

**North of Boston Library Exchange
Executive Board Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2013**

Present: Pat Cirone, Brian Courtemanche, Ron Gagnon, Carol Gray, Martha Holden, Linda Hummel-Shea, Karen Pangallo, Nancy Ryan, Myron Schirer-Suter and Elizabeth Thomsen.

- 1. Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m. by Pat Cirone.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the November 7, 2012 meeting were distributed.

Motion to approve minutes from November 7, 2012 meeting was made by Martha Holden and seconded by Karen Pangallo.

- 3. Treasurer's Report:** A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as of January 31, 2013 was made by Martha Holden and seconded by Nancy Ryan.

4. Executive Director's Report:

MBLC Director Rob Maier has announced his retirement, effective March 15. There will be a reception at the John F. Kennedy Library on the evening of March 5. NOBLE and many of the other networks are helping to underwrite the evening with a contribution of \$100.

Ron was asked to serve on the search committee to find a new MBLC director. The first meeting of the group is Thursday, February 7, 2013 and is being facilitated by two Commissioners, Mary Rose Quinn and Carol Caro.

System Support Specialist Vacancy

Our first posting in November did not yield a strong field of candidates. Very many had only Windows experience, but our focus is Linux/Unix experience.

We readvertised in January, this time adding Monster.com to the mix and leaving out Craigslist, which generated many of the unqualified applications. That has provided a stronger pool of applicants. Two interviews were conducted yesterday morning, with one more scheduled for Friday morning.

The job has also been posted with the MBLC, UMass Lowell, Salem State, Northeastern, Wentworth, Merrimack, Gordon, Endicott, UMass Boston, Simmons and Code4lib.

Staff Sick Time

Five NOBLE employees – Paula, Michele, Elizabeth, Beth and Ron – took no sick days in 2012 and so were eligible for the benefit of three extra days vacation or pay. All took the extra pay.

E-rate

Form 471 was filed on January 7. The twenty-eight day period for receiving offers ended Monday. We are seeking the present level of service: two cell phones, six

voice lines and long distance service. Currently all Verizon under the state contract. We have been contacted by Comcast and Sprint and have until March 14 to select the service and submit Form 471.

MBLC Funds

We received half of the annual subsidy for telecommunications and resource sharing on December 4 and expect to receive the full amount. MBLC escaped the fall round of 9C cuts.

Resource Sharing Working Group (RSWG)

NOBLE staff has been working with the RSWG to resolve the long overdue/bills issue. Martha and Michele have been working on two workarounds that would give circulation librarians the staff client display they have been seeking while not working against the way Evergreen is designed. We will be presenting that to the RSWG at their meeting on Monday (February 11).

5. OverDrive Selection Pilot Plan

OverDrive is still very popular as evidenced by our January checkout totals. The checkout total was 9,327, making it our busiest month ever. (Our previous high was July, 2012, with 7,930 checkouts.) The number of new patrons registered was 924, higher than average but not beating our highest ever month, which was last January with 1,308.

Elizabeth has been doing all the eBook selections and it is long past the time when this should be rethought. As the format increases in popularity, the work load increases (Elizabeth has been doing the selecting, visiting libraries and training on OverDrive on her own time) and it becomes more important that a range of interests are represented. However, libraries may opt out of selecting because they are satisfied with the service but do not wish to select. She is proposing an OverDrive Selection Pilot Program and the Collection Management Group will be the pilot. Elizabeth did an informal survey of the network and found that for most networks it is a combined effort of staff and a committee with no model that worked particularly well. She wanted a committee of libraries who opted in and would buy for NOBLE and secondly, distribution of funds to the libraries according to the existing formula after withholding funds to support the existing subscriptions. There was a minimal training by Elizabeth in using Content Reserve and the Collection Management team was asked to have the funds spent by June 1. The bookkeeping system will be evaluated. Presently, she is leaning toward one cart per library per month and all selectors can merge into one cart.

