

## **Minnesota Digital Library Coalition**

Steering Committee Meeting

July 17, 2006

MINITEX Conference Room, Andersen Library, University of Minnesota

### **MINUTES**

**Attending:** Kristi Tornquist (SCSU), Wendy Lougee (UofM), Kathy Parker (CSB/SJU), Michael Fox (MHS), Keith Ewing (SCSU), Bill DeJohn (MINITEX), Marian Rengel (SCSU), Ben Leonard (Nicollet County HS), Steve Harsin (IRRC), Daardi Sizemore (MSU, Mankato), Jason Roy (UofM), John Butler (UofM), Monica Ralston (MHS), Eric Celeste (UofM)

**Guests:** Joyce Hommel (MINITEX), Carla Dewey Urban (MINITEX), Cecelia Boone (MINITEX)

The Steering Committee welcomed Kathy Parker, the new library director at the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University. Mike Kathman retired.

The committee recommended that Keith Ewing update the MDL Steering Committee listserv to add new members and remove old members.

### **Current grant project**

Jason Roy reported that we have almost completed all scanning on the current grant work, including images and documents. To date, Jason (UofM Digital Collections Unit) and Monica Ralston (Minnesota Historical Society digitization services) have scanned 6,926 images and documents from 32 separate collections. However, only nine organizations have returned metadata. Everybody but the three organizations that are participating in the project to enter metadata directly into CONTENTdm (IRRC, MSU Mankato, Nicollet County Historical Society) are providing their metadata by completing the Excel spreadsheet. A discussion of concerns over metadata followed, including raising questions of training for participants, the ease of using the spreadsheet, and moving to entering metadata directly into CONTENTdm.

Jason extended thanks and appreciation for the work of Dorothy Koettner, a volunteer who has been working for the Minnesota Historical Society and now the Minnesota Digital Library. She's been working on the "Minnesota Reflections" metadata, adding Library of Congress controlled vocabulary. Michael Fox said that Dorothy has also suggested to him that, with the MDLC's stronger emphasis on serving the K-12 community, we make sure that the metadata helps K-12 students and teachers more effectively search our database. She's going to move ahead with that idea. John Butler recommended that we send Dorothy a certificate of appreciation or in some way honor her work. The Steering Committee agreed and also suggested that we honor others who have volunteered their talents to developing and supporting the Minnesota Digital Library. The committee supported the idea of developing a special Web page to commemorate and honor these people.

Marian Rengel reported that we have three transcription projects underway with Stillwater Public Library (German alien registrations), Gustavus Adolphus (various documents)

and Minnesota Historical Society (various documents). We will have spent approximately \$4,000 of the \$6,250 we have budgeted for that project.

Keith Ewing reported that Sandbox Studios completed their work on developing resources for K-12 teachers and he has now posted these projects to the MDL Web site. Those include a PowerPoint presentation, the Pachyderm package, and a teachers user guide. Discussion followed on how to share news of these packages with the educational community. Bill DeJohn will be attending the Minnesota Educational Media Organization (MEMO) leadership conference July 26; he will share information then. He also recommended that we write an article for various publications, including MHS newsletters and MEMO publications. Bill suggested that MINITEX convene a gathering of Social Studies teachers near the Minnesota Department of Education offices and invite teachers there to view the packages. Others suggested developing Web-based resources to demonstrate the tools. Joyce Hommel recommended attending the Metronet meeting with teacher groups that will be held August 22-24. The committee agreed on these actions: Bill will present the teaching packagers at MEMO, we will send word out through MEMO, MHS, and MDL listservs, and MINITEX staff will share the packages at the Metronet meeting in August.

Keith raised the question of downloading the full Pachyderm program to MDL servers. Discussion followed on the computing challenges that would involve, including developing an application programming interface (API) to allow Pachyderm to work directly with the "Minnesota Reflections" database. Marian pointed out that we have funds in the new LSTA grant, which is fully executed and in place at MINITEX, for doing this work.

