

## **Mountain Plains Library Association**

### **Proposed Working Group on Electronic Communities (ECs) November 2006**

**Submitted by Carol Hammond  
Steward for Reorganization and Transition**

I strongly recommend that the Administration Committee appoint a Task Force on Enhancing and Improving Communication through Electronic Communities.

#### Recommended Task Force members:

David Oberhelman (currently an EC moderator) Chair  
Mickey Coalwell  
Scott Childers  
Sharon Moreland  
Michele Seikel

#### Assignment for the Task Force:

- 1) Review the concept of the ECs and add any clarification about the purpose and use;
- 2) Consider the technology issues that limit the usability of ECs and recommend alternatives;
- 3) Revise the guidelines for moderators as needed, and make recommendations about selection, orientation and training needs; and
- 4) Suggest strategies for promoting the use of the ECs among the members of MPLA.

#### Additional Information and Directions:

1. Concept: the committee should review the document that created the ECs, which is the report of the committee on reorganization, available on the web site under MPLA Publications and Documents – Executive Board Reports for July 23, 2005 (numbered TF1).

2. Technology Issues: The solution currently used, Memberclicks, was selected because being e-mail based it avoids most institutional firewall problems and so is available to all members who chose to be part of it; it is affordable; it can be managed with our registration system through memberclicks, where individuals can select and de-select their communities at any time by themselves, or the executive secretary can put people into communities. This is also a members-only service and whatever we use should be limited to members only. Other technology options for the ECs must address the some issues of access, cost, and control.

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3. Moderators: The current Guidelines for EC Moderators are available on the MPLA web site under MPLA Publications and Documents – Executive Board Reports for July 14, 2006 (Steward for Reorganization and Transition Report) Copy also attached. There has been confusion about the function and role of the moderators and questions about how they are to provide direction and leadership for the various ECs. See the final report of the Steward on the web site, under Executive Board Reports Archive for the meeting of October 19, 2006 (copy also attached).

4) PR: past issues of the MPLA Newsletter and online communication through Memberclicks have been the major methods of publicizing the ECs. These are also available on the web site in the archive of newsletters: February 2006 (50:4 cover story; April 2006 (50:5) pages 5-6; June 2006 (50:6) cover story.

Additional Resources:

The task force should include or contact the following people as resources as needed for this project:

- Judy Zelenski, Executive Secretary, for information on Memberclicks, member registration for ECs, and operations.
- Dan Chaney, Webmaster, for questions about hosting anything on the web site.
- Carol Hammond, for additional background information or questions on previous plans.

Other:

- The task force will need a deadline.
  - We need to provide them with some idea about what we would consider “affordable.”
  - They will probably need access to the conference calling service which will be an additional, although modest, cost. They will need information about how to set this up. With the exception of David, all are new members.
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