

Maine InfoNet Board Meeting 1/4/2021

Meeting convened at 1:33pm

All members in attendance

Guests: MIN Staff Lynn, Tim, Alyssa, and Nelson

Bulk of the meeting was devoted to conversation with MIN staff. Highlights from this conversation include:

Staff discussed working conditions during COVID. Most seemed to like the hybrid approach of some in-office and some remote. There was agreement that they miss the ability to spontaneously ask each other questions or discuss an issue, and that project work is now harder.

In response to the Board's question about what sort of training MIN users could benefit from, staff immediately said "cataloguing" and "basic tech support." They noted that for cataloguing and metadata, there is a need to understand metadata as a concept -- that is, the WHY of metadata. What is the philosophy underlying cataloging & metadata?

Another area of discussion was training and professional practice for all levels of staff. In many libraries the staff wear multiple hats, which makes things challenging. Less so with URSUS libraries in general.

Discussion by staff that the commitment to shared collections varies between libraries and library systems. There are some libraries that are more focused on the physical collection, and these libraries don't see the reciprocal borrowing benefiting them as much. Particularly true among some of the smaller libraries. James noted that one of the things he discusses with libraries coming into MLS or MINERVA is that their new bookshelf will look different because of the shared collection concept.

Tim discussed issues with GALE databases with the K-12 audience. Also issues with the Gale authentication since some students access via mobile hotspots which don't always register as authenticated access. .

General consensus seemed to be support and responsiveness from III is about the same. It was noted that III seems to have high turnover, a challenge to keeping a stable knowledge base. James said he will be meeting with Tom Jacobson.

Agreement that INN-Reach continues to be the biggest strength, and that move to AWS was a good idea.

Staff left the meeting at 2:50pm.

MIN Board follow-up topics from staff meeting:

1. Ex-Libris corporate strategy
2. With tech service staffing decline, supporting tech services across our systems
3. Forward-thinking cataloguing and metadata specialists, and underlying concepts of metadata -- the WHY
4. Training/webinars in professional practice
5. VPN access (James subsequently identified UMS software and is addressing access)

The Board deferred approval of the December meeting notes and a financial report to the next meeting. Executive director's report is in the meeting file, and James briefly commented on it. There was a short discussion about whether public library workers should be prioritized to receive the vaccine, so that libraries can open up more readily. The public librarians on MIN agreed to meet separately to discuss this issue.

Meeting adjourned at 3:01pm.