Maine InfoNet Meeting 4/6/2020

Present: David, Ben, Sarah, Diane, James Jackson, Jamie, Janet, Marjorie, Nancy, Pauline, Joyce, Steve

1:35pm Start Time

Agenda Item 1: Minutes of March meeting – deferred

Agenda Item 2: Financial Report. The finance committee accepted all reports. A change in practice was instituted by which JJS will be the one both opening the checks, processing the checks and depositing the checks due to working-at-home status. Jamie motioned that the board accept this practice for the next 60 days, seconded by David, and unanimously accepted.

Agenda Item 3: MIN and COV-19 – All staff are successfully working from home. They're having full staff meetings on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. See JJS monthly report to board for more details.
In the case of an urgent situation involving MIN being down or experiencing problems, the most immediate response will come from calling JSS cell directly and leaving a voicemail. He will call you back.

Agenda Item 4: Download Library – Significant number of new titles have been added thanks to successful pledge drive. James noted March was a record high circulation of 48,322. There was a discussion that perhaps it's a good time to do another pledge drive to keep adding resources for demand. James noted that renewals will be sent soon and perhaps adding a donation line to the renewals would be an effective strategy. That was agreed. James noted that MIN is limited in its ability to do direct requests for donations because we do not hold a charitable license. PPL volunteered to be the agent if in future MIN wanted to do so.

Agenda Item 5: Board discussion on impact to MIN of COV-19 mid to longer term.

- COV is revealing the digital divide
- How will it change libraries and its roles as public spaces?
- Users and staff are finding a new comfort level with remote work. Will that fundamentally change how we work/offer services?
- A shift in what Public Services means
- We're still in a reaction phase
- Unknown budget implications
- Making sure we restore services back to the level they were. Robust remote services.
- How do we define ourselves as essential?
- Accommodate physical lending in a responsive & responsible way
- How do we get things to people?
- Where does MIN fit in that discussion?
- What can be read online?
- If guns and marijuana are essential, why not books?
- Time to jump on connectivity issue, particularly rural connectivity
- People are discovering large amount of things online provided by libraries, taking more advantage of online than in the past
- Physical delivery

- Amazon-style pickup lockers
- When we emerge from this, will there be a strong desire to interact with other humans?
- Let's get back up to services we had, restoration may be step-by-step process the way we shut down step-by-step
- Uncertainty about circulating physical materials may exist for quite a while. Look at what other industries do, how they handle physical materials
- Widely testing people may become the norm. Listen to what Dr. Shaw advises.
- Fundamental role of libraries in offering the internet to the public.
- Libraries may have lean budgets for a year, or two, or more
- Professional conferences may be primarily online for the future
- Travel for professional development and conferences may be restricted due to budgets
- What are the new good things that will come out of this?

Jamie suggested it may be time for a board committee to look at Simply E as a platform. The idea is every Library is on Simply E and provides best in class ebook collection. To do it for the state would be about $54,000.

Post Meeting addition: Our friend Miguel Figueroa at ALA Center for the Future of Libraries has added a new site to track COV19 trends and libraries: http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends/coronavirus

Meeting adjourned at 2:55pm. Next meeting will be May 4th, 2020.