

## **Minnesota Digital Library Coalition**

Steering Committee Meeting

August 25, 2005

MINITEX Conference Room, Andersen Library, U of M

### **MINUTES**

**Attending:** Kristi Tornquist, Mike Kathman, Keith Ewing, Joyce Hommell (for Bill DeJohn), Jim Dildine, Marian Rengel, Gay Galles, John Butler, Jason Roy, Eric Celeste, Michael Fox

#### **Project Manager's report**

Jim Dildine reported that there are 4,000 images online in "Minnesota Reflections" at <http://reflections.mndigital.org>. We have 5,515 images with metadata in our control and will have between 700 and 1,300 more before the end of the project. The selection committee will meet today to talk about the photos project in the next LSTA grant. The management team plans to form a new committee to select documents for that grant. Jim feels that we still need to deal with the question of archiving the collection and proposed that the MDLC purchase a dedicated electronic storage system and print the entire collection of images to a stable paper medium. Jim has also talked with some contributors about attending steering committee meetings. He recommends that the MDLC investigate incorporation.

#### **2003 LSTA grant completion**

Marian Rengel reported that we have until Sept. 15, 2005, to spend or encumber funds on this grant. We can pay bills until Oct. 15, 2005.

The steering committee and the management team had discussed possibly using some of those funds. Eric Celeste presented an idea that he had proposed at the June 10 Steering Committee and discussed further at a management team meeting. His recommendation, with support from the management team, is to purchase dedicated back-up for the Minnesota Digital Library collections. Doing so would take under 1 terabyte, which would cost about \$7,000. He is thinking of a RAID array for storage, not a server. This would be housed at the UofM and be separate from the MDL's public server. Using this dedicated server approach would allow the UofM to manage back-up properly. We could purchase this hardware quickly.

Mike Kathman suggested that if we have funds we could talk about archiving the collection, but Eric repeated that archiving has recurring costs that the MDL is not at this time prepared to meet.

The committee moved further discussion of Eric's plan to later in the agenda.

#### **New LSTA (2006) grant**

Marian reported that SCSU has returned its signed copies of the LSTA 2006 grant to State Library Services and is awaiting their signature and returned copy. She advised that Keith Ewing, principle investigator, and the steering committee start thinking about an extension, since the shut down of state of Minnesota offices this summer resulted in a delay in receiving the grant paperwork. Even though the State Library Services staff said that we could submit bills incurred

for the grant back to June 1, 2005, we have not begun working on this project and won't until September 1 at the soonest.

To begin this work on the new grant and the second implementation phase, we will need a document selection committee for that portion of the project. Kristi Tornquist asked why they needed to be historical documents. That is what we stated in the grant application. Michael Fox began a discussion of the phrase "most important" included in the application for these documents. He recommended using a more general phrase when soliciting documents, such as "significant early documents." He also asked what we meant by a "document." Mike Kathman suggested that certain maps would be considered a document, but are they things we want to include? Several people pointed out that, as we were writing the grant, we were inclusive of maps but not of large monographs. Eric suggested we look at the most usable documents, particularly those valuable to K-12 social studies teachers. We could include pointers from our database to other collections, such as the Library of Congress American Memory book project. Kristi recommended that we clearly tell contributors that we are not planning to do documents that have already been digitized. Michael reported that Tim Hoogland (MHS Institutional Outreach Programs Coordinator) and Pat Coleman (book archivist) have agreed to serve on the document committee. Others recommended that we look for a social studies teacher to serve on the committee and Keith said that Stephen Gross, assistant professor of History at the UofM-Morris is very interested in serving on this committee. Jason recommended that we be more proactive in targeting documents and contributors than we were on "Minnesota Reflections."

Eric reported that we did run into some problems with some photos that had not been cleared for inclusion on the MDL and Keith said there was some duplication of images in the collection. Everyone agreed that we need to work to make sure that what we get from contributors is what we asked for.

John Butler, speaking for the management team, recommended that we use this shift from one grant to the next as an opportunity to evaluate the workflow of digitization projects. We had set a parameter that the metadata would come first and then we would digitize the objects, but that was not how "Minnesota Reflections" worked. Also, the upgrade to CONTENTdm gives us the opportunity to distribute the work flow better. We should look at the lessons we've learned and study how we get data and objects into the collection. He recommends getting objects in first so that we do not have to spend time merging metadata with objects. Acquisition stations on CONTENTdm are all Web-based now. The steering committee endorsed finding and using a better workflow to projects.

