MARINet Board Meeting Minutes
Nov. 19, 2021
Meeting held online

Present: Henry Bankhead (Chair) SRPL, Abbot Chambers SAU, Linda Kenton SAN, Anji Brenner MVY, Sarah Frye COM, Lana Adlawan MCFL, Franklin Escobedo LRK, Debbie Mazzolini BET, Gary Gorka DUC, Ivan Silva (guest) BET, Joey Della Santina BET, Jessica Trenary MNET, Dan McMahon (minutes) MNET.

Public Comments: No members of the public are present.
Introduction of guests: none

Introductions for Lana Adlawan, new MCFL Director, around the table everyone introduces themselves. Followed by recognition that this is Debbie Mazzolini's last meeting after 25 years.

Approval of minutes for Oct. 21, 2021: One correction from Dan, p. 2, all six new e-resources from the state are ready for patrons. Minutes then approved unanimously.

Old Business:

1. RFID Project Update: 50,000 media tags were lost in transit for weeks, but have finally arrived. The USB pads are supposed to arrive in January now, though this is the fourth date we've been given for these. With the shielded pads, we're trying to solve the disconnect problem, testing at Novato, San Rafael and Larkspur especially, and it seems like it might finally be working. The rest of those shielded pads should be here before the end of the year.

    7 encoding carts are here, at College of Marin Kentfield and Bel Tib. BSLW has started tagging at COM. Thomas is here from BSLW managing the tagging crews, he's paying $20/hr. to find people, and it's still difficult.

    Do we want to do some kind of announcement when RFID is going live for the public??   Are any libraries going to do any messaging, and have there been any public comments at the tagging sites? COM reports that since they're tagging in a small space, people will have questions. Larkspur says that when the county makes a big announcement to patrons, they'll follow. The self-check is the place where they'll normally introduce RFID to the public. There are concerns about publicity due to the anti-tag crowd, so MCFL may just start with internal messaging. Jessica reminds us the free self-check offer is only good through January.

    We do need talking points for staff, mostly around privacy issues, also addressing concerns about loss of jobs. We should also have a shared FAQ that's posted online for staff and public. There was a discussion of past PR projects, normally we don't do unified messaging on anything, but for the BiblioCommons launch, Sarah Houghton coordinated a response and a few directors were quoted in the IJ article, it all looked very organized.   A task force is formed, Anji, Henry and Linda will work on messaging and talking points for staff, and coordinate with Dan to post FAQs.

2. New Time for Board Meeting: Fridays are not ideal, and using a Doodle poll to pick a general time slot doesn't really work, it's too tied to specific dates. Tuesday through Thursday are the best choices. Since Marin County is moving their Dept. Heads meeting soon, we should wait for

that before pinning down a time. Meanwhile, can we skip December's meeting? Motion to skip Dec. meeting is made and seconded, passes unanimously.

3. Retreat planning: It's Jan. 27, 900 a.m. to 200 p.m. at Falkirk Cultural Center. Henry is working on catering; he's also gathering info on dietary restrictions. Do we bring our own cutlery or do we want them to provide it? Possible topics for the retreat:

   a. Overdrive as a topic, as well as universal borrowing
   b. Should we have a facilitator? Yes, we will discuss the details in December by email, mindful of not violating the Brown Act.
   c. Retreat is in person, but masked.
   d. Is it too ambitious to talk about more than one topic?
   e. Can we fold in an equity discussion?
   f. Possible topic: How does this group function?
   g. With a bigger agenda, all the topics are worthwhile, so if we don't get to something then we can put it on the agenda for a monthly meeting.
   h. Do we need to authorize an additional budget? We can authorize the facilitator using other training or conference money, which is otherwise going unspent this year.

New Business:

1. Overdrive topics:
   a. Overdrive is setting up Kanopy using a kind of backend Advantage account. Overdrive is also offering some reciprocal lending between customer collections, so we can partner with other libraries and share materials, very much like LinkPlus. It would increase our circulation and get our own patrons more access to e-books in the back titles. Yolo and Solano have joined in a group, should we explore partnering with PLS? Jessica can contact our Overdrive Rep and Carol Frost to gather information. We also need to know more about the terms of these partnerships, can we drop out at anytime?

   b. We're having trouble this year keeping up with the holds ratios with the money we put into the budget this year, $220k for FY 21-22. The reasons are higher circulation (it was 30k checkouts per month when we passed the budget, it's 55k a month now), and some different purchasing patterns by individual libraries. Holds ratios are heading into the 12:1 level and higher if we don't increase funding, which is much higher ratio than the holds ratio for books, and would most likely lead to patron frustration at the wait times.

   c. There is an extensive discussion about Overdrive, and how it functions in our consortium. To summarize just the key points:
      i. We're getting 600,000 circulations systemwide in Overdrive every year, and spending about $600,000 collectively on content. Are we missing an opportunity to be strategic with this by not centralizing the whole operation under MARINet, with monitoring the heuristics and targeted spending?
      ii. It's suggested that we have a committee do this function, and leave spending decisions up to libraries as part of their collection development strategies. But then it's pointed out that this is precisely what we're doing now and it could be working better.
      iii. How long have we been at a 12:1 ratio for titles $75+? About a month now.

