

OWLSnet Administrative Advisory Committee Meeting Online via GoToMeeting – September 15, 2023

Present: Cathy Kolbeck, Algoma; Owen Anderson, Appleton; Rachel Hitt, Black Creek; Jamie Hein, Clintonville; Rebecca Buchmann, Dominic Frandrup, Morgan Mann, Door County; Steph Weber, Florence; Shannon Stoner, Gillett; Robyn Grove, Iola; Ashley Thiem-Menning, Kaukauna; Carol Petrina, Kewaunee; Holly Selwitschka, Kimberly; April de la Ruelle, Lena; Amy Commers, Marinette County; Le Ann Hopp, Marion; Ann Hunt, New London; John Kronenburg, Tracy Vreeke, NFLS; Amy Peterson, Oconto; Eliza Skenandore, Oneida; Amanda Lee, Bradley Shipp, Molly Komp, Chad Glamann, Dave Bacon, OWLS; Sue Vater Olsen, Scandinavia; Michaela Woodward, Shiocton; Eric Bailey, Waupaca

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 AM and Amanda went through roll call.

2. AAC Ground Rules & meeting etiquette

3. Minutes of the July 22, 2023, AAC meeting were approved.

4. Announcements

- a. Dave is retiring November 3rd, and the new Network Manager, Bryan Durkee, will start September 25th. There will be some overlap for Dave to train him.
- b. Ellen Connor is retiring from Manawa in December after 34 years! Congratulations!
- c. Michaela Woodward is the new director at Shiocton. Welcome!
- d. Tracy informed the group that Nancy Bell has been hired as the new director at Shawano County and will start September 25th; Amy Commers was acting as the interim director at MRT but has been hired as the new director; NFLS has hired a new admin assistant, Maryssa. Congratulations and welcome!

5. OWLS and NFLS library data circuits to be updated

Dave said everyone should have been contacted by email about data circuits by now. Wisconsin has a new contract with AT&T in which they will be providing additional network services through the cloud for organizations throughout the state. This doesn't necessarily mean more bandwidth but more longevity for circuits in the libraries. So far there have been 5 conversions with 2 failures in OWLSnet.

The library manager or director needs to let AT&T into the library before hours to show them where the network cables are. Downtime should only be a minute. The state wants all public libraries to be done by the end of the year, which means someone from OWLS will contact each library to do a speed test for pre-conversion data and compare to post conversion data to ensure there is no degradation in service. John added to

confirm the AT&T employee is indeed with AT&T for safety; no one should be touching network materials unless authorized to do so.

What does a data circuit do? It is a direct private path to OWLS. All library data circuits go through OWLS in which OWLS then connects to the internet for libraries to access services. OWLS' circuit will change, too, but on a Saturday when libraries are closed. Also, some libraries will get a bandwidth increase at the time of their circuit conversion but not everyone. If you have questions, please contact Dave. He will be contacting libraries a week ahead of time to make them aware of their scheduled conversion.

6. Requiring multi-factor authentication for library director and branch manager email addresses

Beginning in October, OWLSnet is going to require multi-factor authentication on all library director and branch manager email accounts. In addition to using a strong password or pass phrase with at least 12 characters, you will also have to enter a code generated by an app on your phone or tablet. We recommend the Microsoft Authenticator app, but if you are already using a different app for other services, such as Google Authenticator, you may use that.

The primary objective of multi-factor authentication (MFA) is to reduce the risk of account takeovers and provide additional security for users and their accounts. Over 80% of cyber breaches happen due to weak or stolen passwords. MFA provides added layers of security necessary to protect users and their data. Implementation of MFA is now required by most cyber-security insurers.

We will roll out MFA to approximately 10 people per week in October. You will be notified before we enable MFA on your account. Please refer to emailed instructions to follow when you are prompted to complete MFA set up. If you encounter any problems setting it up, contact Julie or Joe for assistance.

We are not requiring MFA for all email accounts yet, but if you have staff who are willing and interested, we would be very happy to set it up for them as well. We recommend MFA for all supervisory staff and anyone whose email may contain sensitive information. MFA is especially important for anyone who uses their OWLSnet email outside of our network, such as while traveling or working remotely. If your library's email is not managed by OWLSnet, we encourage you to consider implementing MFA locally.

Directors who are newer are most likely already set up for this. The generic branch emails will be done last. If phones are forgotten at home, this shouldn't be an issue as it only asks every 30 days if you are on network. It would only be each time you log in, if you are off network.

The authenticator apps are the most secure option, and we would prefer that folks use them. They are free to download. We don't believe that they create any official records, nor do they give OWLSnet any access to personal information on that phone. If staff members do not have smart phones, or they have other serious objections, there are a few options.

