

Resource Sharing Advisory Council

January 20, 2005

ATTENDEES: Betty Albright, Jo-Ann Benedetti, Rob Carle, Marsha Doyle, Pet Gerou, Dawn Geurds, Geoff Kirkpatrick, Joe Nash, Lorraine Smi, Joe Thornton, Mena Will, Amy Williams

MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING: Joe Thornton distributed the minutes from the previous meeting (November 3, 2004) and they were approved without discussion.

COURIER: Jo-Ann Benedetti joined us to discuss the new courier service, which she described as “better than expected,” given its newness and the complexities of our system, but still far from perfect. Some of the problems she described and is working on: drivers trying to get into ALTM (in a bank) before the bank opens; only one sorter at the sorting facility at first (now three, working five hours a day each); smoky, wet, muddy, otherwise gross bags; drivers changing their routes without telling anyone. Jo-Ann is evaluating the use of plastic bins instead of cloth bags. They’re cheaper, more manageable, and more weather-resistant.

All suggestions or complaints about the courier should be directed to Jo-Ann.

Also, she said that it’s important to remove all old labels, tags, etc. before sending a bag out, and it’s preferable to tag both handles.

Betty, speaking for everyone I think, thanked Jo-Ann and said that it looks like she’s addressing all the issues, and we appreciate it.

HOLD SHELF EXPIRATION DATE: Dawn asked if we should one to the number of days that an item stays on the hold shelf, to adjust for the added day of transit with the new courier system. Joe T will poll the libraries and adjust their settings individually.

EXPIRED HOLDS: Joe asked if it’s ok to delete all expired holds, ignoring the exceptions that Dynix built into the deletion script they gave us. One negative consequence will be item records left with incorrect item_statuses (e.g. “e”). Geoff pointed out that these statuses will be corrected the next time the items are checked in or out. Geoff suggested that we just blow them away (now all expired holds) and maybe deal with them on a case-by-case basis afterward. We all agreed that UHLS will delete all expired holds that expired at least thirty days ago.

Amy raised the issue of expired holds blocks that don’t go away. Example: a patron requests an item but the hold expires a day before he picks it up. So he borrows the item but the “hold expired” block stays on his record. DRA, according to Geoff, used to clear this block, but Horizon does not. Betty said that the check-out person should delete the block, but most agreed that it’s too easy for this step to be skipped. UHLS will look into removing the blocks ourselves, and will add this to the Horizon enhancement list.

LOST IN TRANSIT: Joe T will run the script again to list all items that have been “lost in transit” for more than 28 days.

ADDRESS CHECK: Circ staffs were getting a lot of “address check” prompts. The system had been set to give this prompt if the patron record was expired, or if it had been more than 730 days since the last update of the patron record. UHLS changed 730 days to 90 years, so the prompts went away. However, we should anticipate another outbreak of these prompts next year, when a lot of patron records expire.

CHECKING IN DAMAGED ITEMS: Plea to all libraries: Please don't! Dawn pointed out that the best way to handle damaged items, DVD cases without DVD's, etc. is to send them to the owning library with a note, without checking them in.

OVERDUE NOTICES: A patron asked by email if we could send a courtesy email notice two days before an item is due instead of an overdues notice two days after it's due. Betty: no. Geoff: yes. I don't remember a clear decision on this one.

UHLS'S MOST WANTED: Apparently there's a patron with “interesting fingernails” working the Albany County side of our system, with 100+ items out, which apparently he can get away with because they're in the “Overdue” column and not the “Fines” column.

DUPLICATE PATRON RECORDS: In stafpac, apparent duplicate records appear for some patrons (e.g. Thomas Drucker). There is not really a duplicate, but a bug in the display function of stafpac. This bug is invisible to patrons. It's a known problem (by Dynix).

NOTIFICATION BLOCKS: Most libraries installed the 'dll' file that incorporates the custom programming that Dynix did to improve the blocks that show how a requester will be notified (email, print, phone). Amy pointed out that it's still flawed because the timing of the notice block and the actual email notification are out of synch. Joe T said this is because UHLS wrote the email script, and it does not update the patron record – it simply send the notices.

UHLS PATRONS: Apparently UHLS patrons (e.g. Green Island, Schodack) are not getting Telecirc calls by default. UHLS will fix this.

DEFAULT PICKUP LOCATION: Joe T will ask ASC whether to leave the requester's home library as the default pickup location for requested items, which has been the setup since the last Horizon upgrade. Previously, all requesters had to select a pickup location.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 17, 2005 at 9:00 AM at UHLS.