



PRESENT: Nancy Pieri (BETH), Joe Makowiec (BRUN), Richard Naylor (COLN), Barbara Nichols Randall (GUIL), Joe Thornton (UHLS), G. Sacco (VOOR)

9:00 AM meeting called to order by Philip Ritter, Chair.

I. MINUTES

Minutes of the March 24, 2009 meeting accepted as presented.

II. EMAIL

At the request of N. Pieri, J. Thornton investigated alternatives to our current email addresses. He reported that it is possible for each library to have its own email domain name. That way, any staff members who work in several libraries, would have an email address that was location specific to each library in which they worked. J. Thornton also suggested that eventually UHLS should get out of the email business since there will be a multitude of choices in how this can be handled - but for the time being, UHLS will continue to oversee the email server.

B. Nichols Randall noted that if and when UHLS no longer handles the email, we will have to be certain that the contract states that the vendor will not sell or release the email addresses to the federal government.

J. Thornton will send out an announcement to all of the libraries offering them the option to have location-specific email addresses. It is possible that for these domain names, there might be a small annual licensing fee. The domain name UpperHudson.org is probably available for addresses for the UHLS staff.

III. TRAINING

J. Thornton reported that the \$5,000 for training through MicroKnowledge has been used up and was apparently very popular - at least ten libraries sent staff members for various training programs. He asked if it would be useful to include this again in the 2010 budget? Consensus that it should be considered for inclusion in the budget if possible and that the \$5,000 level was good, but should be increased if possible.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion regarding the purchase of a telephone that could be used for conference calls. G. Sacco suggested checking with the (formerly known as) Council for Community Services to see if they had any conference telephones available through their discount programs. B. Nichols Randall suggested checking with NYLA to see about using their meeting room with telephone-conferencing capabilities.

9:25 meeting adjourned. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 26th at 9:00 AM

Automation Services Report

April 28, 2009

Email (ASC discussion)

Debbie Shoup asked for a new email address to disentangle her email from EGRN issues.

Nancy Pieri sent the following email in response:

This is a very sensible approach. We have/had staff who either work at two libraries or who have changed libraries. I would like to reconsider the issue at the next ASC. Hopefully we can achieve some consensus about making a small but significant change to staff email addresses that will effectively direct email to the appropriate employer.

System slowness

We've had an increasing number of complaints (all valid) about system response time, especially at the circulation desks. We continue to investigate every report and almost never find an obvious cause. On 4/20 at 11:30 p.m. we restarted all servers – Horizon, Telecirc, HIP, and web – that might be related to the problem. As I write this on 4/21, CPU usage is at 70%, so apparently the restarts had little or no effect. I will notify SirsiDynix that we're at the end of our rope and insist that they try harder to find and solve the problem. Related to this problem, the *ILS Migration Subcommittee* reconvened:

ILS Migration Subcommittee

Because we hadn't met in a while and we have a new member – Evelyn Butrico – we discussed briefly the status of our project, the characteristics of UHLS that make us unique (and difficult to accommodate with most Integrated Library Systems), and our next steps. There was some concern about progressing too quickly in the current economic climate, when the Board of Trustees may be reluctant to finance a migration, however compelling the need. We decided, however, to start the conversations with vendors, and Evelyn volunteered to contact OPALS.

Related: Assuming that some vendors will want to do some presentations remotely, we feel strongly that we need a good **conference phone** for the large meeting room. This could also be used for training. We are evaluating a unit that Rawdon researched. It costs \$558, and we're not sure yet that it will work with our PBX. Heidi is looking into this.

KidSearch

Some limits in *KidSearch* have not worked since we upgraded Horizon on 1/27. The details of the problem and the current status are in the attached document *KidSearch.doc* and on the UHLS blog:

<http://uhls.org/autosvcs/blog/>

Databases

We edited the *Databases* page on the UHLS web site to accommodate the NOVEL 4/1 changes. Among the deletions:

- all GVRL databases (many)
- InfoTrac Junior

- Science Reference Center
- Health Reference Center Academic
- Informe Revistas en Espanol

The major additions were *ProQuest Platinum* and *Grolier Online*. We had great difficulty in making these two databases accessible without a password challenge inside the libraries, and with a password challenge from outside. With the possible exception of EGRN, the known problems have been resolved.

We still need to change our *WebFeat* interface to accommodate the NOVEL changes.

AquaBrowser

We've had a relatively minor problem with AquaBrowser for a while: When a bib record is deleted in Horizon it remains in AquaBrowser because the nightly updates we send to AquaBrowser include only additions and changes. There's no way to send a list of records to be deleted. The only way to deal with this problem is to do an occasional full import into AquaBrowser of our entire Horizon database. This is not hard, but it's time consuming. It takes about six hours to output our database to a file, and another four to import it into AquaBrowser. For this reason we did it last on a Friday night, starting at about 5:00 PM. The file was written by 11:30 and we waited for the normal Scheduled Task to begin at 1:00 AM on the AquaBrowser server, when the import takes place. Everything went fine. However, the next night's incremental update (just the previous day's changes) replaced the full database in AquaBrowser so we were left with an AquaBrowser database of a few thousand records. We discovered this on Monday 3/16, started a new full import, and that finished late in the day on Monday.

