Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network

MTKN III – Third Annual Meeting, The Lodge - Bettendorf, IA (Oct. 22 -23, 2003)

Meeting minutes

Wednesday, Oct. 22

Introductions

Attendees – Bob Sweet (UMTRI), Roberto Sarmiento (Northwestern), Mike Shea (Missouri DOT), Clara ... (Missouri DOT), Marie ... (Kansas DOT), Arlene Mathison (UM – CTS), Jerry Baldwin (MnDOT), Nina McLawhorn (Wisconsin DOT), Janet Bix (Ohio DOT), Hank Zaletel (Iowa DOT), John Cherney (Wisconsin DOT).

Jerry Baldwin welcomed everyone in attendance, and asked that each person introduce themselves and give a brief recap of their library activities within the past year.

Bob Sweet – project with OCLC is underway, he is close to sending items to them. He reported some delays and miscommunication in working with them.

Roberto Sarmiento –OCLC cataloging has started – he targeted 460 original titles for cataloging and has sent his first shipment. He reported some trouble with the contracts with OCLC. He needed the contract to be reviewed by general counsel at Northwestern. His former cataloging librarian Tim Hagen left Northwestern and he is about to hire a new cataloging librarian.

Sweet – mentioned that he would be the official timekeeper of the meeting to help keep the group on their agenda.

Clara Lao – She is a new hire at Missouri DOT, having worked there for 7 weeks. On the second day of the meeting, she will give a virtual tour of the meeting of the Missouri DOT library, outlining the progress made.

Mike Shea – He works in the research office/tech transfer, expertise is civil engineering. Mentioned that 2400 of their titles are in OCLC. He mentioned that they had received help through online communication for their library project from three other Missouri University students.

Marie Manthey – new hire at Kansas DOT, having worked there for 6 weeks. She worked with Becky Klenklen-Welsh, who attended MTKN II. They have made their third shipment to OCLC's TechPro Service. She mentioned that many of their items had their own classification system.

Arlene Mathison – She works closely with the MnDOT Library. CTS's items/records reside within the MnDOT Library. She performs reference, document delivery and web site duties for CTS.

Jerry Baldwin – MnDOT has experienced layoffs though the library survived relatively well, losing 1.75 professional positions. He foresees the status quo for the library in the future. He used the MTKN funds for MnDOT/Minnesota materials. He recently came across a large group of vertical file items in the library that could potentially be cataloged.

Nina McLawhorn – WisDOT Research Administrator – her association with MTKN is in trying to keep library issues alive at the national level. She is the Vice-Chair of the 10 State region, in AASHTO RAC. She stressed the importance of the user focus, especially in light of reauthorization of the NTL, and the recent activities she has pursued include a letter to Wisconsin Congressman Petri for continued support of the NTL and MTKN. In a former job, she was a federal relations administrator and feels she can help this group with her experience in consortium/institution building.

Janet Bix – She has three staff members and experienced no cuts in this area. She enjoys a strong partnership with the State Library of Ohio. They catalog her items, but don't fund the OhioDOT Library. Ohio DOT Library is a member of

OHIOLink, consisting of 87 universities, and includes access to 100+ databases. She reported that she wasn't sure about the prices involved with the OCLC cataloging project, but that mostly original cataloging will be performed. She said that her collection contains about 28,000 items.

Hank Zalatel – he is employed by CTRE (Center for Transportation Research and Engineering??) at Iowa State and is the librarian at Iowa DOT. His position at Iowa DOT was eliminated and he is now funded by SPR dollars. The library is still the property of Iowa DOT. He is also a researcher for CTRE faculty and teaches a class for them. The Director of the Research Bureau now heads Iowa DOT Library, which was previously managed by the Human Resources department. For the OCLC project, he plans to catalog early Highway Research Board reports (all contained in a series), which includes a large number on bridge research. All of this would be original cataloging.