As of July 1, the encumbrances will be removed and formal training and support will be offered on Content Reserve. The Collection Management member is doing all the selecting but eventually, the selection will expand to include other staff from each library that purchase fiction, nonfiction, etc. Elizabeth will adopt a management role of observing trends, training, etc. Pat Cirone commented that it would be a good model going forward and that Elizabeth had done a wonderful job. She asked about duplicates. Elizabeth replied that when you select a title, you can see if it is in the cart called Peabody, for example, and you can make a decision whether to buy it or not. Elizabeth recommended that children and YA librarians should be making selections, too.

OverDrive Advantage: selections are permanent, e.g. if you purchase eight copies of *Gone With the Wind*, you will have them forever, you can buy only for Lynnfield patrons and they cannot be loaned. We will revisit Advantage when the selection model is settled. Elizabeth will also do more training in OverDrive Reports for those who are interested. In response to a Martha's question as to whether Advantage would be used to buy bestsellers, Elizabeth thought that could result in a lower quality collection. Other networks who subscribe to Advantage stipulate that libraries can buy bestsellers only. Elizabeth will investigate ALA and Digipalooza for variations on Advantage, e.g. title remains at owning library until it has circulated three times.

OverDrive is welcoming a new version of their public website that will let a patron see titles not owned by NOBLE and are available in OverDrive. This is called patron driven acquisition. NOBLE has decided not to turn that feature on initially until we assess it.

6. Strategic Plan Process and Consultant

A new long range plan is due to the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners on October 1, 2013. The plan would begin with FY15 and go through FY19.

Historically we have had a large group meeting (three members per library) facilitated by an outside consultant. The consultant writes up the input, noting trends, etc., and submits a report that becomes part of our plan.

Network staff writes up a suggested series of long range objectives and a set of first year objectives, which would be for FY15. These are considered by the Executive Board and recommended to the membership for approval.

Once approved by the meeting of the Members, the plan is submitted to the MBLC.

If we want to continue with this format, we need to schedule the large group meeting for the spring, perhaps early April. Ideally we could begin the work on the long range objectives in the later spring and wrap them up at a summer Executive Board meeting for presentation at the September Members Meeting.

Ron has a list of consultants from the MBLC. He recommends Owen Shuman, recently retired from the Groton library. He has met her a number of times. She has done some consulting through the years, and began her career at the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners. Groton was not part of a network at the time, for a number of timing, financial and political reasons, but is now joining MVLC. She is not biased in any particular network's procedures, but is well versed in the situation faced by our member libraries.

Owen is charging \$2700. This will include travel, the meeting preparations and facilitation and compiling, analyzing and writing the report. Ron felt that \$2000 would be more reasonable. Martha suggested negotiating with her, e.g. would she consider \$2000 if there was less travel, fewer meetings, etc.

7. Evergreen Update

We delayed upgrading to Release 2.3 on January 10 due to reports on the Evergreen programmers' list, and reports from C/W MARS, about problems with the staff client for the release. Revised clients are needed for each software change.

Some PCs in some locations were experiencing increased and serious "memory leaks." The PC's internal RAM was not being freed up after performing a certain function and eventually the PC runs out of memory and needs to be restarted.

In addition to the server software, some updates were made in the staff client to upgrade to a more current version of the underlying software. Apparently the upgrade caused different modules in the client to not work together efficiently.

Testing here by Michele, and elsewhere, proved that it wasn't just busy circulation workstations but was directly related to searching patrons, with the memory not being released.

The situation in some C/W MARS libraries prompted another round of letters from directors and discussion at meetings about Evergreen issues.

Equinox is working with C/W MARS on improvements to the client, which have helped somewhat, and C/W MARS is contracting with Equinox for a simple checkin-checkout web client based on the self-check client to expedite circulation without impacting memory.

