V-Cat Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 14, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

Call to Order and Announcements:

Chair, J. Ziebell (Neillsville), called the meeting to order at 9:32am.

Members Present in WVLS Office:

T. Edge (Antigo), V. Calmes (Colby), L. Renel-Faledas (Crandon), J. Roth (Three Lakes) arrived at 9:44 am, M. Handel (Medford), T. Hall (Loyal), K. Sabelko (MCPL), P. O'Connell (Minocqua), J. Ziebell (Neillsville), V. Roberts (Rhinelander), L. Ollhoff (Merrill) arrived at 11:10 am, H. O'Hare (Tomahawk), and R. Ludvigsen (Gilman).

Members Present Via Zoom:

J. Jochimsen (Abbotsford), F. Albrecht (Laona), K. Heiting (Granton) left at 11:15, A. Brill (Greenwood), L. Petersen (Owen) arrived at 9:56 am, L. Ollhoff (Merrill) until arrived in office, C. Soderstrom (Thorp) left at 11:45 am, J. Hanson (Wabeno), and C. Soderstrom (Thorp) left at 11:45.

Also Present:

C. Luebbe (MCPL), K. Zimmermann (WVLS), R. Metzler (WVLS) and J. Klingbeil (WVLS) stepping in for the cloud hosting discussion.

Members Absent:

S. Bedroske (Dorchester) with J. Jochimsen as proxy, C. Huston (Stetsonville) with V. Calmes as proxy, T. Blomberg (Rib Lake) with M. Handel (Medford) as proxy, M. Highfill (Westboro) with R. Ludvigsen (Gilman) as proxy, and B. Hardin (Withee) (no proxy designated).

Approval of the Consent Agenda:

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) requested a change to the agenda to update the financial reports to include May – August 2024.

V. Roberts (Rhinelander) moved to accept the consent agenda with the change to the agenda, P. O'Connell (Minocqua) seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting Reminders:

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared the meeting reminders with the Council.

V-Cat Financial Reports:

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) presented the May – August V-Cat Financial Report. No discussion occurred.

T. Hall (Loyal) moved to accept the reports as presented, P. O'Connell (Minocqua) seconded. Motion carried.

NICE (Northern Wisconsin ILS Consortium Exploration) Project Report:

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared that at the September WVLS Board of Trustees meeting, the Board voted to go on record in continuing support of the NICE project, while recognizing the validity of the V-CAT bylaws and decision and recommends keeping the door open to revisiting the project within two years. The motion was unanimously approved.

WVLS staff will reflect on the outcome and have follow-up conversations with stakeholders. A report of lessons learned and next steps for V-Cat will be developed, including opportunities for improving V-Cat services for library users and future collaborations.

Committee Reports:

Bibliographic and Interface Committee Report:

Chair C. Luebbe (MCPL) presented the written report.

No discussion occurred.

Cooperative Circulation Committee Report:
Co-chair, V. Roberts (Rhinelander) presented the written report.

Recommendation: V-Cat Book Clubs Recommendation
K. Zimmermann (WVLS) introduced this recommendation.

A discussion occurred. M. Handel (Medford) asked about checking incoming books for book clubs out to book club cards. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) indicated that there is a solution for this in the recommendation. M. Handel (Medford) noted that she has used bib level holds for book clubs in the past and they have not always received all the copies needed. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) requested that information about strange hold behavior be sent to help@librarieswin.org for troubleshooting before calling the libraries to fill the holds because holds information in Sierra changes once holds are filled.

T. Edge (Antigo) moved to accept the V-Cat Book Clubs Recommendation as presented, seconded by T. Hall (Loyal). Motion carried.

Recommendation: V-Cat Guidelines and Application for Teacher and Institutional Library Cards
K. Zimmermann (WVLS) presented the recommendation.

R. Metzler (WVLS) reminded the Council that it is important to not use pcode 4 ILL for teacher and institutional card patron accounts. Patron Code 4 ILL should only be used for lending items to another library.

K. Heiting (Granton) moved to approve the V-Cat Guidelines and Application for Teacher and Institutional Library Cards, L. Ollhoff (Merrill) seconded. Motion carried.

Break – reconvened at 10:40

ILS Evaluation and Review Committee Report:
K. Zimmermann (WVLS) presented.