John Cherney – he reported that the library has been involved in some high profile research for the Wisconsin DOT Secretary's office. This research centered on the Marquette Interchange Project, the largest in Wisconsin's history. He is also working on mounting their internal catalog (on their intranet) using InMagic software. They are using both the RetroCon and TechPro services with OCLC. RetroCon started 3 weeks ago, TechPro is slated to start in a month. He mentioned a bibliographic instruction session he did with Pat Casey, of WisDOT's Research Coordination section, where they used the University of Wisconsin's placeware service. A dozen transportation engineers (consultants) dialed in from around the state.. the course was well-received.

Status of MTKN

Baldwin – the status of the MTKN is difficult to assess because of the NTL status – the NTL might dictate how we are in the future. Presently, we are an informal gathering, in limbo, but the groups goals will be discussed on the second day of the meeting. He would like to see general agreement for alternatives the group can take depending on what happens to the NTL library. He would like to see the ILL Guidelines and By-laws approved so in the future, the MTKN can incorporate. This is important if the NTL is defunct.

Sarmiento – Disagrees, he doesn't see the MTKN 'in limbo' – though slowly, he believes the group is moving forward and that we should move forward whether or not the NTL is around. He emphasized that this point was agreed to by the group last year. He cited some PR activities as evidence of the group moving forward.

Baldwin – stated we don't exist formally as a group yet, but that we are doing business.

Sarmiento – says we are in a dilemma and might have to be formal.

Baldwin – stated we need alternatives if the NTL is gone.

Sweet – Felt a sense of uncertainty because of the NTL situation.

Sarmiento – we can't wait for the NTL anymore – maybe move forward on a smaller scale.

Baldwin – talked about the reauthorization process – there was a five-month extension. Some in Washington want more extensions of TEA 21 until the next elections. Others want the process completed before the elections. Consequently, the NTL is in limbo.

McLawhorn – considering the objectives of this meeting, we need a discussion of what we mean by MTKN. Can we define it differently from a user group perspective. Presently, we do have recognition as a regional pilot on the national level, but we need a stronger user component to MTKN. She would like to see discussion on how we can move forward to create a national network, discuss the pros and cons. Other states in the AASHTO regions are interested. The agriculture information community could serve as a model. We need to think broadly, and consider the end user, not only getting things into the system at the front-end. We need to concentrate on education training and information transfer. She outlined three points that need to be focused on.. (1) User component – producing usable products for the practitioner, tailored to the customer. (2) Need to move towards a national network. (3) We need short-term and long-

term action plans. In the short-term, need to focus on reauthorization. In the long-term, we need to focus on the Scoping study (Sandy Tucker, Barbara Harder report).

Baldwin – the user component is implicit in our library code and language. We are doing the end user activities (education, training, etc..) already but just have to remind ourselves about it.

Sarmiento – agrees we need BI (bibliographic instruction) and that it is important. Our Group (union) catalog is an end product. Our goal is to have our group catalog icon on every desktop. Do we as a group 'go national'? We need consensus before the TRB meeting in January. He said we don't articulate the user component but that we do it inherently for our users.

Sweet – said this discussion on the user component is a matter of marketing. We need to tell users that what we do is useful. We need more outreach.

Baldwin – the end users don't see our catalog as important – they need syntheses. But we need to be practical, doing things like syntheses is a product for sometime in the future. Example is MnDOT Library's IRIS reports, which were produced when the the library had the luxury of more staff resources.

Mathison – We should talk more about products.

Sarmiento – We've done some short-term products, such as an upcoming web page, PR items, MTKN – Listserv. We don't really have a long-term plan right now.

McLawhorn – we should define the MTKN differently, as an information system (similar to the language used in the scoping study vision). She sees her research group as a part of MTKN, it should extend beyond librarians. We need to focus broadly.

