Members present:
Paula Chapman-Aurora, Debby Bocnuk-Babbitt, Patrick Perry-Bovey, Mary Zaitz-Chisholm, Mary Lukkarila-Cloquet, Amy Hay-Gilbert, Marcia Anderson-Grand Rapids, Ginny Richmond-Hibbing, Nancy Riesgraf-Hibbing, Sue Sowers-Hoyt Lakes, Diane Adams-International Falls, Linda Wadman-NCLC, Julie Billings-Silver Bay, Susan Thompson-Two Harbors, Susan Krause-Virginia, and Nancy Maxwell-Virginia; Shari Fisher-ALS, Mark Koukol-ALS, Rebecca Patton-ALS, Shelley Rogers-ALS, Jim Weikum-ALS

President Nancy Maxwell called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Introductions were made by all present.

The minutes of 2/20/08 were presented. No corrections were noted; the minutes were approved as written.

COMPASS AND COMPUTER RELATED ISSUES

Questions or problems with Horizon functions:

- Diane/International Falls noted that some changes made to the stat class field disappeared around the time of the last Horizon upgrade. If this continues, please contact Mark with examples.

Horizon news, updates & upgrades:

- Horizon 7.4.2 is scheduled for release by the end of 2008, and upgrades to Horizon 7.4.3 and for the IPAC are planned for next year. The new releases should support the new version of Sybase and will experiment with Enterprise Faceted searches (which would push more details and information to patrons). SirsiDynix is also planning a release of "Pocket Circ" (an offline unit which would allow remote check-out/check-in or at-the-shelves scanning for inventory).
- The Horizon database back-up tape unit is failing and will be replaced soon.
- TM3 seems to be working well. Mark will look at running a streamlined report of failed calls for libraries; libraries may also run reports from Express Reporting.

ILS timeline strategy:

- Jim Weikum inquired what process and timeline libraries would like to follow in looking at options for a successor system to Horizon. The last time, committees were formed for various modules (Circulation, OPAC, Cataloging, Serials/Acquisitions and more); it was a good process but one that required advance planning. It was decided that committees will again be formed and will start setting meeting dates after August. ALS will send out information about committees and will seek volunteers.
- Some viable products include Sirsi's Symphony, Polaris, and various open source products. (Innovative Interfaces, Inc. has said that their product does not work well in a consortia environment.) Minitex has scheduled informational workshops with 2 major open source product providers. Four staff from ALS are planning to attend; others are encouraged to attend as well.
- Maintenance contract coverage on the Sun server is no longer available after April 2009. Since the price tag is high (approx. $20,000), it might be wise to delay replacement until a new ILS has been selected to ensure compatibility.

Overdrive downloadable audio books: iPod-compatible titles in MP3 format:

- OverDrive is working with publishers to offer downloadable audio book titles available in MP3 format. Reluctance from publishers to release titles without digital rights management is limiting the current selection of titles. These titles should work on iPods as well as any MP3 player; however, the download speed will probably be slower. OverDrive is offering a download station for this format as well. The earliest the titles will be available is late June. Rebecca will contact OverDrive for more information.

Follow-up information: Unique Management Systems pricing:

- Pricing for the Horizon Debt Collect module is $7000, with a $1260 annual maintenance fee. Although many present were interested in working with Unique Management debt collections, it was decided not to proceed with purchase of the Debt Collect module at this time. Mark will contact Unique Management Systems to find out if Debt Collect information could be migrated to a new system, and will also find out if disinterested libraries could opt out or if it is an all-or-none product.

Staff reports: Mark Koukol:

- The suggested changes have been made on the wording of the request buttons in the IPAC.
- Horizon will work with Microsoft Vista.
- The next version of Windows is due out in approximately 2 years. The next version is billed to be modular; consumers can purchase only the parts they want.
- Windows XP will be available for purchase through June 30. Through Jan. 30, 2009, white box versions of Windows XP that are preloaded on PC's should be available for purchase from local vendors.

Other:

- Cloquet Public library is planning on purchasing a self-checkout machine; does anyone currently use one? If so, please contact Mary at Cloquet with information.

LIBRARY ISSUES

PLA Conference reports and information sharing:

- A number of those present attended PLA. Attendees found the conference to be refreshing, energizing, motivating, exciting, and entertaining. Tips gleaned included calling 9-1-1 when necessary when dealing with problem patrons, focusing on service responses when doing strategic planning (the book The New Strategic Planning for Results is in the ALS Professional Collection), remembering the importance of early childhood literacy for strengthening communities, getting staff out from behind the desk and interacting with patrons (this and various other ideas were adapted from the book Why We Buy), the importance of weeding, and user-friendly shelving and displays.

Reporting items missing from ALS Delivery and/or NEMIDS:

- Velocity requests that missing items be reported within 30 days. This time frame is difficult for libraries because of already-lengthy transit times from and to some locations.
- Mark is able to run a report of items that have been in transit since a specified time; the report includes the locations from and to which items are in transit. Information is available for items placed in transit after the last Horizon upgrade. Mark will run this report after the first of every month and email it to the ALS-Dynix list as an Excel attachment.

Staff reports: Shelley Rogers:

- Shelley went to a Tech Services workshop in Ohio. She will send her report to Minitex for posting on the Minitex blog. If you would like to see it, ask Shelley or check the Minitex blog.

Staff reports: Rebecca Patton:

- There will be a workshop on time management on June 27 at the Fond du Lac Tribal College in Cloquet; registration information will be forthcoming.
- Registration for the highly recommended Nancy Pearl workshop in September is filling up; please register soon!
- NoveList is rolling out a version including nonfiction titles; please use the free trial link and give feedback to Rebecca.

Staff reports: Jim Weikum:

- Jim distributed sample "Safe at Home" brochures received from the Secretary of State relating to the confidentiality program.
- ALS's 2008 budget has funding for the 2008 initiatives related to the ALS strategic plan. ALS will bring in outside consultants to evaluate the delivery services, Technical Services, and Tech planning. ALS is also looking at funding a regional "Return on Investment" study of regional library services, and at finding a consultant to circulate amongst member libraries and work with local strategic planning. More information will be forthcoming.

Staff reports: Shari Fisher:

- Please let Shari know of any schedule changes in the Velocity delivery times. Shari will check if changes are permanent and will ask that Velocity communicate with ALS and member libraries before making schedule changes.

NCLC:

- The "23 Things on a Stick" tech learning program has finished. 66 people from ALS participated; 22 finished the program by the April 16 deadline. Participants reported having fun and learning a lot; the web site will be left up so others may continue to use it. Incentives for those who finished by the deadline will be distributed soon. There is interest in a re-run of this program as well as a new tech learning program.
- 5 PLA scholarships were awarded.

Other:

- KAXE recently received a grant to work on community-based web sites. They will provide training on blogging and web site creation; their goal is to see local community journalism web sites established and to increase political involvement online. They are presently focusing on Grand Rapids, Hibbing, Virginia, Brainerd and Bemidji.

Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Next meeting date: Wednesday, May 28, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Chapman, Secretary