Maine InfoNet meeting notes 10/4/21

Meeting called to order at 1:32pm. All members present.

Item #1: The August notes were unanimously approved.

Item #2: ARPA expenditure plans.
- James reported that there had been several meetings with representatives from Polaris to discuss migrating MILS to Polaris. Most aspects of Inn-Reach will function with Polaris except for walk-in borrowing which is not yet developed in the API. 2/3rds of MILS directors said lack of walk-in would be an issue for them. James explained the technical and programming issue in order to enable this feature in the API. Innovative has scheduled it for Q3 development with a January release date. But there's no assurance that this would happen in the given timeframe. The challenge becomes, we planned to spend $120,000 of the ARPA funds on this vendor-supported project, without proceeding with migration, how would we expend those funds in time allotted?
- Jamie Ritter said that he believes, but would have to confirm with IMLS, that because MaineInfoNet has made a grant of these funds from MSL, in terms of the federal money they are viewed as encumbered and under contract. For multiple reasons, Jamie believes the project is a very good use of funds.
- It was suggested that another possibility is to give MILS libraries 2 options; One, go to Polaris with no walk-in borrowing and live without the feature for awhile; or two, stay in Sierra and wait until Polaris API is fully developed at some point in the future. Those that move to Polaris right away would receive the benefits of the more public library-friendly Polaris system.
- For the other $380,000 some of the options are:
  - Pay Bywater to increase to number of Koha libraries
  - Still working on Evergreen; expend some funds for Balsam to plan
  - Work with Biblionix to connect via API
  - Demo and set up pilot of Mitinet
  - Backstage authority work
  - Staffing issues; soft money for a two-year limited term library technology specialist position.

Item #3: Bryce Cundick from URSUS joined the meeting to explain that URSUS has signed an MOU to explore the potential of a URSUS public arm of 5 libraries and an URSUS academic arm of 8 libraries. Potentially there would be an RFP for each arm. In other words, two flavors of URSUS. While the relationships among the libraries would be maintained.

James clarified that the current III contract expires June 2024.

Marjorie reported that the CCB is conducting an environmental scan of the library systems market.

Item #4: James said there is some nationwide behind-the-scenes discussion about the future of the Inn-Reach system. There is some concern with the move to other ILS systems and the emergence of the open source product ReShare (PALCI is the primary project owner), that there will be smaller numbers of Inn-Reach customers.

Item #5: James presented his Executive Director's report briefly. He commented that the comic book rollout is finally ready to be implemented. The full Executive Director's report is available on the shared drive.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:08pm.