

TLN Technology Committee Meeting Minutes

APPROVED

Tuesday, October 17th, 2017

Bloomfield Township Public Library

1. Usual Business

1.1 Order and Approvals

- Meeting called to order at 9:36 a.m.
- Agenda for October 17th, 2017 – Approved
- Minutes for August and September 2017 - Approved

1.2 TLN Update

- The telecommunication committee is in “decision making mode.” The two vendors they are looking at now are ATT-Merit and Comcast. The committee met with the vendors last week and are waiting on a little more information from each. Hopefully they will have their recommendation ready for us by November 3rd. This telecommunications contract will be for 3 years. It would be less work for TLN to negotiate 5 year contracts but at this time, prices change and go down fast enough that reassessing every 3 years is better for the member libraries.
- Director of the Southgate Public Library, Joyce Farkas, has retired and the interim director is Donald Priest. They are interviewing for a new director.

1.3 Announcements & Upcoming Events (Library News)

- MLA is this week. Nobody attending the tech-comm meeting is going.

1.4 Security Issues, Tech Tips, Websites Worth a Look, What’s New?

- WPA2 Wi-Fi crack announced putting devices on those networks in harm’s way. Windows and Apple products are safe but Android and Linux are at risk.
- My Reading Log is having issues right now. After being migrated to TLN’s new hosting servers, there were DNS and other issues. Currently, some functionalities are turned off to protect patrons from a bad experience. Michael McEvoy and Andrew Mutch are working on this with the help of Mike Vela and hope to have it fixed soon.
- Angie reassures that other than a few hiccups, the hosting migration went well and if a library is having any issues, they should open a ticket with TLN.
- Eric Hayes of Orion brought up a vendor he introduced on the tech-comm e-mail list called KnowBe4. This company does e-mail and website “spoof” testing to see if your staff knows how to identify and avoid malicious phishing attempts. Andrew Mutch has used this company and said it worked well for his municipality. The results were revealing and when a staff member is successfully tricked, training is automatically offered. We may hear from them at a future mtg.

- Melanie Bell brought up a proposed bill (#5099) in the Michigan House that could be bad for municipal broadband. It essentially strips municipalities of the ability to provide that service. The initial bill is vague and has errors (up and down speeds reversed) but it is something to watch.
- Marj O'Donnell mentioned "opensignal.com" which is a website that maps the signal strength of different mobile broadband and phone carriers. Useful when looking at mobile access points for your library. If a certain carrier has bad reception in your area, you may want to think about other carriers.
- Eric Hayes mentioned that he uses Spiceworks Network Monitor. Spiceworks is migrating away from their locally hosted offering and moving it to a cloud but Eric is still going to use it. While looking at Network Monitors, he also found a product from Netwrix that works well and that has a free version. The monitor scans exchange and active directory for changes and can send a daily e-mail report notifying you of changes. This is useful when you have a several members of an IT staff and want to be aware of and track changes. The free version has some limitations but it is useful and there is a paid version that unlocks all of the features.
- Later, after discussing the Tech Forum and future ideas, Joan Wu mentioned Google CS as a good resource for coding classes in the library. Susan Paley reminded us about a website called prenda.co (not .com!) that Michael McEvoy has mentioned before.

2. Discussion Topics

2.1 T-Mobile Presentation

- Joel Bell from T-Mobile in Livonia and Steve Kahn, sales engineer, visited to present their mobile hotspot program.
- Nearby libraries using T-Mobile for the mobile hotspots include Novi, Dearborn, Jackson, Holland, and East Lansing. A little further away in Ohio, there are 140 libraries using this program.
- They feel that popularity for this service is high and that the items circulate fantastically. It is great for patrons who don't have access to broadband internet at home for various reasons (socio-economic or geographical) and it's popular with more affluent and urban areas for access outside the home or for families going on long trips. They claim fast data speeds with a national average of 26Mbps.
- They always suggest the Unlimited LTE data plan for these devices, so that patrons can use the device throughout the month and receive unlimited LTE access. They have cheaper plans that are also (unlimited) but that have speed throttled after a certain amount of LTE data is used up. That could mean that if a patron uses up the data in the first half of the month, the patron who receives the device in the second half of the month will only have access to 3G speeds.
- The Unlimited LTE plan is \$29.40 per device, per month (with a few small tax fees which brings the actual price paid to about \$31 per device per month). They often have promotions that allow you to get a free device by signing up for this plan. There is one going on now until mid-November.
- If you end up having to purchase hardware, they roll the cost into your monthly fees and you end up paying \$3 extra per month (per device) until you have paid off the device(s).