Another problem we discovered was caused by our update procedure. We had written the SQL to send all changed or added bib records, along with their linked item records, to AquaBrowser every night. However, our bib records are not changed when a new item is attached to it, so AquaBrowser did not accurately show the holdings for bib records whose item records were attached after the bib record was first sent to AquaBrowser. We fixed this oversight. Now, if a bib record has been added or changed, or if a new item has been attached to it, it will be sent to AquaBrowser in the nightly update.

It looks like the authentication of external users of our WebFeat databases through AquaBrowser is finally working properly.

Training (ASC discussion)

The \$5000 account of discounted training credits we set up with *MicroKnowledge* has been very popular, and the funds have almost all been spent. We tried very hard to distribute the credits as fairly as possible, but still, had to deny a few requests. Do we want to continue this service next year? If so, do we want to fund it at the same level?

Webinars

The Automation Services Department and the Technology Advisory Council have been researching ways to hold webinars and to do online training of simple applications.

The Automation Services project is aimed at delivering frequent, short demonstrations of computer applications (reports, WordPress, Horizon, etc.) without requiring anyone to drive to UHLS.

We've identified some very good free tools for desktop sharing and webinars, but the show stopper is teleconferencing. The collaboration tools we've looked at offer free teleconferencing *services*, but we would still have to pay long distance phone charges to connect to the service.

The solution we're proposing is Skype. Skype is free, easy to install and use, and the audio quality is outstanding (better than land lines in many cases).

The participants need to have microphones and speakers. Some options:

- If you have a desktop computer with speakers, just buy an inexpensive microphone (USB or the traditional non-USB type). (~ \$30)
- Buy an inexpensive headset (~ \$30). This is good if you're the only meeting participant at your computer.
- If you have a laptop, it probably already has a microphone and speaker built in, although the quality would improve a lot with a headset.

Please consider creating a Skype account (www.skype.com) and purchasing the necessary audio equipment if you don't have it already. We feel strongly that this will be an excellent, extra way for us to collaborate.

TROY mailing

We wrote a program to generate a list of 28,664 TROY adults, and attempted to print as many mailing addresses on envelopes, provided by TROY. The program combined, and deduped as well as possible, our patron database and a file of Troy registered voters. We learned that our printers are not capable of printing that volume of envelopes. The best solution we found, after exploring several options, would have required about four and a half work days of uninterrupted attention to the job – adding a new stack of twenty envelopes every minute. So we offered to print labels instead, which added to the cost (which UHLS absorbed) and also to the work required of the TROY volunteers. Printing that many labels was not a picnic, either. The lesson: for large mailings, use a professional service.

Also, we created a mailing list of all TROY adult patrons, to be used for a fundraising mass emailing from the library.

Public web Browser

Our license for Public web Browser was set to expire on 4/29/09. We renewed it for two years, and Rawdon outlines the procedure for updating your pwb.ini files in the attached document *PWB.doc*.

Networking support

Rawdon continued his invaluable on-site networking assistance at the libraries. A sample:

SNLK cable issue will be resolved. The town hall will put down new cables for the entire library but they will not put the connectors on; therefore, I will do it sometime this week. While I was there, I noticed their public PCs need attention. They have Steadystate installed but the disk protection was not turned on, and the patron profile is not locked. It took a very long time to login. I will propose to the library to let us take over, at least for these three public PCs.

POES connection is problematic. It lost 6% of incoming ping packets, 2% outgoing pings. While I put a laptop on the RR modem, I lost 2% of incoming. I simultaneously ping'd RENS and POES from home. I lost very few packets to RENS but 25% to POES. I will call Cisco for help.

APL collection development project

We sent separate files of the ISBNs held in each of the APL branches to Baker & Taylor as part of the collection development project they're working on with APL.

Statistics

Because some of these reports are long, I'll just give the links to the *statistics* pages on our blog.

WebFeat: http://uhls.org/autosvcs/blog/?page_id=398
(includes March, 2009 and the total since 1/1/2008)

AquaBrowser: http://uhls.org/autosvcs/blog/?page_id=388

CatExpress: http://uhls.org/autosvcs/blog/?page_id=8

Notices: http://uhls.org/autosvcs/blog/?page_id=7

In addition, we've sent 8,158 'hold expiring' email notices since 1/1/09, and 21,694 pre-overdue courtesy email notices since 3/2/09 (as of 4/20/09).

Summer Reading Program

We met with John Love of BETH who has generously offered his excellent Summer Reading Program for use by all UHLS libraries. Mary Fellows is coordinating this project, and the Automation Services Department will work with John and Mary to do whatever we can to install and maintain it for any interested library. A trial version is here: <http://uhls.org/summerreading/>

Miscellaneous.

- We made more changes to the 2009 Riverway site: www.riverwaystorytellingfestival.org
- We created a mailing list of adult BRUN patrons.
- We started collecting website stats for NASS.
- On 4/6 the HIP keyword index became corrupted, so we ran the massindexer and advised the libraries to use AquaBrowser in the meantime.
- We sent a list of all APL patrons, in an Excel spreadsheet, to Elissa Kane at APL.
- We renewed our SSL certificate for the web reports page (<https://horizon.uhls.lib.ny.us/reports/>) to prevent the warnings issued by browsers when visiting an encrypted page that does not have a registered certificate.
- We wrote a couple of queries to provide for EGRN the total amount of fine and fee payments taken in at the circulation desk in 2008, and the total amount of fines and fees incurred in 2008 that are not yet paid