Committee Reports

Baldwin – reported that the Executive Committee hasn't talked much, but that they respond to issues as they arise. For instance, the AASHTO resolution was drafted by him. The Standing Committee on Planning asked about the NTL. The resolution was passed. Another issue that arose was whether a non-library could join the MTKN as a member. In this case, the organization was the MRUTC (Midwest Regional University Transportation Center) at UW-Madison. The Executive Committee has also worked with OCLC in the past year.

McLawhorn – MTKN visibility has increased, AASHTO is tuned in.

Zalatel – reporting that that BI committee worked with Nelda and the NHI (National Highway Institute) to develop a search aid for TRIS for use in agencies that don't have a library.

Sarmiento – we need to promote things like this (the search aid). He was not aware of this effort/product. He would not like the NTL to take credit for this. There is a need for better communication between MTKN's committees.

Mathison – gave an update on the Communications Committee. She distributed two handouts. Said we need to identify things we can publicize. We have completed the MTKN list serv, the MTKN logo, and the web site is in progress. We completed a brochure which was distributed at the GTRIC conference. Bob Sweet did a presentation to an audience (Iowans) of about 20 people at the Midwest Transportation Symposium. The Proceedings for this conference are available.

Baldwin – stated that the AASHTO resolution that was passed (containing support for the NTL) was not reported in the next issue of the AASHTO Journal, prompting a call from him to Sunny Mays Shust. It was then included in a later issue.

It was reported that Julie Bolding's OCLC project was up and running (South Dakota).

Shea – said that at the AASHTO RAC meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, they were very interested in the status of the MTKN. A mention was made about the National RAC meeting in Connecticut.

McLawhorn – There is an opportunity here. Research managers are meeting at TRB in January, an MTKN/NTL update will be given. She is putting together an agenda for a national discussion.

Mathison – Julie Bolding wrote an article, it was supposed to be published but hasn't been yet..it may appear in an upcoming issue of Public Roads. She said it would be a good idea for the communications committee to explore grants and funding opportunities.

Update on NCHRP Project 20-7 (Scoping Study)

Baldwin – the final report is out, but not published.

Sarmiento – asked if there would be any repercussions if we wanted to catalog it, or post it on our web site. He doesn't like the fact that it is a privileged document.

Baldwin – mentioned that if requested (possibly by AASHTO), it might appear later as a TRB Research Results Digest, and then it could be published with permission.

McLawhorn – asked why this document was so restricted.

Baldwin - said within the transportation community, such as AASHTO and TRB, there is a desire to be seen as the sole providers of transportation information. He theorized that AASHTO and TRB would like to take the credit for TRIS.

McLawhorn – she is going to take up issue of restricted access to the scoping study with RAC and SCOR (Standing Committee on Research). She said MTKN exists to help state DOTs and not a good idea to keep things so restricted.

Baldwin – Overall, the scoping study is a good document. The goal of the report is to do a larger, policy study, or NCHRP 20-66. The goal of the policy study is to recommend to government agencies what they should be doing regarding the national transportation information structure. He talked with Chris Hedges (who worked on the scoping study as a project panel member, he is a TRB staff member). Reauthorization interfered with NCHRP projects, and they are waiting for funding and with an extension, NCHRP will at least receive some funding to go ahead with projects.

McLawhorn – felt that the policy study should have been finished by now to give to Congress recommendations for reauthorization. She feels it has to be done now before the opportunity is gone. She is working with Bob Johns to get funding for the MTKN states. Congressman Petri (WI) is interested and has suggested that we work with Illinois DOT also.

Baldwin – said that reauthorization and appropriations are handled by two different committees.

McLawhorn – said the goal should be to authorized to get stable funding for the next six years, instead of applying for money every year.

Update on Bibliographic Instruction (BI) Project

Sweet – Didn't like how this project has been conducted. He thought it was much broader (i.e. using the web) in scope than a BI project on how to use TRIS. He was under the wrong impression.

Bix – said that NHI has authority over what was presented. There was a question about the marketing of this at NHI. Roger Goerring? from NTL gave a list of objectives for the course. NHI wants to do this course as a 2 hour placeware

class. NHI and NTL together want to market this course. Sweet and Bix agreed to teach this course, with Goering's involvement also, though she felt that NHI sent too many objectives for the course.

