

Members present:

Shari Fisher-ALS, Mark Koukol-ALS, Rebecca Patton-ALS, Shelley Rogers-ALS, Jim Weikum-ALS; Paula Chapman-Aurora, Debby Bocnuk-Babbit, Mary Lukkarila-Cloquet, Jan Simmons-Duluth, MaryBeth Kafut-Eveleth, Leigh Zika—Eveleth-Gilbert Schools, Terry Moore-Hibbing, Nancy Riesgraf-Hibbing, Sue Sowers-Hoyt Lakes, Diane Adams-International Falls, Sally Peterangelo-Mountain Iron, Susan Thompson-Two Harbors, Susan Hoppe-Virginia, Nancy Maxwell-Virginia, Aimee Brown-Iron Range Research Center, and Linda J. Wadman-NCLC.

President Nancy Maxwell called the meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. Introductions were given.

The minutes of the Wednesday, Jan. 27 meeting were presented. It was noted that the meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. Sally Peterangelo moved and Diane Adams seconded that the minutes be approved as amended. **Motion passed.**

COMPASS AND COMPUTER RELATED ISSUES**Status of Horizon:**

- Mark Koukol reported that the system is now at the highest software level presently attainable until Horizon 8.0 is acceptably functional. He is waiting to hear about hardware, and especially server requirements, for 8.0.
- There is presently a change in the Sirsi-Dynix leadership (their CEO left).
- The IPAC has been updated to version 3.08.
- After ALS staff noted weekend freezing problems, Horizon found memory errors. RAM has been replaced on the HIP server, and firmware updates have been done.
- The Horizon contract is due for renewal in the summer of 2008; ALS will informally look at other vendors to see what other products are available. (Innovative Interfaces, Inc. has noted that it does not function as well in a consortium environment.)

Questions or problems with Horizon functions:

Terry Moore-Hibbing expressed concerns over response time causing poor customer service. Mark Koukol noted that in the short term, ALS is looking at two short-term issues.

- First, bad T-1 cards in the router have been replaced; this has improved the upload time (response time of Horizon traffic from ALS to member libraries).
- Secondly, Iprism traffic between ALS and member libraries is taking up two times the bandwidth it should. ALS tried to reposition the Iprism equipment to CPTelecom's site as a fix; however, the equipment set-up did not work. ALS is presently testing the use of an Iprism helper proxy site in Duluth with Virginia Public Library. If this works well for Virginia, ALS will shift other libraries' Iprism traffic to the helper proxy as well. If it is successful, moving the Iprism traffic will make more bandwidth available for Horizon traffic and will hopefully improve response time.
- The real fix for response time will come after July 1, 2007, when the DSL line to NE Net will be reactivated. NE Net (unlike CPTelecom) can prioritize Horizon traffic.
- A call will also be placed to CPTelecom expressing ALS's concerns regarding CPTelecom's present service. CPTelecom is unable to provide detailed analysis of library usage/traffic.

Wide Area Network issues: results of recent E-Rate bidding process:

The E-Rate bidding process is now completed.

- Sites presently with CPTelecom will remain with CPTelecom for the remaining 2 years of the contract.

- Most sites presently with FrontierNet and MediaCom will migrate to NE Net (the lower bidder), effectively giving them a T-1 connection. (This will also lessen their burden on the network, benefiting the CPTelecom sites as well.) Exceptions to these migrations are Baudette and Kinney.
- Since a year will remain on the FrontierNet contract, ALS has made an offer to FrontierNet libraries. If member libraries will directly assume the \$69/month charge, ALS will install and provide tech support for a wireless network to the FrontierNet lines for the remaining contract year, with member libraries having the option of continuing or dropping that network after the contract year expires June 30, 2008. (Since the cost will not be included in E-rate, filtering is not mandatory.)
- **Expect further details as June approaches and a transition period in June.**

Future technology needs (“Library 2.0” technology in member libraries:

Discussion ensued regarding future technology needs in libraries and how ALS and member libraries intend to plan for the future.