iv. We risk losing the momentum we've gained in the last year and a half with this collection, as it's now 1/3 of all checkouts. If people can't get their holds from our collection, they will turn increasingly to Amazon etc.

v. A sharing plan would be like LinkPlus for Overdrive, and access to back titles from other, possibly larger partners would really help our patrons, as well as increasing the use of our own older titles by patrons of anyone we partner with.

vi. SORA is getting good checkouts, but only a few schools are engaging with it – even though it's free. Some outreach by the Children's Librarians to other schools could really help this grow.

vii. Statistics do show that each library's circulation in Overdrive is closely aligned with their share of the MARINet funding formula. Library spending on Overdrive outside the 1/3 that's in the MARINet budget is generally though not as closely aligned.

viii. With a completely shared collection like Overdrive, we are being made to act as one unified system which we're not. It exposes the fault lines here.

ix. Sausalito compared their physical audiobook circulations to the e-audiobook circulations and found that it's 2,000 online to 250 physical circs. Abbot plans to make decisions around this information in regards to buying audiobooks on CD versus money for more e-audiobooks.

x. The JPA doesn't have much to say about this type of collection, though it does leave us the option to have services that not all members pay for by the funding formula. (This is "formula" spending versus "ala carte" or "tiered" spending.) It just has to be explicated in Board Resolutions and budget documents. We've been tiering or ala carting Overdrive, LinkPlus and CENIC, everything else is by funding formula so far. The language in the 1997 JPA suggests that all "core" services (then, just the ILS) be done by formula. We could end up considering Overdrive to be core at some point.

xi. How much of our regular budgets do we shift from print to E? It boils down to everyone looking at their own budgets and making their decision of how much to shift.

xii. Overdrive is different from physical collections in that it's a single collection, with a single interface, so that everything is available to all patrons. Online items also don't "return" to their home library ever. Yet the JPA also enshrines that libraries make their own local decisions about policies.

xiii. If Overdrive Advantage is being activated for Kanopy, how do we prevent libraries from using that to create their own silos of content? The answer is that we don't have to make accounts using Advantage available to library selection staff.

d. Actions to be taken now:

i. The DRWG will make a recommendation on the funding level for Overdrive for FY 22-23 as they normally do, and that will be what we put in the proposed budget for January's meeting.

ii. The DRWG will also look at the sharing plans between Overdrive libraries and make a recommendation on how to proceed.

iii. Dan offers that we could put an extra $20k to $40k into Overdrive right now, just from current funds. (Some bills are still lower than expected due to Covid and strong state funding, especially the CENIC networking costs.) A motion is made to allow up to but not to exceed $50,000 for Overdrive content right now,

out of current funds. After acknowledgement of the autonomy of libraries to make local decisions on their collections, the motion passes unanimously. We're aiming for a 10:1 or 12:1 ratio for the rest of the year.

2. Fees and Fines: Overdue fines are gone, and fines collected for Replacements/Lost Books are back to a level about half of what they were, similar to the levels of circulation now. We have widely varying policies on replacement charges and on processing fees. This topic should go to the CWG next month, do they have a recommendation? Do they think it's a problem? We are reminded that for many members, any change in fees and fines has to go back to Council, so it's not easy or quickly scheduled. This topic should come back with data on what each library is charging as a processing fee. It may be something that libraries can't agree on. Staff have more leeway in waiving fines now, but it's also good to not create unwanted fines in the first place. It quickly becomes an equity issue. We need more data on the fines being paid for further discussion. And waiving policies might vary, but there's a concern that such waiving of fines not be subject to staff bias.

Equity discussion: (Henry)
Transgender and non-binary are also equity issues. They are being very conscious of pronouns at SRPL. This issue is evolving culturally in the workplace. Specific actions at San Rafael Public Library are to normalize the conversation, add personal pronouns to staff name tags, and work on single stall restrooms. County DPW has not addressed this in any buildings. If anyone sees good signage examples, please send them to Lana. One director puts her pronouns in her e-mail signature line and people ask, "What does that mean?" For young people this doesn't seem to be an issue, which gives us hope. It's suggested that on this topic, if people are confused, they can ask their kids about it.

Systems Report: We'll have a resolution in a future meeting for setting up a bank account, and authorizing exactly who can write checks on it. San Rafael's IT support company (Xantrion) is looking at taking over the CENIC Wi Fi with their own controller, which would work. We would leave the existing APs but then be out of the support and AP business for them. AT&T is working on pulling fiber to the Library in the Northgate Mall for a CENIC connection.

Future agenda
- Open source.
- Board meeting schedule.
- Retreat, so survey.
  RFID
- Diversity in collections, as a topic, would be good to know what other people are doing. Audits.

Announcements:
- The Locker showed up at LRK and will be installed soon.
- At Sausalito, the tent encampment is still in the park below.
- For scheduling a meeting in January aside from the retreat, we should wait to see what the County's Department Heads schedule is for next year.

Meeting adjourned 11:21 a.m. The next meeting scheduled is the Retreat on Jan 27.
--MINUTES APPROVED Jan. 27, 2022 by MARINet Board