There is much debate in the Evergreen community about future directions of the client, and the underlying software components: should they be updated, replaced or the whole client rewritten.

MassLNC is reserving \$15,000 in development funds to contribute to a larger client improvement project should one develop. A developers meeting focused on the client issue is being held at 1:00 p.m. today.

At this point, NOBLE would likely not load any new release until after the semester ends in May. Equinox did update our server software with a recent set of security patches.

We have traditionally waited a reasonable amount of time before loading any new releases to let them mature, and have all the bugs worked out. We have taken a different tack with Evergreen: the releases come much more often, they have the advances that we need, and we have designed, contracted and paid for these releases as part of MassLNC. While the delay will take more time before the acquisitions and pull list improvements in 2.3 are available to our libraries, the May timetable is not at all unreasonable based on past practice, and the practice of other Evergreen users.

CJK development

NOBLE contracted with freelance Evergreen developer Dan Scott to write an improvement for the catalog that would allow for the display and searching of Chinese, Japanese or Korean characters contained in our MARC records. Our Millennium system

would display the characters, but they were not searchable. This \$1,000 improvement allows us to restore and improve upon Millennium functionality. It is our first solo development project.

Additional Development

MassLNC is investigating and contracting for additional development, including acquisitions improvements, catalog improvements (stemming, Boolean search and browse indices for author, subject and title) and holds.

MassLNC Conference

The first annual MassLNC Conference will be held on May 15 in Worcester. Librarians from all three MassLNC libraries are invited to attend. The conference will include sessions on the Evergreen catalog, getting involved in the development process, and breakouts covering different functional areas of the system. Several NOBLE staff will be facilitating sessions.

Evergreen International Conference

Elizabeth, Michele and I will be attending the 2013 Evergreen International Conference in Vancouver from April 9-13.

The 2014 Evergreen International Conference will be in the Boston area, co-hosted by MassLNC and Bibliomation of Connecticut. The likely conference site will be the Marriott in Cambridge, in late March, but details are still being worked out.

8. EBSCO Contract Update

Our current contract for EBSCO databases expires on June 30. We have had a preliminary meeting with our EBSCO sales representative, but have not received any follow-up information.

Janet Bjork, the serials librarian at Gordon College, used EBSCO A to Z to compare holdings in EBSCO vs. the Gale databases provided by the state. The overlap is not as significant as you might think.

The statistics for the past five calendar years indicate that in very general terms, EBSCO use is up overall, but more so in the academics, with a decline in the public libraries.

Our academic libraries, particularly the private academics, purchase a great volume of databases through NOBLE from EBSCO, which helps to increase their figures.

Publics are a bit more puzzling, with searches up 72% over the five year period, while sessions are down 14% and full-text requests are down 27%. Fewer users are doing more searches but accessing less full text would seem to be the conclusion.

Usage volume continues to be great, over 300,000 sessions per year, resulting in a million searches and over 600,000 full text requests.

9. Crisis Plan Progress

With NOBLE staff input, Ron has been working on a Business Continuity Plan for NOBLE. In addition to being a good planning tool, and exposing some weak links in existing practice, we are also seeking a quote on cyberliability insurance. Many of the items in the questionnaire revolve around having an emergency plan.

The template we are using is from FEMA and Homeland Security. It is geared toward a larger organization, so we are combining some of the many task forces, working teams, etc., since effectively the same people are on related groups.

Ron has reached out to Pat and to Alan at Danvers to be willing to host some form of NOBLE operations as an offsite meeting place. Ron's home is first on the list, being nearby and accessible 24 hours per day. More formal meetings could take place at the libraries and staff could largely telecommute if need be.

The plan is not ready yet, but Ron hopes to have it ready for consideration in the next month or two.

There being no other business, Martha Holden made a motion to adjourn at 4:00 p.m. Brian Courtemanche seconded the motion.

Submitted by,

Nancy D. Ryan
Secretary
March 11, 2013