McLawhorn – Wondered if NTL is taking credit for this MTKN course.

Question centered about the marketing of this course.

Sarmiento – said the BI area is for us, and we should promote it as an MTKN product. BI Committee was developed for distribution to MTKN groups and their customers.

Sweet – We need to direct where this should be marketed and figure out who our audience would be.

Sarmiento – 2 out of the 3 people who created this BI product are MTKN people, hence, MTKN should get the credit.

By-Laws Discussion

Article I – approved.

Article II – discussion started at great length.

McLawhorn – we shouldn't speak in librarians language, need to be more explicit and speak to users more clearly. In the Plan portion of Section 2, we need to be more broad and mention education , training and products, concepts important for a knowledge network. A good idea would be to use the language in the scoping study. She offered to make some language changes.

Sweet – said the MTKN exists for all of the customers McLawhorn mentioned and wondered if she should change the language now.

Baldwin – said there are two schools of thought on this ... says we should have a purpose as a network of librarians and libraries, and then that our products geared towards end users.

Mathison – we should distinguish between products and by-laws. Products might be better served in a strategic plan.

Sarmiento – trying to apply scoping study to what we're doing might be too difficult. He does envision incorporating some of their goals into our goals.

Baldwin – wondered if we should use the term 'goals' in bylaws. Goals and products are more in the arena of strategy.

Sweet – asked if we should establish a By-Laws Committee

Baldwin – responded that we may not need to establish such a committee based on our current discussion. Section 1 goals should be changed to purpose, or we should delete both words 'Goals' and 'Plan' from the current By Laws.

Further discussion about statement of purpose in by laws.

It was mentioned that this will be revised, to be a more broad statement to include other groups besides librarians.

McLawhorn – said we should define not who we are, but focus on the purpose of the network (don't concentrate a defining a series of 'who's'). Feels the network is much more than librarians, suggested using the term 'information professionals'.

Baldwin – need to state in the by-laws what an organization is made of ... which is librarians. Our business is library services.

McLawhorn – said it shouldn't be just a library network.

Sarmiento – said that MTKN is a network of libraries which includes librarians and other information professionals.

Baldwin – need to educate the transportation community that libraries provide services that they need and do not have. Our cause will not be helped if we rename libraries as something else.

Sarmiento – need to focus on libraries not librarians. He was in favor of the name change for SLA, feels the word librarian is to narrow. We need to include people who are not librarians who see MTKN as valuable, but also need to mention that a library is necessary.

McLawhorn – purpose statement should define the 'what' – the MTKN as a knowledge system (information management system).

Baldwin – MTKN is an organization of libraries.

McLawhorn – purpose is too narrowly defined, would be a disservice to the network. We need to have a comprehensive network that relates to a broad range of functionality.

Baldwin – the discussion is now talking about redefining MTKN. We are confusing mission with bylaws. The bylaws should state the participants and nothing more. Bylaws are for the 'whos', the 'what's' should be defined elsewhere.

McLawhorn – MTKN started as an organization of libraries, but things have changed, and so has the meaning of the knowledge network. Need to be broad in our mission.

Sweet – MTKN's purpose is already very broad.

Cherney – We could add the concept of 'partners' into the language of the bylaws.

Shea – asked why we changed the name from MTLC to MTKN

Sarmiento – we used 'knowledge' instead of 'libraries' because of a narrow view by people.

McLawhorn – there is a difference between knowledge and information – knowledge refers to usable products and can be whoever provides the knowledge, i.e. librarians, tech transfer, researchers. She thinks we want to retain focus on librarians.

Sarmiento – we are still a library – oriented group. The library is still the member of the group and we have to remind ourselves of our focus to link libraries together nationally.

McLawhorn – for the future, MTKN needs to thing of how we are going to appear at the national level. She doesn't think that only librarians can carry out the broad information needs.