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared a document with the Council on ILS product improvements and updates since August 2023.

It was noted that Koha has had three upgrades since the demos we received.

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared that V-Cat Libraries would gain access to Metabase with Koha. H. O'Hare (Tomahawk) asked for an explanation of the Metabase product. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) answered that it is a product that sits on top of the database and queries within it. Metabase would allow staff to query the database and is a visual query builder. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) noted it will work a bit like Create Lists, but it may be easier to use. She added that it is as user friendly or more user friendly than Sierra Create Lists.

H. O'Hare (Tomahawk) mentioned that there were concerns about the cataloging workflow in Koha, specifically the practice of using multiple windows to compare records. R. Metzler (WVLS) noted that Koha is browser based, so staff could have multiple browser windows to mimic the current workflow.

L. Ollhoff (Merrill) asked about Koha offline service. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) and ILS review committee members could not recall how this worked during the meeting.

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) also introduced the changes to Sierra since August 2023. It was noted that Sierra has had two upgrades released, but V-Cat has not upgraded to 6.1 due to concerns with known issues about patron notices and search functions. WVLS staff plan to upgrade to 6.2 but will need to perform a server upgrade of migrate to cloud hosting with Innovative prior to the upgrade to 6.2. Sierra 6.3 is in beta and is expected to be released this year.

Innovative has included cloud hosting in the current quote. If V-Cat chooses cloud hosting, Innovative would manage updates, security, and backups.

J. Klingbeil (WVLS) shared some pros and cons of self-hosted vs. cloud hosted. He noted that with cloud hosting, someone else is taking care of the server. With self-hosted, the LEANWI team has access to servers as well as the Innovative support team. These teams work together. If V-Cat chooses to go with cloud hosting, the access relationship flips so the LEANWI team (if even allowed by Innovative) would access Innovative's cloud hosted servers when appropriate.

J. Klingbeil (WVLS) noted that with either option security is a priority. He continued to explain that if V-Cat were to migrate the hosting of Sierra to a 3rd party cloud then LEANWI would no longer maintain the servers. This would remove that workload from LEANWI and move it to Innovative. J. Klingbeil (WVLS) noted that each option is equally good but stated that it makes sense to move in the same direction as all LEANWI partners.

J. Roth (Three Lakes) asked about the workload relief versus loss of access and wondered if this is an even trade-off. J. Klingbeil (WVLS) answered that it is hard to measure. There have been very few situations where being in control of the server has been necessary.

J. Roth (WVLS) asked about the history of security concerns with Innovative hosting. J. Klingbeil (WVLS) answered that there have been concerns and noted that Innovative communicates when they occur. In recent years, there have not been very many concerns.

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) added that the other LEANWI partners intend to move to cloud hosting with Innovative. MCFLS (Milwaukee County Federated Library System) has moved to cloud hosting with Innovative. WISPALS consortium was cloud hosted by Innovative when they were on Sierra.

H. O'Hare (Tomahawk) asked if being cloud hosted will lead to delays in our service. J. Klingbeil (WVLS) indicated that delays are not expected.

 P. O'Connell (Minocqua) moved to go into closed session to discuss confidential price quotes from vendors, seconded by M. Handel (Medford). A role call vote was taken. Motion carried.

V. Roberts (Rhinelander) moved to leave closed session, seconded by L. Ollhoff (Merrill). A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried.

V. Roberts (Rhinelander) moved to discuss the recommendation from the ILS Evaluation Committee and V-Cat possible actions, seconded by L. Ollhoff (Merrill). Motion carried.

J. Roth (Three Lakes) asked for a timeline for a transition. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) answered that a migration may take six months working with a vendor, but it is best to plan for a year. V-Cat's current Sierra contract requires 90-day termination notice. V-Cat must have a decision by the end of May. It may be possible to make a change within 2025, but it would be tight.

T. Edge (Antigo) asked if V-Cat could go to end of a calendar year with Sierra if we choose to migrate to Koha. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) indicated that V-Cat would be charged for an entire year. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) noted it may be good to keep Sierra through annual reporting.

V. Roberts (Rhinelander) asked if both ILS products would most likely be cloud hosted. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) noted it is an option to be discussed.

