

**MINUTES**  
**MORE Executive Committee**  
**(Budget Hearing)**  
*Friday, June 14, 2024*

**Present/Attending:** Allison Lutz (TL), Joleen Sterk (ME), Karen Furo-Bonnstetter (WO), John Thompson (IF), Leann French (DR).

**Also Present:** Lori Roholt, Kathy Setter, Bridget Krejci, Joanne Gardner, Katelyn Noack.

**Absent:** None.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Lutz (TL) called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

**ESTABLISH A QUORUM:**

Lutz (TL) established a quorum was present.

**CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE  
WITH OPEN MEETING LAW:**

Certification of compliance with open meeting law was confirmed.

**AGENDA:**

*French (DR) moved to approve the agenda. Thompson (IF) seconded. Motion carried.*

**MINUTES:**

*Thompson (IF) moved to approve the minutes of April 5, 2024. Furo-Bonnstetter (WO) seconded. Motion carried.*

**BUDGET HEARING ON 2025 MORE BUDGET:**

Roholt referred those in attendance to the meeting materials document which included six items related to the 2025 MORE budget. Roholt ran through the information on each product.

**Possible New Product: Text (SMS) notification service**

The first item is for a possible new product that Roholt heard from libraries to consider for the budget. The product to consider is a text notification service. MORE currently has two options for delivering circulation notices for hold pickup and overdues. An old, staff-configured method is no longer supported by many carriers and devices. Currently, about 17,500 patron records are configured to receive notices by text message using this delivery method. Because of the unreliability of this delivery method, it has been left off of the most recent version of the MORE patron registration card. The second option is patrons can sign up for a

Library Elf account and configure custom text notices. Patrons set this up themselves outside of Sierra or the MORE catalog. About 4,000 patron cards are being checked by Library Elf. A paid service would allow staff to set up notices to be delivered as text messages in Sierra in a way that is broadly allowed by carriers. Two products that would work well with Sierra are MessageBee SMS from UMS and Text4Library from ShoutBomb. Both services have a one time implementation fee with an annual fee on top of that. The costs are comparable. MessageBee SMS includes a platform fee @ \$1,495 and up to 100,000 text messages @ \$3,500. There was concern raised about what happens once the 100,000 were reached and the need to buy additional bundles of text messages.

Kelley-Johnson (SO) did like ShoutBomb's ability to tailor a specific message to an audience via email (i.e., story time group, library closed, renewals). LaVold (NR) did not have a strong feeling either other to encourage getting one of these services. A text notification service will solve a lot of problems and provide better customer service. Meyer (EL) concurred. In the past carryover funds were used to cover startup/implementation fees.

It was noted that a popular feature is that Library Elf can send one email with information for multiple cards.

Several directors were leaning more towards ShoutBomb as the ongoing costs would be less. It is unknown how quickly we would reach the 100,000 limits with MessageBee.

### **Sierra Maintenance and peripheral products**

The next discussion is on Sierra maintenance and peripheral products. 2024 is the last of a 3-year maintenance agreement with our Sierra vendor, innovative Interfaces, for Sierra maintenance and peripheral products. MORE can continue with these services for a single year or enter into another multi-year agreement for some or all services. MORE can approve 1, 3, or 4 years for Sierra Maintenance. Roholt noted that a 3 year agreement would provide enough time to investigate a new ILS if the group wishes. A 1 year agreement would be tight.

There are a few other ILS products available include Polaris, OwlsNet, and open source products. Roholt's sense is that the options out there are not a significant improvement in functionality that it would be worthwhile to switch. The acquisitions module is not as robust.

Leslie (SC) inquired what would be a reason to switch from Sierra. Roholt noted that she has heard staff that use Polaris as its interface. They have done more with making the product almost exclusively web based. Sierra is computer-based.

Roholt noted that MORE has not seen a huge increase in Sierra costs that some are getting. Sierra and Polaris are now both Innovative products. Sierra is still in wide use among public libraries.

The draft budget includes a 1 year cost with a 5% increase. If the group opts for a multi-year agreement, that number would decrease. Kelley-Johnson (SO) encouraged the Executive Committee to go with a 3 year maintenance agreement.

## **Telephone notification service**

The current telephone notification service, iTiva, makes approximately 3,000 automated hold pickup and overdue notice calls per week. It also takes incoming renewal and account check calls. The server is currently locally hosted, but the service may switch to a cloud hosting model in the next year.

Innovative is offering another product called Innovative Phone Alerts (IPA). This would provide the same type of service as iTiva product, but cloud-hosted by the vendor. The maintenance cost is comparable, but IPA would have a one-time implementation fee.

Kris Schwartz maintains the servers for MORE locally with support from LEAN WI. When we can take one thing off his plate, that would be a smart move. Roholt would advocate staying with iTiva and see if they make good on their switch to cloud hosting.

## **Cover images for online catalogs, app, and Sierra**

There are two products that are resold by Innovative, and both offer multi-year options. The current product is Content Café, which provides book and media cover art for display in MORE's public-facing catalogs and Sierra. Content Café has generally been fine. There have been a few instances where Sierra was really slow because the cover image service was down. It has been much more stable recently. Syndetics cover images provide the same type of service as Content Café, but better media (film and video game) coverage. Syndetics was a ProQuest product that was bought by Innovative.