- Their mobile access points support up to 15 devices at a time (though those devices will be sharing the allotted LTE bandwidth). You have the option to impose limits and reduce the number of allowed devices.
- They offer “Web-Guard” web filtering for free but it is standard boiler plate and you cannot change the filtering other than to choose the category (child, preteen, teen, adult). You can use your own if you have it but check with them to make sure it will be compatible and work.
- Using a portal, you can temporarily deactivate units that are overdue or permanently disable devices that are lost or stolen. T-Mobile support can also do this for you.
- No overages and includes Canada and Mexico. You can disable International data, to avoid getting charged if a patron did take it on a plane to Antarctica.
- They have a Mobile Tablet option and the tablet is free if activated on the unlimited tablet plan which is \$19+ dollars per month.
- For those interested in testing this product, contact Joel and he can get you a device to test in your service area for 2 weeks.
- They suggest having 1 device per 1-2 thousand patrons (depending on usage and popularity).
- Joel recommends a “Pelican Case” to hold the devices. They are clear cases, so library staff can take inventory without having to open the cases at check out and check in. T-Mobile doesn’t sell them but Joel just thinks they’re good.
- If you decide to start this program, Joel needs your tax ID, can create a bill account for you in about 1 business day, order your devices, and have them to you about 3 days later, so a quick turnaround. Contact him to get started! Angie Micheline will send out his information.

2.2 Tech Forum: Review and Future

REVIEW

- The 2017 Tech Forum went very well. Minor format changes including the Tech Discussion break out session and the two keynotes (one at the beginning and one at the end) were well received.
- Got back 44 comment sheets from the 90 or so attendees and all were positive. One suggestion to focus more on smaller libraries with limited techy skillsets.

FUTURE

- Next year TLN will need to reduce its role in tech forum planning, though they are still willing to help with Registration, Payment, Website, and Vendor table relations. That’s still a lot!
- Some of the challenges that the committee faces include vendor support, security location, interacting with the caterer, etc. but the main issue is coming up with interesting topics and even more so, finding speakers who are willing to present those topics.
Last year, despite attempts, they got very tepid responses from possible speakers and by the middle of the summer had to piece together what they could. Although it fell together in the end and was successful, it was difficult and nerve wracking for the committee.
- After discussion it was decided that the main thing a committee would need in order to proceed next year, is a sort of a chair-person, who could oversee the progress and help to delegate. That was the biggest thing that TLN provided in the past. Michael Shereda offered to try to be just that.

- Many tech-comm attendees offered to be on the committee, including Susan Paley, Amanda Parry, Eric Hayes, Carl Swanberg, Michael McEvoy, Dan Blakney, Bill Bowman, and Michael Shereda with Angie Michelini supporting and mentoring.
- Since there seemed to be so much enthusiasm and interest in the committee, it was decided that there will be a TLN Tech Forum next year.
- A few topics to look at include Affordable tech solutions for smaller libraries, coding classes for patrons (Google CS, prenda.co), new technology that we should know about (possibly from the perspective of “what kids and teens know about that we should too”), and more.
- Angie suggested reaching out to libraries outside of the TLN membership for ideas, speakers, and fresh perspectives.
- It was also suggested to poach ideas from other conferences we attend or hear about that TLN membership libraries might not have the chance to attend and to pull from vendors next year, who are always willing to present (but reminding them that it’s not really a sales pitch, although they should be able to mention that they offer services)

2.3 Meeting Locations for 2018

- Meeting locations for 2018 were discussed. Marj O’Donnel is filling in the chart with hosting volunteers, following up with people, and will eventually send out an e-mail to fill up any remaining meeting dates.

Meeting adjourned at 11:32 pm

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 21st, 2017 – 9:30am

Location: Chelsea District Library

Attendees

Marj O’Donnel – Lyon
 Angie Michelini - TLN
 Michael McEvoy – Northville
 Dan Blakney – Allen Park
 Carl Swanberg – Canton
 Alyssa Beesley – Canton
 Joan Wu – Bloomfield
 Tim Perry – Bloomfield
 Andrew Mutch – Waterford
 Eric Hayes – Orion
 Michael Shereda - Farmington

Virtual Attendees

Bill Bowman – Clarkston
 Ben Sebrowski – Commerce
 Susan Paley - Ferndale
 Amanda Parry – Auburn Hills
 Glen Fischer – Cromaine ~ Hartland
 Melanie Bell – Chelsea