A discussion occurred about delaying action. V. Roberts (Rhinelander) suggested that V-Cat renegotiate with Sierra for a year or two and then look at Koha. L. Ollhoff (Merrill) expressed her support for this suggestion.

M. Handel (Medford) shared concern about how Innovative is not promoting Sierra to new customers. T. Edge (Antigo) added that training on a new ILS will be an issue.

It was shared with the Council that IFLS and NWLS are staying with Sierra, as well as Milwaukee County Federated Library System.

K. Sabelko (MCPL) suggested V-Cat proceed with the recommendation of the committee. H. O'Hare (Tomahawk) added that she was on the ILS Evaluation and Review Committee and the group was close to selecting Koha.

H. O'Hare (Tomahawk) suggested that V-Cat proceed with a multi-year contract for Sierra and then start the review process again.

K. Sabelko (MCPL) moved to uphold the recommendation of the ILS Evaluation and Review Committee by negotiating a 5-year contract with Innovative and to move to cloud hosting with Sierra as well as a test instance of Sierra, seconded by L. Ollhoff (Merrill).

J. Roth (Three Lakes) asked if the number of years of the contract will impact the timeline of a new committee. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) answered that if V-Cat thinks that Sierra is not sustainable then in a few years it will be time to look again.

Motion did not carry with representative vote. A roll call vote was taken. Motion did not pass.

T. Edge (Antigo) moved to uphold the recommendation of the ILS Evaluation and Review Committee by negotiating a 4-year contract with Innovative and to move to cloud hosting with Sierra as well as a test instance of Sierra, seconded by J. Hanson (Wabeno).

A discussion occurred about the nature of reconvening the committee and the scope of their work. It was suggested that V-Cat think about that work and suggest it for the committee in the future.

A Council member asked if the cost would change with a shorter contract. K. Zimmermann (WVLS) noted that Innovative may choose to change the cost due to the shorter contract. She asked if the cost should be added to the motion.

T. Edge (Antigo) moved to uphold the recommendation of the ILS Evaluation and Review Committee by negotiating a 4-year contract with Innovative at the current price point and to move to cloud hosting with Sierra as well as a test instance of Sierra, seconded by J. Hanson (Wabeno). Motion carried unanimously.

Report of the ILS Admin:
K. Zimmermann (WVLS) reported the following updates.

Aspen test server
We are considering whether to keep the format order as it is now (mostly in alphabetical order) or make a change to the format order to prioritize print books and physical materials. She indicated she will be sending out an email with example records for interested staff to review, consider the differences, and complete a survey to provide feedback.

We anticipate WVLS will make changes based on the results of this survey in late November to Mid-December. If there is not a clear preference in the survey results, we will wait to make changes until after the December 3 V-Cat Bibliographic Interface Committee meeting.

ByWater Aspen Changes

Earlier this year the lead developer and architect of Aspen, Mark Noble, left ByWater to start his own development company, Grove. This has so far been an amicable transition. There are now three Aspen developers: ByWater, PTFS Europe, and Grove.

ByWater is changing their service model as a response to this change. Bugs will have priority to be fixed. Anything that is a new development will go through one of three channels:

> 1) Library pays to have the development completed
> 2) Crowd sourced funding where multiple libraries pay to have development completed
> 3) Send the development request to the Aspen community, which will vote to determine the most pressing development requests, and which development partners will prioritize.

The community is still in the process of determining governance and tools for communicating and tracking bug reports and development requests.

ByWater will continue to host our Aspen servers and provide support.

Patron Record Deletions

Adult patron records that were expired and inactive over 5 years with no fines or fees as of July 1, 2024, were removed from the V-Cat database. A total of 7,074 records were deleted. A count of records deleted by library was provided.

For a public library to report the number of registered users on its annual report, DPI requires that patron records are purged at least once every three years. It will be helpful to note the number of records purged in the 2024 annual report.

The following was noted about the patron record deletions:

- Birth date was used to determine "adult" records rather than patron type.
- Juvenile patron records were not purged at this time.
- Patron records with fines or fees were not purged at this time.
- Reports of deleted patrons were shared with libraries who requested them

Libraries can request WVLS assistance with purging inactive juvenile patron records, and/or patron records that have fines or fees, or records that are inactive/expired for a shorter period by emailing help@librarieswin.org with their request.

