

Minnesota Digital Library Coalition

Steering Committee Meeting

September 18, 2006

MINITEX Conference Room, Andersen Library, University of Minnesota

MINUTES

Attending: Kristi Tornquist (SCSU), John Butler (UofM), Jason Roy (UofM), Monica Ralston (MHS), Bob Horton (MHS), Marian Rengel (MDLC/SCSU), Kathy Parker (CSB/SJU), Kathleen Flynn (St. Paul Public Library), Bill DeJohn (MINITEX), Eric Celeste (UofM), Keith Ewing (SCSU), Ben Leonard (Nicollet County HS), Todd Digby, (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities), Gay Galles (MEMO), Emily Kissane (Minnesota Office of Higher Education)

Guests: Irene VanBavel (MHS), Carla Dewey Urban (MINITEX), Mary Parker (MINITEX)

Outreach coordinator's report

Marian Rengel, who started her position as outreach coordinator for the Minnesota Digital Library Coalition on Aug. 23, summarized her report (attached). She is working with Jason Roy to bring in the metadata for the last of the Phase 2 projects. She is also beginning work on Phase 3. She met with Monica Ralston, Jason Roy, Eric Celeste, Keith Ewing, Bob Horton and Ben Leonard immediately preceding this Steering Committee meeting to discuss details of the call for project proposals and the application. The group agreed to emphasize K-12 social studies requirements in seeking digitization projects for the current grant cycle. That group also discussed the time period the project would involve with no consensus. Marian had worked with Jason Roy, Monica Ralston and Terry Beseman, financial officer for MINITEX, to distribute scanning funds. She recommended reserving some funds for transcription and translation of documents as needed. She is also working on adding members to the selection committee.

Minnesota State Fair

Mary Parker reported that MINITEX and its partners, including the Minnesota Digital Library had another very successful year at the Minnesota State Fair. There was a huge turnout this year and the Cool Tools @ Your Library booth was very popular. MDL gave away 1,000 bookmarks and 10,000 pens. Keith Ewing reported that the "Minnesota Reflections" site had twice as many hits during that week as during other weeks. Carla Dewey-Urban said that people were looking for stuff from their areas in the state. Genealogists are looking for old family photos. People want to give their own photos. Bill DeJohn reported that he Viking Library System trustees and directors were very interested in the MDL and took our materials.

St. Paul Public Library

Kathleen Flynn announced that this will be her last Steering Committee meeting. She is retiring from St. Paul Public Library. Her last day is Sept. 29. Sue Ellingwood will replace Kathleen as St. Paul Public's representative on the Steering Committee. Sue attended the initial MDL planning session in 2001.

OCLC WorldCat

Carla reported on her investigation of making “Minnesota Reflections” metadata available for harvesting by OCLC’s WorldCat and thus making it searchable through this prominent database. OCLC wants a symbol for each collection in “Minnesota Reflections.” She and Marian are prepared to contact the participants to explain this service to them and to explain what it will do for the visibility of their collections online. There will be no cost to the participant. The cost to MINITEX will be staff time. Collections will not be automatically added to WorldCat. If the collection does become part of WorldCat, people will be directed to the “Minnesota Reflections” Web site. Eric Celeste explained that we do not need the contributing organization’s permission to harvest the metadata, but since each contributor does need an OCLC symbol, we would need to ask them to participate and for their permission to request that symbol.

Several concerns arose. Eric asked what would happen if a contributor already has a record available in OCLC, one that is already cataloged? If we were considering one symbol for the MDL and making this an MDL project, there wouldn’t be a problem. With that choice, Carla explained, we would lose the individual benefit for each contributor. After considerable discussion, the Steering Committee supported moving ahead with this project. Carla will ask follow-up questions of OCLC and begin working with Marian.

LSTA grant work

The Management Team is working with Sandbox Studios to develop a project to address the K-12 curriculum component of the current LSTA grant. This project will include developing curriculum units using Pachyderm, the software demonstrated by Scott Sayre in the spring and used by Sandbox in its prototype project funded under the MDLC’s previous LSTA grant. The committee discussed issues related to hosting an instance of Pachyderm on MDLC servers and chose to consult with Sandbox before moving ahead. There are many issues related to the newness of Pachyderm. The software itself does not cost money but the effort to bring it up on the MDLC server would and making the connections with the CONTENTdm database would also require work. Questions of funding for this investigation arose. Todd Digby had informed members of the Steering Committee that, as requested, MnSCU would be interested in possible helping fund work on creating learning objects and that the work with Pachyderm might fit into their interests. John Butler asked if any other organizations represented on the Steering Committee would be interested in hosting Pachyderm and recommended that members considering doing so. Eric suggested that anyone interested should let Marian know within the week, but that the UofM is up to the task of hosting Pachyderm if necessary. The Steering Committee supported the Management Team take the lead on this project and report back on developments from the discussions with Sandbox Studios.

Marian has started gathering information to begin the statewide assessment of digitization work and digitization needs that is one of the grant goals. The grant discusses three types of assessment, a broad informal search for issues of concern to the library and museum communities, and others, in Minnesota, a specific needs survey, and a usability assessment of the “Minnesota Reflections” Web interface, which we have long sought but never been able to fund. Keith suggested that we could ask Sandbox to conduct the interface usability work as well as do the work with Pachyderm. The committee supported this direction for the usability assessment.