- ALS needs to submit at least a rudimentary technology plan to the state by June 1; however, they also plan to do deeper analysis and planning down the road. ALS maintains that technology planning will depend on the needs and desires expressed by member libraries.
- Diane Adams noted that legislative funding significantly lags behind technological development (case in point: MLA platform is seeking funding to establish the minimum connection as a T-1 to Minnesota libraries; this connection is already insufficient for present demand).
- Network infrastructure is foundational to technology and is already a financial struggle; new technology and higher interactivity will only increase the need for newer and more advanced infrastructure. Since Telecom Reimbursement rules have not changed, ALS funds infrastructure upgrades.
- The new ALS web site will be more interactive than it is at present. (One suggestion for further interactivity was made was allowing patrons to post reviews of items and including links to reviews in the bib records.)
- There was discussion of present cataloging practices, and the possibility of combining different editions of the same title onto one record. The advantage would be ease for the patrons in placing holds—fewer records to go through. The problem would be increased difficulty in identifying a specific edition if the patron preferred one. A further consideration is how this would affect MNLink. **Shelley Rogers will investigate and report back on this issue.**
- Hibbing Public Library is requesting the ability to include thumbnail photos, etc. in the catalog, especially for their Dylan collection—but Hibbing lacks server storage space.

Staff reports: none

Horizon “TeleCirc”

The group discussed, and received a brief demo of TeleMessaging 3 (TM3): an automated phone system that functions with Horizon to notify patrons about overdue items and holds, with the option to notify patrons about billing notices (not recommended due to legal requirements necessary to establish proof of contact if working with collection agencies) and to notify specified groups about upcoming events (for example, reminded to Friends members about meeting date). TM3 (outgoing calls only) has been included in the ALS budget and, if ALS proceeds, will be available to all member libraries. (TM3 also offers a system for patrons to call in and request information; however, ALS has not budgeted for this option at this time.)

- Calls are made to customers by an automated system. The system states either that a hold is available for (name of patron) to pick up at (pick-up location) or that (name of patron) has (number of items) overdue. (It was not clear if the system specifies the owning library of the overdue item.) The message is repeated, so that if an answering machine picks up, the full TM3 message should still be heard. If a message were left with either a patron or machine, it would be noted in the patron block record that a call was made on that date.
- ALS would have the ability to set the times of day during which the calls would be made and the number of attempts that the system would make. If the patron, or their answering machine, were not

contacted within the specified parameters, a notice would be printed. (Questions were raised regarding who would have the responsibility for checking for/printing/mailing these notices.)

- ALS would have the ability to change the language of the overdue message based on whether it was a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd notice.
- Multiple types of notices to one patron are combined in one; calls to multiple patrons within the same household are NOT combined.
- The call is noted as completed regardless of how much of the message a patron listens to—hang-ups will be recorded as a successful call. The company estimates that the system is effective with 99% of answering machines.
- Calls are made based on a code within the patron record; libraries may code patrons to never receive TM3 calls if so desired.
- The TM3 system allows for the generation of reports regarding the number of types of calls and contacts made.
- Duluth has, uses, and likes their telemessaging system; it saves significant staff time and postage.
- TM3 provides a PC loaded with and specially formatted for the TM3 system; ALS must provide a SIP server to allow TM3 to connect with Horizon. TM3 recommends a separate dedicated phone line; **ALS will consider whether this or allowing calls to go out on multiple lines behind the server would be preferable. ALS will also investigate the estimated number of calls that would be made and capacity of available lines to effectively handle the capacity.**

LIBRARY ISSUES

Downloadable Audio books Committee Report:

The committee met to look at available downloadable audio book options; Rebecca Patton submitted a written report and Sue Thompson provided a verbal summary. The major vendors offering downloadable audio books to libraries are NetLibrary and OverDrive. These two companies are very different in structure, pricing, and selection. Considerations included what patrons want, technological requirements for both patrons and libraries, staff time requirements for libraries, and selection. Based on their investigation, the committee expressed a slight preference for OverDrive as a source for downloadable audio books for ALS for the following reasons:

- Neither company is compatible with Ipods; however, with OverDrive, it is possible to burn items onto CD.
- OverDrive is not tied to a core collection; the customer selects how many and which titles to purchase.
- OverDrive allows titles to be downloaded in parts rather than demanding that the title be downloaded in one whole piece. NetLibrary is advertised as being faster, but Sue Thompson did not find this to be the case when she tried downloading titles from both companies both at her home and at her library.
- OverDrive is more user-friendly.
- OverDrive will allow a dedicated computer in the library for downloading audio books if desired.
- OverDrive help customers with publicity and will customize the OverDrive web site patrons access to download titles to match the customer's own web site.
- Cost structure: OverDrive has a one-time set-up cost of \$28,000, a monthly \$1000 cost, and titles are available at a cost of approximately \$35/title. Titles purchased are owned outright; if the customer discontinues service from OverDrive, they may store all purchased titles on their own server. NetLibrary has a cost of \$22,500, which must be paid each year (cost covers 22,500 checkouts of adult titles and 650 checkouts of children's title each year from their core collection of titles. NetLibrary is by subscription; if the customer discontinues service from NetLibrary, there is no further access to titles.

The group discussed various questions regarding whether patrons desire such a service and how it would play out. Questions raised included amount of interest by patrons (there was discussion about the possibility of a survey of patrons), the amount of bandwidth that would be used if patrons download at the library, selection of titles, how titles would be catalogued and whether or not there would be bib records available for both the ALS and Duluth catalogs. If ALS proceeds with OverDrive within the presently budgeted amount of \$63,000,

approximately 657 titles could be purchased during the next fiscal year.) **ALS will look into answers to the raised questions.** After discussion, Terry Moore moved and Jan Simmons seconded that ALS proceed with OverDrive. **Motion passed.** Jan Simmons also displayed a Playaway device purchased by Duluth Public Library; one book is loaded onto a small playing device, which can be worn or plugged into a car.

Rural Library Sustainability Workshop:

The workshop will be held on Tuesday, March 13, at ALS from 9-4 (registration 8:30-9:00 a.m.) Registration is needed by March 1. The workshop will have an emphasis on funding and grant writing; there will be a demonstration and/or discussion of Web Junction, background information on sustainability, and discussion of an action plan. Participants will have the opportunity to apply for a grant for computer training. Substitutes and mileage will be refunded to participants.

Legislative Update:

- Bills have been introduced for each item on the MLA platform. (Some have questioned how a Minneapolis Public Library/Hennepin County Library System merger might affect RPLBSS; there should be a separate bill regarding a merger should it occur.)
- Library Legislative Day is Wednesday, March 28; please consider going.
- A bill regarding making libraries eligible for early childhood education grants has also been introduced.

MNLink:

A new version of VDX is being released; it should allow restrictions based on media type. This should bring the potential for controlling the flow of requests.

Staff reports:

- Shari Fisher: ALS is close to launching the new ALS web site; Shari will keep everyone posted.
- Rebecca Patton: The date of the Advocacy Workshop (presently announced as 4/11) may need to change due to unavailability of the presenter. Further information will be given following the next ALS Board meeting. Annual reports are due 4/1; libraries not submitting the report by the deadline jeopardize their crossover and best seller funds.

NCLC:

The North Country Library Cooperative has started a scholarship program; any library may apply. (Contact Linda Wadman for an application—note that most of the funds for this fiscal year have already been granted.) Forms will eventually be available on the web.

Other:

- Patrons living outside of Duluth will no longer have access to the extra online databases funded directly by Duluth Public Library.
- Jan Simmons announced three upcoming retirements from Duluth Public Library:
 - Liz Pearson: March 28 (Her position will be filled by Jane Wester.)
 - Jan Simmons: May 25 (Her position may be filled by internal promotion.)
 - Beth Kelly: May 19 (The Mayor has appointed David Ouse as Acting Director)

Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Next meeting date: Wednesday, April 28. (March 28 is Minnesota Library Legislative Day.)

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Chapman, Secretary