

DPLA Board of Directors Call
February 14, 2014: 3:00 PM Eastern

Present: Amy Ryan, John Palfrey, Paul Courant, Robert Darnton, DPLA staff, members of the public

Absent: Cathy Casserly, Laura DeBonis, Luis Herrera, Jamie Hollier, Siva Vaidhyanathan

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John Palfrey, President of the Board, commenced the call at 3:00 PM EST. While a quorum was not met, Palfrey noted that the agenda for the call lacked decision-making items and was therefore reasonable to convene.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF “METAHUBS” IDEA

Palfrey introduced the topic by stating that the purpose of the operational DPLA committees, such as the Content Strategy Committee which recently convened an open call on February 5,¹ is to roll ideas up to the Board and Executive Director for consideration. The subject of the open call was to explore the possibilities, priorities, and opportunities for establishing a multimedia Content or Service Hub.

DPLA Executive Director Dan Cohen opened up discussion by providing some background about the call. Karen Cariani, WGBH, and Peter Kaufman, Intelligent Television, composed a 2-page straw-man memo² detailing how institutions with specific types or subjects of materials could serve as a “meta” DPLA hub, and how they might prepare themselves if such a possibility seemed likely. In providing an overview of the document, Cohen highlighted the tensions between including these “metahubs” and any potential market confusion that would occur as a result (i.e., who would have the “right of way” for interested/prospective hubs?).

Palfrey asked if there was an actionable recommendation from the committee. Cohen said that there wasn’t a concrete recommendation, though there was a general inclination on the part of the committee and himself to pursue the creation of “metahubs” on a case-by-case basis. Palfrey then asked where DPLA might start if it were to pursue the idea. Cohen responded there hadn’t been a discussion of this on the open committee call, but he imagines that a “moving picture” or “images” hub would be simpler to spin up than a “museum hub,” which would require a greater degree of social engineering.

Palfrey opened the topic up to the Board for discussion. Robert Darnton approved of the idea and said that a pilot with 1-2 metahubs would be a smart approach. Amy Ryan

¹ <http://dp.la/info/2014/01/29/open-committee-call-feb5/>

² http://dp.la/info/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/OCC_-_Content-Strategy_-_DPLA-content-hub.pdf

seconded this idea. Paul Courant said that the implicit notion that working with a particular type of content, such as images or video, would be easier than museums, was a right one, as it aligns with the work already happening in libraries. Integrating museums and museum content into DPLA more fully is trickier, he added. Courant advised against making commitments that may prove more complex down the line.

Palfrey clarified that the creation of these metahubs wouldn't break away from DPLA's existing architectural design: these metahubs would aggregate data and leave the hosting of items to the holding institutions.

Palfrey said this conversation provided a clear statement that DPLA should hew closely to existing infrastructure and work to establish an "images" pilot of some sort.

A member of the public, James Shulman, ARTstor, added that moving images are immensely popular forms of content and could prove a boon to DPLA's popularity.

US COPYRIGHT OFFICE PUBLIC ROUNDTABLES

Palfrey wanted to flag the US Copyright Office Public Roundtables on orphan works and mass digitization (March 10-11, 2014) for the Board and the public.³ Cohen said that he plans to attend, at least on March 10, and he pointed out that these roundtables and their corresponding outputs could have a significant impact on what DPLA is doing, particularly around books. Cohen said he hopes to look to members of the DPLA community for comments on the topic.

Palfrey noted that these roundtables represent a good chance to get orphan works law right, or to at least get it pointed in the right direction. Courant said that the HathiTrust Digital Library is still enmeshed in a lawsuit on the subject and that he can't speak too publicly about his opinion. He encouraged others to press for reform.

Darnton asked what the likelihood was of the Copyright Office pressing for new orphan works legislation. Courant said the roundtables should be interesting, since the Copyright Office appears to be posturing toward some sort of legislative proposal. Palfrey said that seems likely given the call for a public roundtable.

Palfrey encouraged the Board and the public to share their thoughts to DPLA staff.

UPDATE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Cohen then provided a brief update on DPLA activities in January 2014. DPLA staff was at ALA Midwinter in Philadelphia in January, where they participated in a number of panels and convened a series of all-staff planning meetings to think through strategic initiatives. Cohen was pleased to mention the arrival of the Connecticut Digital Archive

³ <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/02/10/2014-02830/orphan-works-and-mass-digitization-request-for-additional-comments-and-announcement-of-public#h-4>

as a new Service Hub at the conference. Lastly, Cohen mentioned that Mark Breedlove, DPLA Technical Coordinator, is quickly getting up to speed and is working hard, alongside Director of Technology Mark Matienzo, to finish the transition from the planning initiative's tech staff to an in-house technical team. DPLA is also in the process of recruiting a third developer.⁴

Palfrey asked if Cohen could provide an update on the FCC's E-rate revisions. DPLA's discussion with the FCC has been about how they could use expanded bandwidth capacity to provide services nationally to public libraries.⁵ Cohen said that things are moving relatively slowly and that FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler recently announced an expansion of the charge. Cohen said he would be traveling to Washington, DC in the coming weeks to meet on this topic and others, including a discussion with the U.S. State Department during which he hopes to explore potential cultural exchange programs.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Palfrey then opened the floor for questions/comments from the public.

John Butler, Minnesota Digital Library, asked if Cohen could speak to the LibHack that took place at ALA Midwinter. DPLA Project Coordinator Kenny Whitebloom described LibHack 2014,⁶ a library-focused hackathon that made use of the DPLA and OCLC APIs. Many of the details he covered can be found in a January 30 post on the DPLA blog.⁷

Before concluding the call, Palfrey mentioned the recent launch of the DPLA Tumblr account.⁸ Palfrey concluded the call at 3:31 PM Eastern.

⁴ <http://dp.la/info/2013/08/20/opportunity-tech-specialist/>

⁵ <http://dp.la/info/2013/09/26/dpla-fcc-erate-upgrade/>

⁶ <http://www.libhack.org/>

⁷ <http://dp.la/info/2014/01/30/the-city-of-liberty/>

⁸ <http://digitalpubliclibraryofamerica.tumblr.com/>