MFA can be set up to provide a code in these (less secure or more costly) ways:

- Call a cell phone
- Text a cell phone
- Call a desk phone at work (not useful for remote access)
- Use a token (purchased by the library or staff member)

We're holding off on rolling out MFA for staff until after all the directors are comfortable with it. Looking ahead, we have discussed the possibility of using tokens for securing agency emails that are used by multiple people, but the cost would be significant, and they could easily be lost. We're still brainstorming options.

7. New OWLS website

The current OWLS website is 10 years old with outdated software that will become deprecated in the future. This was a good time to recreate and improve the site. OWLS' goals for the new website are to:

- improve user experience,
- easier access to staff resources,
- reduce content creep and bloat,
- enhance communications/updates to member library staff,
- and improve content addition and removal process.

Chad showed a glimpse into what the new site will look like with more content relevance and accuracy in information. The current site will remain active while the new site is being built. Chad will send out a survey to get some feedback on training opportunities for the new website, features and functionalities, etc. The site will be proofed before scheduling a time to make the switch. OWLSnet will be separated out of the OWLS content.

8. InfoSoup Road Trip wrap-up

Thank you to everyone who participated and made this program possible. This was a program idea taken from IFLS, so we can certainly look at altering it in the future to incorporate different point values for libraries. We announced the winners on August 1st, which was recorded and shared online. There were 1,176 booklets stamped and 144 prize entry slips. Overall, libraries found the program to be valuable and engaging for their library and community and many expressed interest in offering the Library Road

Trip again next year. Everyone felt that the program was easy to understand and implement, and accessible to both library staff and patrons. Patrons seemed to love the adventure and often made a day of it! Some libraries felt that they had low participation due to other programs or events, and confusion around the phone call option. In the future, ideas for improvement include increasing advertisement, extending the program duration, creating smaller booklets, providing display ideas. Separate tally sheets for phone calls, and more lead time. Feedback will be used in guiding OWLS in making improvements and enhancements for future iterations. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact Chad Glamann, or Lori Baumgart.

9. Discuss training opportunities

Molly's goal is to create webinars for staff in which they can learn more about CARL or policies and procedures, similar to CARL Conversations. The hope is to give you all more opportunities for training and to ask questions about things that you do daily. Molly sent out an email to OWLSnet Updates asking for what you all would like to see in a training webinar. The responses so far gravitate around reports, but other responses included going over daily and monthly tasks, formatting data in Excel, hot keys in CARL-X, and moving through functions quicker in CARL.

10. Vote to recommend updated OWLSnet Borrowers' Card Program policy and guidelines to the OWLS board

Last time we presented updates to the OWLSnet Borrowers' Card Program policy and guidelines that made it clear the replacement fee is optional and included the one-year expiration date for OWLS libraries that complies with SRLAAW best practices for cross-county billing. Because this is a policy, we must vote to recommend it so Bradley can take it to the OWLS board for final approval.

There was concern and confusion for point 12 in the guidelines, stating: "Libraries participating in this program may issue a local library card to a nonresident who does not qualify for an OWLSnet card, e.g., or residents of another state. Local library nonresident cards are not required to be honored by all OWLSnet member libraries." The "local library card" wording was not defined and was language brought over from previous policy when the discussion focused more so on protecting individual library materials and not open access. This also typically meant issuing a community card in which a patron who doesn't have a verified address can still have access with a limited community card, given on a library-by-library basis. But it doesn't have to be a community card, or a physically different card, it could be a blue InfoSoup card but with different permissions. Many libraries give cards to anyone as long as they have an address to verify, they don't care where they're from.

Online resources are paid for by state tax dollars and LSTA funds and patrons from out of state could be holding up hold queues for our patrons paying for this. This doesn't

seem to be a major concern right now, but it is something to keep in mind. More discussion on open access is great but we don't want the pendulum to swing too far and make libraries feel uncomfortable. OWLS will take the guidelines back for review and rewording. They will focus more on the patron card types setup and the policy for development. Please contact Amanda if you have feedback for rewording or if you'd like to volunteer for wordsmithing. The updated policy will then be discussed at the November meeting and then possibly voted on at the January meeting.

11. Vote to recommend updated Resource Sharing List of Exceptions to the OWLS board

Last time we discussed adding vinyl records and passes to local attractions to the Resource Sharing Policy List of Exceptions. Our Resource Sharing Policy is an agreement that all libraries will circulate materials freely, but there is a list of exceptions of materials that don't travel well, have too many pieces, are too large, etc. This is not a list of items you can't send. You can still send if you choose but you are not required to. There was consensus to accept an amendment that will allow vinyl records and passes to local attractions. Bradley will bring it to the board.