Baldwin – Confusing the vision with the organization's bylaws – it **is** a network of libraries. There are non – librarians in the libraries. The work carried out involves other people. We need to change the mindset of 'just being librarians'. We manage knowledge centers, though only librarians do the library services. The transportation community has failed because they entrusted library services to non-librarians.

Sarmiento – we don't want to lose focus on librarians if we include other stakeholders. We don't want to change our philosophy; we don't want to include others in our tent, we're not ready to taka a step to evolve and incorporate other broad stakeholders. MTKN is a cog.

McLawhorn – we have to be leaders in the nation and evolve. We should be prepared to go to Level 2 (as mentioned in the scoping study). The scoping document is much broader than libraries.

McLawhorn – we are the leaders in moving things forward. We need to be broad when we talk to Congress and about reauthorization. We need to be better.

Baldwin – scoping study is way beyond where we are today, when talking about the national infrastructure. We have to presently focus on the structure of MTKN. Without the MTKN, the vision of the scoping study won't be realized. MTKN is a critical part of the scoping study vision but not the whole. We tell people what we need to accomplish this vision. Example, the USDOT has it backwards. NTL shouldn't report to BTS. NTL is a broad organization, and they report to BTS, which has a narrow vision. Librarians are good at listening to people and customers.

Sarmiento – there is still a disconnect with what McLawhorn is saying.

Bix – West Virginia research section wanted to join our group. She asked whether we can include other interested supporters even though they don't have a library. We can't lose our focus on libraries but we need to broaden or we won't get any further.

Baldwin – We have to crawl before we can walk. At Wisconsin, there are other information services products, syntheses. Wisconsin is ahead of curve, they offer other products besides library services. Asked if we need a bylaws committee.

Zalatel – MTKN is not necessarily a library network. We need to broaden to get to the people who control the purse strings. Asking research directors at various DOTs would help prove this point.

Mathison – Librarians and libraries are traditionally underfunded and undermarketed.

Sarmiento – We have to evolve, we may need to change our philosophy. We want to get more people under our tent, we need a broader scope.

McLawhorn – scoping study is the key. It is a microcosm of what we are talking about. MTKN should make sure users and libraries get what they need out of this.

Baldwin – we don't need to involve others in the specifics of what we do. We need to do a better job of communicating the needs and what needs to be done to meet those needs. The job of MTKN is to help get the needs met.

Sarmiento – added that we are a pilot project but that we want to go to the national level.

McLawhorn – agreed that we should remain as a viable group of libraries. She asked if we could take a phased approach (similar to the scoping study levels of effort, levels 1, 2 and 3). Follow what is in the scoping study. Asked if we were comfortable with what MTKN is presently. We have to incorporate other elements. We are a set of libraries, but can we evolve to be a broader network to be a system that brings in these different groups.

Baldwin – we are confusing the issue between the vision and what we are. The MTKN is not the entire transportation community, but we are formed and are a network of libraries to work toward that vision.

McLawhorn – Should we change the name to MTKN back to MTLC? We should reserve the 'knowledge network' for a more comprehensive vision. What happens to the rest of us? (i.e. other non-library organizations who want to be involved). We need to focus, libraries would like to do it all, but can't.

Baldwin – Transportation community does not recognize that libraries can manage information.

Sarmiento – maybe we should be a part of something bigger. We must all retain our own identities. We are all working toward the same vision.

McLawhorn – she has a problem with the name 'knowledge network'. Maybe too broad of a concept for us. To accomplish the vision in the scoping study, we have to include other partners.

Marie M. – what kind of support would we get as librarians? Librarians not seen as professionals like doctors, lawyers, etc.

McLawhorn – is working with Congress reps to get NTL reauthorized, and to get funding for MTKN. Her interest is in obtaining money for everyone. She would like to see an expanded, reauthorized NTL.

Zalatel – we have a two – part purpose. First we state we are a library and library network. Second part is about partners.