Paying for publicity is an issue this year, since LSTA did not fund this request. Bill explained that, since there are no funds for publicity in the current LSTA grant, MINITEX will pick up the cost of the publicity we need as long as we are not talking about ads.

Similarly, LSTA did not fund travel to Steering Committee meetings. Bill asked that organizations that can cover this cost do so and that MINITEX will pick up the mileage cost for those members who still needed that support. He is offering to meet this cost for 2006-07 only. This and other administrative costs should be part of the legislative request he will be carrying forward this year.

The MDLC needs to track more closely the in-kind contributions of time to this project. We need a better understanding of this not only for grant reporting purposes but for seeking legislative funding. As Bill put it, we are spending a tremendous amount of in-kind time on this project and this is much more than a \$200,000 grant. Marian will once again be tracking time Steering Committee members spend on meetings. She will also attempt to track the time contributing institutions spend developing and completing digitization projects, as well as other in-kind contributions.

MDL at MLA

The Minnesota Library Association has offered the Minnesota Digital Library a booth in the exhibitor's hall at this month's MLA annual meeting. We have accepted that offer. MINITEX will pay for the cost of providing Internet access to the booth – \$175. Marian and Keith will be the primary staff at the booth, which will be located next to the MINITEX booth so that their staff can provide help if needed. Marian has sent out a request for volunteers to staff the booth and is still taking offers of time.

MnSCU funding

Kristi Tornquist sent a request to Todd Digby for funding from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system to help fund current projects. Todd has discussed this at the Chancellor's Office. We are considering \$7,500 to support the development of learning objects or units.

Annual meeting

There are no grant funds available for this activity. The Committee tabled discussion until its next meeting and members agreed to consider how they might help compensate for the lack of funding.

Visioning group

Bill reported that this group has not met since April. He is looking to reconvene it. The Steering Committee agreed that the group should meet again to discuss the issues raised in April.

Minnesota Historical Society's new Bush grant

Bob Horton briefly outlined the scope of this new \$1 million, three-year grant project. The primary goal is to improve MHS's infrastructure in order to provide enhanced access to digital content. They are working through the grant to tie into a national infrastructure. The grant will involve participants from the state historical societies in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. Four county historical societies will also participate – Anoka, Olmsted, Blue Earth and Nicollet. The grant was awarded in July and work started on Sept. 1.

Kristi offered congratulations to MHS on behalf of the Steering Committee. Bob said he will report often to the Steering Committee on the grant work. John Butler asked Bob to give the committee a sense of the overlap between the vision and mission of the grant and the Minnesota Digital Library Coalition. Bob explained that MHS wants to explore the relationship of content to context; people are looking for tools that enhance the information. MHS want to work with various audiences to identify and meet their needs. John and Bob discussed the differences between the assessment goals of MHS and MDLC. MHS is working with a small group of participants to identify needs; MDLC is working across the state. Bill asked if MHS was looking at a general audience or targeted to high school and library audiences. Bob said theirs is a general audience. MDLC is concerned with the K-12 and the library communities as well. Kristi asked if MHS was going to offer free digitization and free assistance with metadata. Bob said it would not be for free and that he does not see that as sustainable. Bill asked if they were looking for participants who could do digitization on their own or also those who could not. Bob explained that the project was limited to the six partners named. Kristi asked if MHS would charge people to use the resources they develop and Bob said that is something they need to explore.

The Steering Committee supported close communication between MHS and the MDLC as this grant project moves forward. John recommended that we look at deliberately coordinating some of the work of the two groups. Bob explained that the two groups are looking at two different timelines. It will be critical for both to plan whatever comes next. The Steering Committee supported Kristi's suggestion that this should be an issue for discussion by the visioning group.

Grant ideas

Several people raised the question of the MDLC applying for an IMLS grant or for the NEH grant to digitize newspapers. MHS is considering and having discussions on the newspaper grant project since they have microfilm copies of the newspapers NEH is interested in. NEH is also looking for a sustained partner.

The committee briefly discussed the possibility of developing an IMLS National Leadership grant, but chose not to move in that direction at this time.

Scheduled MDLC Steering Committee meetings

10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Friday, November 3, MINITEX conference room

10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, December 11, MINITEX conference room

Notes by Marian Rengel (9/18/06)

Outreach Coordinator's Report
Monday, September 18, 2006
Minnesota Digital Library Steering Committee

Since August 23, 2006

“Minnesota Reflections”

Phase 2 – Bringing in last few stragglers to project

Phase 3 – Starting new round

- Revised application form – combined (based on feedback)
- Met with subcommittee to discuss scope of projects (9/18/06)
- Distributed grant dollars between two digitization centers
- Recommend: reserving some of the digitization funds for transcriptions/translations
- Need to work out some metadata details
- Reconstituting selection committee
 - Bonnie Wilson
 - Lisa Marohn
 - Lydia Lucas
 - Steve Werle
 - Volunteers – Bruce M. White, Bill Wittenbreer (librarian, Augsburg)
 - Recommendations –
- Three organizations have contacted me about contributing projects and

Educational packages for grades 4-12+

- Discussed issues with various MDL participants
- Formulating plan for contracting for this service

Status of Digitization work across Minnesota

- Started gathering information on digitization projects across Minnesota

Publicity

- State Fair – Mary Parker
- Booth at MLA
 - Banner
 - Bookmarks?
 - Develop poster

Challenges

- Participation by MDLC members
 - Some members seem over used and some are underused
 - Is expertise more widespread so we can spread out the work and get faster response times?
- Reference services