12. Resource Sharing

In January a committee was formed that stemmed from a discussion of displaying other libraries' materials. The committee met 3 times and compiled guidelines on a variety of topics related to resource sharing. Concerns regarding the guidelines include book club materials and how/when they can be displayed. Some felt that if a newer item is coming off short loan it should be okay to place many holds on the title if needed. No holds is too restrictive for book clubs. We can look at adding a ratio to items/holds for use in book clubs to make it less restrictive. The committee will review the guidelines and make changes to the book clubs, displaying other libraries' materials, teacher kits, and classroom visits section and make them into their own sections with potentially different selection criteria.

Discussion led to collection budgets, how municipalities are quick to cut collection budgets, so it is nice having resource sharing and the importance of speaking up about it. The ILL Lender/Borrower stats show how libraries share materials. They are based on physical materials; how many you send out and how many come in. These stats are grouped together for consolidated libraries. If it would help anyone, Bradley is more than happy to speak at city council meetings to explain things in more detail, upon invitation by a director. Implementing lender credits seems to have a negative effect and we'd like to avoid that. Subsidies to those that need it were mentioned. This could be a solution, but it lets libraries off the hook; the solution needs to be local. Many factors contribute to ILL ratios being off and a committee needs to decide what should be included in the guidelines to better fit our consortia needs. Amanda asked for volunteers for a new Resource Sharing Committee since the inequities of the system

was out of scope for the initial committee. Volunteers include Holly from KIM, Tasha from APL, Rebecca from DCL, Sue from SCA, April from LEN, and Ann from NLP. Amanda will send out an email if any additional volunteers are needed. The committee will look to have something for the March AAC meeting.

13. CARL/BiblioCommons Satisfaction Survey results

The survey results showed that overall, people are more satisfied with CARL than they were last year. The number of libraries voting to migrate went down slightly. The newest release has some new features and bug fixes in Connect that include:

- Items redesign, making it easier to get to a specific item and see statistics;
- a new Holds functionality within Manage where staff can Cancel Hold and Clear Expired holds;
- a new Claims Returned functionality so that staff can mark items as Claimed Returned within Connect;
- and the bug fix in which typing in an “M” into a field causes a Manul Block window to come up.

New features come with each release, but we understand the frustration with what is currently in front of us. Our contract is up in December 2024. We won't know the cost of migrating until we start the process of searching and asking for demos, which we won't do until the group votes on doing this.

Most ILS platforms have a cloud-based option, but they are not all fully developed and other library systems, like Winnefox, are not using the cloud-based platform yet. But keep in mind that if we go with another ILS, we will need to use a cloud-based version; we can't avoid it. Most vendors today don't even allow folks to host their own server. It is very expensive to maintain on our own. Also, we may not be able to afford BiblioCommons. The reason we were able to acquire it was because CARL had a much lower cost than the other ILS platforms out there. If we choose a different ILS, then we may need to cut BiblioCommons or make drastic cuts elsewhere to keep BiblioCommons.

Frustrations include having two platforms, training for two platforms, paying fines, placing holds, too many clicks, slowness, etc. OWLS is willing to do the investigate migrating, but this would be the primary project for at least a year, which means other projects would be put on hold. There would need to be a committee, demos scheduled, write up an RFP, reaching out to other systems using platforms we're looking at, etc. This is a big process, and we want to make sure this is what people want. Any platform we investigate, there will be sales pitches and roadmaps that sound promising but are not always reliable.

OWLS is looking to using 2024 budget funds to increase training opportunities for libraries because it seems like a lot of comments in the survey pertain to training. There is a training gap because CARL *can* do a lot of the things staff commented on, it's just a matter of knowing *how* to do those things and OWLS needs to minimize that gap. Staff don't always seem to know *what* to ask for in terms of training, though. It could be useful to ask those who have been here longer what are things they used to be able to do, or what they miss about Sierra, or how do you do certain things in CARL now, so that we can pass that along to everyone else. Also, as great as training is, some libraries can't always get their staff to participate, having them live great distances or language barriers, so this will always be an issue.

Dave shared that a lot of the slowness is not always limited bandwidth issues. It is still difficult to find the exact reason as to why the cloud-based service is slow but that is why we need more information from staff when this does happen. When OWLS runs tests, they always run fine. Those libraries getting bandwidth increases, please let us know if you notice drastic changes or improvements in how CARL runs. If staff notice a drastic improvement, then that is just the ammunition we need to go to AT&T to prove an increase for everyone. But we also need those pieces of data, not bandwidth related, to bring to TLC so that we can figure out what is causing the issue(s).

The consensus was we need more discussion. The current timeframe doesn't seem to be enough to migrate before our contract is up. Bradley can negotiate a new contract but needs to know if it'll be one year or multiyear. And a merger with other systems is not on the calendar currently. Tracy added that NFLS won't look at a merger until year 3 or 5 of their strategic plan. OWLS needs to know if a migration is what people want. At the November meeting, we will vote on where we want to put our resources for the next year.

14. Adjourn at 1PM