

NEOS Access Services Committee Meeting
July 14, 2020, 9:30 am
Via Video Call
Minutes

Present: Paul Pype (Alberta Government Library), Melanie Belliveau (Alberta Health Services), Sheila Clark (Burman University), Wilmer Tenerife (Burman University), Roberto Pellegrino (Alberta Innovates), Debbie Quast (Concordia University of Edmonton), Roger Salus (Covenant Health), Katalin Ormay (Grande Prairie Regional College), Linda White (Keyano College), Shannon d'Agnone (King's University), Kathy Williams (Lakeland College), Lana Thompson (MacEwan University), Kaitlin Kirk (Northern Lakes College), Samantha Nugent (NorQuest College), Barb Mahoney (Red Deer College), Natalya Brettle (University of Alberta), Karina Dunn (Vanguard College), Scott Davies (University of Alberta ITS), Elaine Coupland (University of Alberta ITS), Anne Carr-Wiggin (NEOS).

Regrets: Jim Derksen (Newman Theological College), Kelsey McMann (Olds College).

Guest: CJ de Jong, University of Alberta

Minutes of June 3 meeting

The minutes of the June 3, 2020 meeting were approved by consensus.

MeeScan

Lana noted that MacEwan is going to be implementing MeeScan as a pandemic measure to enable self checkout. NorQuest, King's and Concordia already use it. She asked if any other libraries are considering MeeScan, and if there would be future interest in a NEOS-branded installation. The advantage of this would be that with individual installations, only that library's primary clients can use it, and with a shared installation people could check out items at other libraries. As well as the MeeScan cost (assumed to be dependent on user numbers) it would involve a share in the annual cost of the SIP2 license. MeeScan is developing a curbside function. The group discussed various advantages and issues. Natalya will share the review of MeeScan done a few years ago by the U of A.

Reopening Planning

CJ de Jong attended the meeting to join the discussion about plans for reopening physical collections and physical delivery. Elaine noted that a variety of measures and solutions have been reviewed, and what is implemented and when depends to a large extent on what the group wants.

Four libraries have begun curbside pickup. CJ described the current UAL curbside service, which depends on CCID authentication to book a time slot (via LibCal). (They may not keep the system of booking a time; they are looking at other options for people to pick up items.) At present there is a high demand that is not met by the number of available time slots. Samantha noted that NorQuest is also booking timeslots using LibCal but they are able to meet demand. Lana noted that the MacEwan curbside system is scalable as they are not booking timeslots but having clients come into the library and picking up the items. Vanguard was the first to start curbside access; they are meeting clients at the library and Karina mentioned that they are not overextended.

Elaine noted that it would be fairly easy to reinstate Secondary Client borrowing and External Client borrowing. The due date would stay the same – at the end of September - and would not change to the end of January.

There are questions and implications:

- Would libraries want overdue fines? Overdue notices? Recalls?
- Once libraries are open, items would be able to be manually renewed by clients, and would then be due September 30.

Elaine advised, and people were in agreement, that it would be best to implement a solution for the fall, rather than an interim solution for the summer. This means that Secondary Client access to other libraries' collections may not be feasible unless delivery can be resumed and/or Elaine can devise a solution. It may not be possible to control which libraries people can choose for pickup but Elaine will investigate that. For example, could users request items from other NEOS libraries but only be able to pick up at their home library? Much of this is done via discovery systems and Elaine would have to discuss with Sam. Elaine will explore what is possible in terms of limiting a particular client's pick up options in the various discovery systems.

Paul noted that AGL is exploring opening partially and is using government courier to send their own materials to primary clients. As their building has construction outside and they are on the 11th floor Paul has concerns about AGL being available as a pickup location for non-primary clients.

Other libraries shared information about imminent partial openings by the middle or end of August. Most buildings will only be open at first to primary clients. Some libraries have continued to be partially open (either physical collections or for computer use) throughout the pandemic. Melanie noted that AHS libraries are closed even to staff, likely for an extended time, and Elaine said that their libraries could continue to be marked closed.

There was discussion about what was possible in terms of shipping or receiving items. Anne noted that Secondary Clients are the main priority in terms of having access to collections, although if it is reasonably simple External Clients could also be served. One of the drivers for reopening collections is to resume the print lending relationships among members and to sustain the value of consortial membership for clients. Maintaining and demonstrating the value of collaboration as a best practice is particularly important in view of the upcoming provincial review of post-secondary education.

Anne will gather information from libraries via a survey:

- Current open status
- Plans for reopening
- Access for non primary clients
- Feasibility of resuming NEOS Connect
- Wishes for recalls, overdue fees and notices
- Ability to ship items - when?
- Ability to receive items – when?
- What is your storage situation? Are you OK to keep things or do you need to ship right away?
- Plans in case of sudden closure for pandemic reasons
- Ability to participate in Centralized ILL

- Who has curbside? Do libraries use a booking system that limits to their primary clients?
- What are your plans to ensure physical distancing in the library?

CJ noted that the RCRF is able to receive, ship and sort. But libraries would have to be able to receive before it makes sense to ship items to the RCRF. Some libraries have kept their return bins open so already have a backlog to ship out.

MacEwan is investigating the possibility of circulating print textbooks and reserves. They are anticipating buying extra copies and having a 24 hour loan and then a 72 hour quarantine.

Many libraries are encouraging electronic over physical reserves.

Katalin noted that GPRC is looking at using the Springshare seat reservation app to limit attendance at the library. Sheila said that Burman will be removing furniture to facilitate physical distancing. Other libraries have plans to ensure physical distancing.

CJ noted that U of A is currently doing ILL in terms of scanning items and will be opening their ILL service for print materials. Those NEOS libraries participating in Centralized ILL can supply materials if they are able.

RDC and NorQuest, and perhaps other libraries, will not be having physical student cards in the fall. Elaine has developed processes to send userID information to students. Other libraries who need this should let her know.

Committee members agreed that they would still be very generous with cancelling fines during this period.

Update on Extending Loan Periods for Secondary Clients

Natalya noted that the U of A is open to agreeing to a Recall fine for Secondary Clients that is lower than the \$5/day they charge to their primary clients.

The committee also discussed considering a consortium-wide movement towards ending fines on regular overdue materials. Many individual libraries and some consortia have gone fine free, and research shows that books are returned at similar times with or without fines. Several NEOS libraries have either never charged fines to their primary clients or in recent years have not charged regular overdue fines to their primary clients. In the ILS it looks like fines are accruing but when the items are returned the fines disappear. Blocks on accounts and lost book charges once an item is very overdue still occur. Clients still get all overdue notices. Reserve and recall overdues still are charged. This obviously has a financial impact, but is good for relationships with clients. Further discussion will take place in the Fall.

Next Meeting – August 5, 2020, 1:00 pm