### **Training**

The two June training sessions presented in Duluth and Mankato by Jason Roy (MHS) and John Chapman (UofM metadata librarian) went very well. Eighteen people attended the Duluth training and 32 people attended in Mankato. We received good comments from people and questions on where we would go from here on training. Jason recommended that John's session on metadata might help participants in MDL collection projects. We could modify the session to give them practical answers to using the CONTENTdm acquisition station for entering metadata.

Keith reported that Carla Dewey-Urban sent out word on training available through OCLC and that OCLC is wondering if we want to co-sponsor any sessions at no cost to us. Of

the topics OCLC had to offer, only training on preserving digital materials and digitizing audio seemed interesting, but even they weren't directly relevant. Eric and Keith will let Carla know of MDLC interest.

Kristi reported that the board of Central Minnesota Libraries Exchange was very interested in having us do training for teachers. She asked if we needed to hire someone to do training for K-12 teachers on using the digital library. Keith recommended not going too far down the K-12 road until we get the survey and focus group results from Sandbox Studios.

Keith also reported that Wayne Torborg from St. John's University and the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, will be conducting an in-depth color digitization workshop for MDLC participants the week of September 12 at the Minnesota History Center.

### **MINITEX as MDL Home**

Joyce Hommel, MINITEX associate director for MNLINK, reported that Bill DeJohn is interested in providing a permanent home for the Minnesota Digital Library. Kristi reported that MAGNOLIA recommends that the primary participants develop a memorandum of agreement to locate the MDL in MINITEX. She also reported that Bill was going to talk with (Emily Kissane) of the (Minnesota) Office of Higher Education. The MDLC Steering Committee would become an advisory committee, with the MDLC a unit within MINITEX. The next step is to get Bill, Wendy Lougee, Michael and Kristi together to discuss the possibilities and how the members of the coalition would work together.

Several committee members suggested keeping an advisory board for the MDLC if MINITEX becomes its home, but redefine its functions. Michael asked the further question of where the Minnesota Digital Library is going. So far we have focused on cultural heritage, which he's seen as a good pilot focus, but where does the committee see it going beyond that? John Butler asked if perhaps the MDL should become more infrastructure than content. Others agreed that this was a possibility, suggesting that the MDL is trying to figure out how it fits in with other state services. Is it collection development or is it infrastructure?

Eric suggested that the MDL's purpose is to make resources available to people who do not have them. Keith and Bill DeJohn have talked about the point at which the MDL and MINITEX funnel together. Mike Kathman said that for funding reasons, the MDL home needs to be in MINITEX, but if that funding sources doesn't come through, then the MDL needs a different home. Michael reported that the Minnesota Historical Society has been talking with the Bush Foundation about a project to create a cultural heritage grid of service and development projects.

Steering Committee members recommended that Bill, Wendy, Kristi and Michael discuss these issues and come back to the steering committee with suggestions or recommendations.

### **Publishing Agreement**

The committee agreed that we would use the membership form, approved in May and distributed at the annual meeting in June, as a means of confirming participant understanding of the uses of the Minnesota Digital Library collections. No one has yet signed this form. Marian and Jim agreed to work together to modify the form and then Jim would work directly with participants to get signatures on the document. John Butler asked if the MDL has the right to provide OAI (Open Archives Initiative) information.

### **MDLC and Archiving**

Jim had recommended in his report printing the entire “Minnesota Reflections” collection on stable paper medium. Members of the committee pointed out that there are better ways of creating of non-digital form of the collection, such as microfilm, if that is what the committee wants to do. Eric asked what we would be trying to accomplish with this type of backup since the originals of all of the “Minnesota Reflections” images still exist. Jim suggested that the MDL has no access to the originals, but Eric pointed out that we do have access and would just need to go back to the participating organization and ask to rescan them. Michael suggested that if the MDL does become an infrastructure system then we would need a digital asset management system. Others suggested that we need to consider workflow in determining archiving or backup needs.

Eric reported that we have made a clumsy attempt at improving workflow in the current project and that the UofM and MHS and the contributors have learned enough that they can define a clearer workflow for the next collection project. Eric repeated his recommendation that the MDLC purchase a storage system; this would provide enough reliable storage for us for a few years and give us time to discuss the issues more fully. We could also then look at how archiving is part of our workflow.

Kristi pointed out that we need to be clear with participants that we are not protecting their historical societies from flooding. Jason added to her point the fact that the MDL is digital, that we cannot replace a lost postcard. Mike asked if the archiving ability of the MDLC could be a selling point, archiving as a part of the infrastructure, and Eric suggested that if we look for recurring funding, yes, archiving should be part of the plan.

Kristi reported that Emily Kissane at the Minnesota Office of Higher Education was willing to ask for off-year funding for the MDL. Kristi and others will follow-up on this offer.