Patron Record Residency Code Checks

WVLS recently completed a patron code 4 accuracy check for all V-Cat patrons with Langlade County Patron Code 4 residency using the US Census Bureau's Geocoder Batch Addressing tool. A total of 7,806 records were reviewed. We were able to identify and correct 887 patron records' patron code 4 information. A report with the number of updated records was shared with libraries whose patron records were updated.

If we were unable to verify the correct patron code 4 residency information using the patron address and the US Census Geocoder tool,

- A check address block was added to the records to prevent further circulation activity until the records can be reviewed and verified.
- Libraries received an email with a request to review and update the records following these steps:
  > 1) Verify the address information with the patron
  > 2) Use myvotewi.gov to verify the patron's residency
  > 3) Update the patron code 4 to match residency information from myvotewi.gov
  > 4) Remove the patron message about address verification
  > 5) Remove the patron block

Members were reminded of the V-Cat Guideline to identify correct patron code 4 residency information when new library card applications are completed and new patron records are created. A second check of the application and patron record

information was recommended. This is the responsibility of the library where the patron applies for a library card. Inaccuracies can happen when addresses are updated, and patron code 4 is not adjusted.

This WVLS review and verification of patron residency information is in addition to the processes in place at V-Cat libraries.

Antigo Public Library Bookmobile
The Antigo Public Library is continuing to develop bookmobile service and will be establishing a rotating materials collection. This service is still being developed and may change over time as the service and needs of the library change.

Currently, the APL bookmobile is a site of the Antigo Public Library with set location codes, and a statistics group to track circulation. It is not a full-fledged location within Sierra.

Currently the practice for APL staff is to shift items from the APL new materials shelves to the APL bookmobile monthly. The rotating bookmobile collection will have the following limitations:
- Items will not be available to fill V-Cat patron holds, and V-Cat patrons will not be able to place holds on the items. Please do NOT override a "not holdable by patron" block on the Antigo Bookmobile items.
- Items will be suppressed at the item level and will be hidden from the public library catalog (Aspen Discovery)

Once items have been in the bookmobile collection for a month the APL staff will return the materials to the regular Antigo or White Lake Public Library collections. Then the materials will be available to fill holds for patrons at V-Cat libraries.

Library staff were encouraged to reach out to K. Zimmermann (WVLS) with any questions about this process.

Items in the Antigo Public Library bookmobile collections will have the following codes in Sierra.
- Location codes:
    - **a1abm** Antigo Adult Bookmobile or
    - **a1jbm** Antigo Juvenile Bookmobile or
    - **a1ybm** Antigo Young Adult Bookmobile
- Item Types:
    - **9** 7-day Special Item or
    - **15** 14-day Special Item
- Status: **w** workroom (unless the item is checked out)
- Item Code 2: **n** suppress
- Item Message: **A1: Item belongs in book mobile please give to DA when returned. [Date added to the bookmobile collection] [Initials]**

In addition, a sticker or colored tape will be used to identify the physical item as part of the Antigo bookmobile collection.

Strategic Planning
Council members were asked to watch for a strategic planning survey between now and the February V-Cat Council meeting and reach out to her directly if there are big picture projects they would like V-Cat to prioritize in the near future.

V-Cat Training Report:
K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared an upcoming Create Lists training opportunity with the Council. She also shared that an in-person training occurred at Merrill in November and in-person training was scheduled for Antigo in December and that she and R. Metzler (WVLS) were re-considering how to offer training in the future given the low interest and low registration for the Fall training sessions.

Report of the ILS Specialist:
R. Metzler (WVLS) shared that she had nothing new to report.

2025 V-Cat Committee Membership:

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared that a complete slate of committee members for V-Cat Council committees will be coming in February. She asked the Council to reach out to WVLS if membership needs to change or if they or a member of their staff were interested in serving on a committee or as the V-Cat Chair-Elect.

Weighted Vote Calculations:

The Weighted Vote Calculations for 2025 document was shared with the Council.

Request for Agenda Items:

No topics were suggested.

Upcoming Meetings:

K. Zimmermann (WVLS) shared the 2025 V-Cat meeting schedule with the Council.

Adjournment:

H. O'Hare (Tomahawk) moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by L. Ollhoff (Merrill). Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:59 pm.

SUBMITTED: 2/6/2025 R. METZLER, RECORDER