aid cuts. The situation with Beltrami County (Bemidji and Black Duck Libraries) was discussed.

Commissioner Seagren's document and letter of response from library directors: Copies were available at meeting and also have been sent through ALS delivery. A group of those involved met yesterday, February 21, 2006. Janet Coy was present. State Library personnel were present. Seagren was there briefly. Coy called the meeting cordial but despite discussion, felt that "no communication happened." Mary Lukkarila noted that North Mankato PL is going to court over their differences with the regional system there. Coy noted that Grand Rapids came into ALS later than most and has a different contract than many of our libraries. Coy noted the importance of knowing our ALS Board members, especially those representing our areas. She reminded us that it is NOT a one library, one vote system. These issues are also relevant to Beltrami County decisions and clearly may affect all Minnesota public libraries, regional system structures and multitypes in the future. Duluth is already affected in terms of catalog differences, resource sharing and ILL. East Central, Rochester, and Pioneerland also use different protocols (non MnLINK libraries). There are huge, long-term communication problems involved.

Weikum notes that the ALS Board always asks: "What does this mean to Member Libraries?"

Interlibrary Loan and MnLINK: are changes coming? Since the Get It button, statistics show that 40% of borrowing from outside a library's region is for AV materials. Sometimes there is already a usable item in the system but AV materials are often more difficult to match (multiple records due to lack of ISBNs). Mark Koukol is now supervising Nancy King. The ILL workflow is out of control: she is overburdened. Beginning July 1 (for budget reasons) a new part-time position of ILL assistant will be added. Short-term solutions may be: not allow renewals, suspend use of OCLC/WorldCat, difficult requests are already falling to the bottom of the pile (to do list). Terry

Moore expressed concern about unfair, biased service. Others also noted that they have patrons with very specialized interests and research needs that should not be put off.

Koukol noted that MINITEX is planning to facilitate a meeting to brainstorm/trouble shoot such issues. The ALS statistics show that ILL from outside to ALS libraries increased 145.8% (with 122% increase in fill rate) and from ALS libraries to other regions increased 51.4% and 23 %.

Discussion included comments about having buttons for feedback and donations, speed of delivery versus Blockbuster home/mail service. Janet Coy asked that a bookmark for patrons be designed stating changes and reasons. All were encouraged to keep looking for creative solutions, try new and different ideas, etc. One question was if any other ALS staff could help with ILL between now and July 1.

ALS 2006 Budget and implication for staffing levels (moved up on the agenda since it related to the above discussion): Dollars budgeted for the unfilled COMPASS position they now expect to use for the ILL assistant. There is only enough money for a half-year, part-time position. Exact hours will depend partly on wage required by the Union.

More comments: MnLINK is just a tool – it is heavy use by the patrons that accounts for increases in workload, costs, etc. Another consideration is to limit borrowing by copyright date (not allowing ILL of newer items.) It is always worth remembering: libraries should buy popular new items, rather than expecting to get them through ILL.

Audio books: what formats are libraries purchasing in 2006? Sharon Kangas asked what formats and vendors are preferred. Companies that sell storage cases include Blackbourn (MN) and Showcase (FL). Companies that lease to libraries charge more but offer free or low cost replacement parts. Landmark Audio/Recorded Books, Blackstone and Books in Motion were other companies mentioned. Jan Simmons noted that her director, Beth Kelly, came back from ALA Midwinter conference with a new item: “Playaway” is a small player with one specific book/title preloaded. The whole digital audio device can be checked out to patrons with or without headphone (disposables could be available for a fee). Simmons will forward additional information to the group.

Gates “Staying Connected” grant for public libraries: S. Fisher reminded us again: use your money now! Printers are acceptable expenditures. First round ends June 30. At this point it doesn’t look likely that much money will remain (unspent funds) to be redistributed.

LSTA Grants: ALS letters of intent moving to application phase. Note that \$600,000 is available and 1.5 million was requested in letters of intent.

- 1) Weikum for Rebecca Patton – Automation proposal for Carlton and Cook Public Libraries, was approved to proceed with application.
- 2) S. Fisher – ALS Website redevelopment with money for advertising and training for local library sites included in proposal. First stage: contract with WA Fischer for \$24,000. Questions: who will maintain? Responsibility will be distributed among ALS departments. Can we offer PayPal as an option for paying fines, etc. What about charge and bank cards?
- 3) Certification workshops (State level, ALS acts as fiscal agent) – Two are proposed, one will be on marketing. This is a non-competitive grant.

Staff reports: No additional items from ALS staff.

Linda Wadman –NCLC: Linda Wadman talked about a federal budget line item reduction for EPA libraries and electronic cataloging. This would affect Duluth PL the most. She may offer Always a River (Soaring teleconference) again. It was very good and so was the discussion following.

Other: Weikum showed three Minnesota history books to give away (titles removed from ALS HQ holdings). He noted that he will not be available for the April meeting as scheduled for the 26th. Group decided to cancel March 15 meeting and shift the next meeting to Wed. April 12, 2006.

Motion by J. Coy, second by MB Kafut to adjourn. All approved.
Meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Second DRAFT Submitted by Ginny Richmond, COMPASS secretary, 4/10/06.