### **Annual meeting recap**

Keith shared the summary of evaluations (attached). Our overall rating was 3.3 on a scale of 4, a little better than last year's rating. We had a 30 percent increase in registrations and nearly 50 percent of those registered were attending their first MDLC annual meeting. Kristi Tornquist thanked Daardi Sizemore, Marian and the MINITEX staff for all of the work they did for planning the meeting.

Kristi asked if we wanted to have an annual meeting in 2007 and if we have funding for one. Marian said that the grant does not fund the meeting. Committee members supported that we have a meeting and Bill said that MINITEX will either pay for it or that we will need to consider charging a fee. Michael once again offered the Minnesota History Center as the venue. He'll check availability for the first two Mondays in June 2007.

Planning for next year's annual meeting began. Kristi asked if notetakers had shared their notes and recommended that they do so soon. Several people recommended doing more with metadata training, as well as scanning training. While Steve Harsin suggested that we should offer such training at Minnesota Library Association (MLA) meetings, Bill pointed out that we're seeing people coming to our annual meetings who do not go to MLA. Others suggested that we focus more attention on K-12 work, since many participants this year were interested in that topic.

### **Goals for the new LSTA grant**

MINITEX has received the fully executed grant and can begin spending on projects.

Marian reported that the new grant has funds for digitizing 500 maps, 3,000 images, and 1,250 document pages. One goal of the grant is to experiment with ownership and copyright issues. The grant also includes funds for the assessment of existing digital collections, of the

needs of the people and organizations the MDL seeks to serve, and for developing more educational resources.

Michael explained that he is expecting that the Bush Foundation will be announcing imminently the award to MHS of a grant to develop its cultural heritage grid project. That would have an impact on MDLC projects. MHS is also discussing reinstating its regrating program to smaller historical organizations to provide them funds for project work. This project by MHS dovetails into the work of the MDLC, including developing the vision a subcommittee began work on in April.

John Butler asked if MHS has already done some needs assessment. Michael explained that the MHS project involved needs within MHS itself and within a small working groups of six to seven institutions, not statewide. This is one area that the goals of the MDLC and MHS could work together.

Marian explained that the digitization projects that will help us achieve our goals have not yet been defined. She asked if we wanted to have open applications or if we wanted to seek out specific projects and participants. Jason said that he is not concerned with open project applications on the maps and images, but does with documents, since the current project yielded a hodgepodge of projects. Eric Celeste suggested that we ask teachers and historians what documents they need, but Ben Leonard explained that often when you ask historians that they ask in return, "what can you get for us?" Still, several people suggested and the committee supported having all steering committee members ask people they know what we should digitize. Others suggested developing a theme and inviting people to submit applications. Given the smaller number of objects to digitize, these applications would be more competitive.

While some people recommended moving this discussion to the management team, others felt it was important enough to meet, at least in a telephone conference call, though some suggested coming to St. Cloud, to develop the projects. Keith, Marian, Ben, Jason, Monica and Eric all volunteered to be part of this discussion. Marian will make the arrangements.

In other discussions, Joyce recommended that the MDL develop task forces to take on the work of these projects. Marian reminded the group of the timeline and assessment goals that are part of the official contract for this grant. Carla Dewey Urban distributed copies.

### **MDL Leadership/Organizational changes**

Marian will be assuming the responsibilities of outreach coordinator as soon as the contract between Learning Resources & Technology Services at St. Cloud State University and MINITEX at the UofM is complete. Bill reported that he has sent a draft to the UofM legal department and will push it through as soon as possible. Marian will have responsibility for managing projects, but will not be taking on the metadata review job that Jim Dildine did. Discussion of metadata training resumed. Committee members explored needs of the MDL and "Minnesota Reflections." Some suggestions emerged, including better training for participants in completing the spreadsheet and working toward direct input of metadata into CONTENTdm. The committee also supported a continued relationship with Dorothy Koettner to work on metadata.

Marian explained that the bulk of her responsibilities will be to do the assessment of digitization projects across the state and building quality relationships with people we seek to serve.

