Report of the MINITEX/MnLINK Transition Task Force

In response to a consensus motion from MnLINK Policy Advisory Council and MINITEX Advisory Committee, a MINITEX/MnLINK Transition Task Force was appointed.

This is a report of their deliberations in considering the issues in the proposed arrangement, including how to populate the various groups as well as refining the roles of various groups as appropriate and developing proposals to guide the merger of MnLINK leadership and management functions into MINITEX.

The Transition Task Force met on January 10, 2005. Members were:

- MnLINK Policy Advisory Council:
  Mike Kathman; Gary Langer; Pat Conley (for Bob Boese); Suzanne Miller

- MINITEX Advisory Committee:
  Joan Roca; Wendy Lougee; Anne Ryan; Audrey Betcher

In addition, Emily Kissane, Joyce Hommel, and Bill DeJohn were in attendance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the consideration of the two Advisory Groups:

After July 1, 2005, the MINITEX Advisory Committee would become the MINITEX Policy Advisory Council and would have three standing committees advising it:

A. MnLINK Technology Advisory Committee
B. MnLINK Gateway Advisory Committee
C. MINITEX/MnLINK Interlibrary Loan Subcommittee

1. Current MINITEX Advisory Committee members are elected by type of library representatives who currently use MINITEX service, and this will continue. Four library directors currently serve on both groups: Mike Kathman, Joan Roca, Wendy Lougee, and Suzanne Miller. Current library membership is as follows:
   a. City-County Libraries
   b. Community Colleges
   c. County Libraries
   d. Private Colleges
   e. Regional System Libraries
   f. State Government Libraries
   g. Multi-type Multi-county Library System
   h. State Universities
   i. Technical Colleges
   j. University of Minnesota Coordinate Campuses
   k. University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus.
2. Role: “To determine policy for MINITEX and advise MHESO and the MINITEX Director regarding MINITEX activities, including MnLINK, in planning, development and evaluation of programs and services.”
   - The current description and statement of purpose will be revised prior to July 2005.

3. A school media librarian should be added to the MINITEX Policy Advisory Council, and the Task Force recommended that Richard Kettering, currently on the MnLINK Policy Advisory Council, be asked to continue serve on the MINITEX Policy Advisory Council.

4. Ex officio non-voting members would be:
   - Director of Minnesota State Library Services & Technology (a unit of the Minnesota Department of Education)
   - MnSCU System Director of Libraries
   - MnLINK Interim Director

A. MnLINK Technology Advisory Committee

   - This Group would have a membership of 12-15 members and be appointed by the MINITEX Policy Advisory Council.

   - Role: “To serve as a strategic planning committee researching future technology infrastructure opportunities to enable statewide cooperation for libraries and allied stakeholders and to enhance access. The focus would be on long range planning, project assignment, funding source analysis, and implementation structures. Proposals from this committee would be advanced to the MINITEX Policy Advisory Council for approval. Committee would be active in beginning implementation processes as appropriate.

   - This Advisory Committee should be set up and functioning by July 2005.

   - Activities to be considered:
     - Take advantage of emerging and near term technologies.
     - Gather information about experiments going on within libraries and share with rest of the state.
     - Environmental scan processes could be an important component of this Committee’s work.
     - Invite non-librarians to attend and share what they see in their areas that might be important to libraries.
     - It was suggested that there be a wide call for nominations and encourage everyone to identify non-library technological representatives.
     - Other ideas were generated including:
       - Maybe have a conference every 2-3 years on future technological developments that everyone should be aware of and how they impacts our communities. This could be jointly sponsored with the Minnesota State Library.
If staff development components are identified in the course of this committee’s work, they can be referred to other organizations in Minnesota in order to help everyone.

B. MnLINK Gateway Advisory Committee

- The current Gateway Operations Committee should be asked their opinion on a plan of operation for the next two years in terms of what is necessary. This assumes that responsibility for oversight of routine operations will be moved to the staff level with appropriate contact with Gateway server site staff on a regular basis.

- Role: To review and consider enhancements to the Gateway, to provide mechanism for development and distribution of best practices, and to provide input to the MnLINK Technology Advisory Committee about areas for further research and to MINITEX PAC for policy considerations.

- It was brought up that library directors from participating libraries of all types that share their resources should be represented on the Gateway Advisory Committee. One idea was to keep the same membership and add additional library directors from libraries involved in sharing via the MnLINK Gateway VDX/ZPortal.

- There may be a need for an annual meeting, and this group could act as more of a ‘user group,’ acknowledging that various integrated library systems usually have ‘user groups’ around their vendor system through which functionality and enhancements are discussed.

C. MINITEX/MnLINK Interlibrary Loan Committee

- This group currently is composed of interlibrary loan librarians and has developed several documents that are educational and contain recommended policies to follow once the Gateway is fully operational. Many of these recommendations fit well within the MINITEX document delivery environment since the same libraries are involved.

- Role: Develop recommendations and expectations regarding operational procedures and policies for resource sharing.

- The Committee would report to the MINITEX Policy Advisory Council, but would pass all recommendations through the MnLINK Gateway Advisory Committee for comment.

User Groups
Time ran out for discussion of this item, and the Task Force decided to discuss this issue via email and or conference call unless there is a need for the group to meet again.

Joyce Hommel announced that the MnLINK Policy Advisory Council would probably need one more meeting after July 1, 2005 to approve final actions relating to MnLINK ILS. Considering this, it was suggested that the MINITEX Advisory Committee and the MnLINK Policy Advisory Council try to find a suitable date to meet on the same day. Currently, the MINITEX Advisory Committee has a set date of Friday, September 9, and the MnLINK Policy Advisory Council has a set day of Thursday, September 22. (3/05)