### **Sandbox Studio’s Update**

Keith reported that results from the Zoomerang survey conducted on behalf of the MDLC by Sandbox Studios had a small summer response rate, but that Scott Sayer and Kris Wetterlund expected numbers to pick up as teachers return to school this week and next. In fact, more people are hitting the URL now than had most of the summer. Scott and Kris are conducting focus groups. They will be in Bemidji Aug. 26 and then are going to Moorhead, Minneapolis, and a site in southern Minnesota. They are conducting an assessment of K-12 needs and of teachers’ use of digital objects and what teachers would need. We expect them to complete their work and have a report to us by the September 15 end date of their contract.

### **Launch of “Minnesota Reflections”**

“Minnesota Reflections” is out there. It’s up and working (ready for the State Fair which opens today). John reported that there are minor adjustments needed and that they and the UofM have been providing them. Jim has been providing contributor feedback. It was a bit of a nail biter getting the collection ready, partly due to the late release date of CONTENTdm 4.0. We were unable to fit in the usability that we had talked about in the spring. The staff at the UofM is encountering some technical difficulties with CONTENTdm. There is a problems with DiMeMa not being familiar with Apache servers and with memory leaks

“Minnesota Reflections” is on the Web at <http://reflections.mndigital.org>.

We have done some things on the interface that are outside of the box, such as topic, map and profile access.

Jason asked Keith to create a redirect link from the mndigital.org profile page to the “Reflections” interface. Keith will take care of this.

Keith recommended that the MDLC thank all of the people who did so much work to get “Minnesota Reflections” up and working well. He asked John and Jason for the names of people in their organizations that the MDLC should thank. He will send out certificates of appreciation. Michael recommended that he also send letters of recognition with copies to their bosses.

Michael asked about the status of the standardized subject heading list. He has a volunteer, Dorothy Kettner, who used to be library director at Fergus Falls, ready to localize that list.

### **Publicizing “Minnesota Reflections.”**

The committee is still interested in learning if we can piggyback with MINITEX to have a display at the Minnesota Library Association conference in September and the Minnesota Educational Media Organization meeting in October. Marian will check with Mary Parker, MINITEX assistant director, who is very busy right now with the State Fair booth, after the fair is over.

Gay Galles offered to write up an announcement for MEMO’s fall newsletter.

Joyce Hommel recommended talking with Suzanne Miller, state librarian, about working with the Association of Secondary School Principals. Mike Kathman recommended the regional library directors and the Council of Public Libraries.

What are our general PR needs? Do we have a spokesperson, someone who can help tell the story? Marian and Keith will work on publicity. Eric said that Christopher James, a UofM Libraries public relations staff member, could also provide some expertise. The committee recommended that we develop and send a generic press release to the contributors so they can modify it and include a link to a photo from their collection.

October 1 will be the official launch date.

### **Other participants in the Steering Committee**

Todd Digby, who was a guest last spring and is the new systems librarian for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, has expressed an interest in being part of the Steering Committee. Jim said there was also interest from several contributors in participating, particularly Ben Leonard from Nicollet County and Steve Harsin from the Iron Range Research Center. John and others supported the idea of having contributors serve on the Steering Committee. The committee approved adding Todd Digby; Kristi will notify him. Jim will contact both Nicollet and the IRRC about sending a visitor to the next meeting in anticipation that we would ask them to join the Committee.

### **Funding**

Kristi needs help pursuing external funding opportunities. She would like someone to help handle the minutia.

She has not heard recently from MnSCU on our federal legislative request. Marian volunteered to assist with following up on this.

Mike Kathman stressed the point that our energies should go to finding permanent funding. It takes a lot of energy to do grants. Michael recommended that we figure out where we want to be, what our vision is. Mike said that the vision he has is that the Minnesota Digital Library will have a collection and have links to create in effect a gateway to other digital collections. In Minnesota, there is a distribution model that we often follow, of providing access to smaller areas and then linking larger areas that have their own missions. Michael sees the MDL as providing services to smaller institutions and agrees that the MDL will be based on a distributive model. Keith agreed, reminding the members that smaller institutions do not have the wherewithal to do much of the digitization themselves. The larger institutions can develop and test and do a lot of the research and development and then others can pick it up and use it.

Eric suggested some things the MDL might do could include hosting an index of metadata from across the state. We are already reaching many more institutions and going way beyond where the academic organizations can go.

### **Announcement**

This year's MINERVA conference will be November 2. Planners are trying to put together a session that looks outside the box.

### **Next MDLC Steering Committee meetings**

10 a.m. to 1 p.m., October 3 – Miller Center B18, St. Cloud State University

10 a.m. to 1 p.m., November 7 – MINITEX conference room, Andersen Library, UofM, Minneapolis

Notes by Marian Rengel (8/25/05)