### **MnLINK Update**

Joyce Hommel said that MnLINK is working with Fretwell-Downing to begin testing that company's software to do federated searches on (Open Archive Initiative) OAI-compliant databases. John Butler (UofM), Mike Berkowski (MINITEX), and Nick Banitt (MINITEX) are working on this test. This could have an impact on future development of resources for the Minnesota Digital Library.

### **Minnesota State Fair**

MINITEX is deep into planning for the Minnesota State Fair Aug. 24-Sept. 4. Marian advised the committee that she will be sending out a request of volunteers to work at least one six-hour shift. Volunteers will get a t-shirt and a pass into the fair. As a partner in the booth, we've been asked to provide a bookmark and a giveaway. However, there is still a question of whether grant funds may be spent on publicity. Suzanne Miller was going to check on this and get back to us. Since she was unable to attend this meeting, Bill DeJohn will follow up with her. If the grant cannot cover the cost of publicity, then MINITEX will.

### **Continuing the Management Team/Restructuring the Steering Committee**

Issues over the size of the Steering Committee and changes in the membership of the Management Team came under discussion. Currently, the Management Team meets by conference call and tries to maintain a biweekly schedule. Members are: Keith, Marian, Monica, John, and Jason. Eric has volunteered to participate when he can and as needed. Bill will be representing MINITEX as needed. Marian recommended that we have a historian on the management team and asked Ben Leonard if he would be interested in participating. He agreed to. The Management Team will meet (July 31) with the MINITEX staff to discuss how the two will work together.

The Committee discussed the increasing size of the Steering Committee, which is now at 21 members. Do we need to continue meeting monthly? What function is the Steering Committee serving? Kristi explained that at the beginning of the MDL, we worked in committees with the chairs of those committees meeting as an executive committee, but found that to move things along, more people needed to be involved in the discussions. The committee agreed to put this issue on the agenda for the August meeting.

### **Training on CONTENTdm**

Carla Dewey Urban reported that MINITEX has started gathering information on the prevalence of the use of CONTENTdm in its service area and has begun developing training on CONTENTdm. They are looking developing training for the user population on such special features as the PowerPoint plug-in. In October, at the OCLC users group meeting, there will be a CONTENTdm users group meeting as well.

John asked how many CONTENTdm users there are in the state. While we know of some, we don't know of all. Carla will investigate some of these issues.

### **Opening "Minnesota Reflections" to OCLC's WorldCat**

Carla asked the committee if the fact that it has not made "Minnesota Reflections" accessible to OCLC's WorldCat (<http://www.oclc.org/worldcat/>), a major library search engine, was a policy or philosophical issue. Committee members explained that the issues involved WorldCat's definition of a collection. The way the MDLC is set up, each contributor's collection

in “Minnesota Reflections” is separate, but wouldn’t OCLC see “Minnesota Reflections” as one collection? If “Minnesota Reflections” is one collection as far as WorldCat is concerned, then our question is “can the Minnesota Digital Library Coalition responsibly make other organizations’ collections open to this worldwide search program?” Carla will investigate with OCLC what the MDLC’s options are in terms of reporting collections.

**A Minnesota-only OAI-PMH (Open Archives Initiative/Protocol for Metadata Harvesting) harvester**

The issues involved in this discussion center on the discussions of the visioning committee and the directions for the Minnesota Digital Library. Raising the issue lead to a discussion of a variety of visioning topics including linking the MDL to other Minnesota databases, linking Minnesota databases into one index, developing social computing functions, harvesting for “asset actions” (Eric presented this concept) and not just images, and making a wide variety of technology options available rather than options targeted to the lowest technical capability among users.

**Scheduled MDLC Steering Committee meetings**

10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, August 14, 2006. MINITEX conference room, Andersen Library, University of Minnesota.

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, September 18, 2006. MINITEX conference room, Andersen Library, University of Minnesota.

Notes by Marian Rengel (7/17/06)