Roholt noted that as well get into improved email notices starting this summer, one option is using cover images in email notices. This is a part of a new suite of products from Sierra. It might make sense to switch to Syndetics.

## **Sierra hosting services**

Sierra hosting is currently done locally at CVTC's data center, maintained by IFLS staff with backup from LEAN WI partners. Innovative has offered cloud hosting, but the pricing has always been much more expensive than hosting locally. This year, they have offered a reasonable quote for cloud hosting. This would eliminate the need for local staff to monitor and maintain servers. The 2025 cost for local hosting would be \$3,500. The cost for cloud hosting by Innovative would be \$5,000 plus a one time migration fee of \$8,200 and subject to variable multi-year increase depending on the agreement term.

Roholt noted that cloud hosting provides a better defense mechanism against ransomware attacks. Cloud hosting would provide a more sustainable model for the MORE consortium.

## **Collection Development and Statistical tool**

Decision Center (current service) provides transaction and collection counts, weeding tools, and other reports, with the option to schedule and send reports by email. Decision Center will be supported, but not developed anymore. Libraries find Decision Center valuable with counts, reports, and notably for weeding reports.

LibraryIQ provides similar statistical reports and weeding tools as Decision Center, plus additional collection development tools. Some libraries find LibraryIQ a bit more user friendly and dynamic. Some MORE libraries are currently using this product.

LibraryIQ is more robust overall. They are in active development and responsive to customer needs. Innovative is now a reseller of the product. Eventually, LibraryIQ might replace Decision Center, but that is not the case yet.

LibraryIQ is much more expensive than Decision Center.

LaVold (NR) was one of the libraries who initially was in favor of LibraryIQ and now will not advocate for LibraryIQ until it becomes an Innovative product. They have made changes that make the product harder to use than previously. LaVold would like to see more responsiveness and alignment. She is not ready to spend the extra money to make the switch to LibraryIQ where the product currently sits.

Niche Academy was a new product for 2024 and provides a training/tutorials platform. MORE had split the cost with IFLS. Thompson (IF) agreed IFLS would be willing to do the same in 2025.

Roholt shared the 2025 MORE Draft Budget on the screen.

Lutz (TL) was disappointed and surprised that the recommendation was to eliminate Flipster (electronic magazines). Lutz does understand the thought process.

Leslie (SC) noted that directors should be mindful of penny-pinching. We need to be careful not to frustrate patrons in the process when considering reduction/elimination of services like Library Elf and Flipster.

The council discussed that Library Elf can combine accounts into a single notice. The Library App can access multiple accounts but does not provide a single notice.

Niche Academy has both a public facing and staff training tutorial platform. The staff training tutorials is where we post the MORE development such as basic circulation training videos. IFLS staff has not really run with the product for tutorials to-date. IFLS plans to do more in that realm. In addition to adding content, we create; Niche Academy has shared tutorials. There is a privacy tutorial that has a lot of views statewide. Tutorial framework is a nice way to step through training for staff. Cecelia Cole created an ILL lending tutorial on Niche Academy. There was a bit of a learning curve, but now that she has done one, she is more comfortable to add more interloan based trainings and tutorials. It is hoped more will be created for OverDrive, Collection Development, etc. The steps to create the tutorials ensure quality in the end product and provide a great learning tool.

Roholt noted that the draft budget includes \$20,000 from carryover/reserves to reduce the overall budget amount. This same amount was used in 2024. Carryover is unspent funds from prior years and also includes startup costs for new MORE member libraries. For a number of years, libraries joined MORE. With Hawkins being the last public library in our

system, those funds have dried up. If the Council opts to use \$20,000 carryover for 2025, going into 2026 there is an estimated carryover of \$85,000.

Questions were asked about reserves and carryover and if they are in an interest bearing account. Thompson (IF) noted that all IFLS reserves are in an interest bearing account. The MORE administrative fee is not tied specifically to personnel. The fee is based on a percentage increase tied to state aids.

All attendees were thanked for participating in the 2025 budget hearing. All are welcome to stay for the Executive Committee meeting.

#### **ACTION ON 2025 MORE BUDGET RECOMMENDATION:**

*Thompson (IF) moved to recommend the Directors Council approve the MORE 2025 budget including: a 3-year maintenance agreement for Sierra and all peripheral products, iTiva 3 year agreement for telephone notification and renewal services, switching to Syndetics for cover images for 3 years, maintain Decision Center for 1 year, use Text4Library (ShoutBomb) for text messages. Carryover funds will be used for implementation fees. Lutz (TL) seconded. Motion carried.*

*Thompson (IF) moved to recommend reindexing telephone numbers with undesignated carryover as soon as July 2024, based on staff workload availability. French (DR) seconded. Motion carried.*

*Thompson moved to switch to cloud hosting by Innovative with a 3 year agreement. The migration fee should be taken out of carryover. Sterk (ME) seconded. Motion carried.*

*Furo-Bonnstetter (WO) made a motion to discontinue Library Elf. Lutz seconded. Motion carried.*

*Thompson (IF) moved to recommend the 2025 draft MORE budget as amended to be presented to the MORE Directors Council in July 2024. French (DR) seconded. Motion carried.*

Thanks were provided to Roholt and others who contributed to the 2025 budget draft.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

*The meeting adjourned at 12:17 pm.*

Joanne Gardner, Recorder