

Meeting summary for Circulation Advisory Council (11/06/2024)

[Zoom Summary edited by JT]

Quick recap

The group discussed the upgrade of Sierra's operating system and the potential use of Lx Starter for customizing circulation notices. They also addressed issues related to items in transit, the timing of bill notices, and the loan policies across different library locations. Lastly, the importance of the peer support network launched by Urban Librarians Unite was highlighted.

Next steps

- Phil to draft and send an email to the Circulation list proposing changes to the billing cycle and overdue notice timing for discussion.
- Joe to send out Sierra 6.2 Release Notes to all members before the upgrade on Sunday night.
- Virginia to send Joe the link for the Urban Librarians Unite peer support network for distribution to the Circulation list.

Summary

Operating System Upgrade and Lx Starter

The meeting began with a discussion about the upgrade of the operating system that Sierra runs on, which was completed the previous night. The group was informed that Sierra would be upgraded to version 6.2, which would allow them to use Lx Starter for customizing circulation notices. The specifics of Lx Starter were not yet known, but more information would be provided once it was experimented with.

Items in Transit and Guilderland Issue

The group discussed the issue of items in transit for a long time, particularly from Guilderland. Phil mentioned that only 14 items belonging to Bethlehem were sent to Upper Hudson, but he was unsure about other items from other libraries. Joe confirmed that there was a known problem and they were working on it. Virginia and Pam shared their experiences with the Ad Hoc report, which they use to track items in transit. They agreed to pay closer attention to this issue. The group also discussed the possibility of items not arriving at Guilderland.

Adjusting Bill Notice and Renewal Policies

Phil initiated a discussion about the timing of bill notices, particularly in relation to the fine-free and automatic renewal policies. He suggested a potential change to the current 21-day cycle, proposing a shorter period of around 14 days. Phil also mentioned that the issue arose due to a patron receiving bill notices from another library, which

led to a discussion about the need for a more efficient system. The group agreed to consider Phil's suggestion and potentially shorten the billing cycle. Virginia added that some libraries have a shortened billing cycle for newer items, and the issue of people missing email notifications about fees was also raised.

Addressing Extended Item Renewals

The group discussed the issue of items being out for extended periods without being returned. Phil suggested that the current system, which allows automatic renewals up to two times, might be too generous and could lead to items being kept for longer than necessary. Virginia countered that the system was designed to remove barriers to access and that shortening the billing cycle might not be effective in encouraging the return of items. She suggested that if the goal was to get items back faster, it would be more effective to remove the automatic renewals and fine-free features. The group agreed to consider these points and potentially adjust the billing cycle to 21 days.

Loan Policy Changes and Peer Support

The meeting focused on discussing potential changes to loan policies across different library locations. Phil proposed a cautious approach, aiming to avoid over-complicating the process for patrons. The group agreed to write an email to the circulation list to gauge the opinions of directors and other stakeholders. Virginia then brought up the topic of the peer support network launched by Urban Librarians Unite, emphasizing its importance for library workers across the country. She offered to share the link with the group. The conversation ended with no further topics for discussion.