

2018 Summer RAC Meeting Debrief

The meeting was held in Wichita, KS from July 22nd to 26th.

Librarians in attendance: Renée McHenry (Missouri DOT Library), Marie Manthe (Kansas DOT Library), Mary Moulton (National Transportation Library), Bobbi deMontigny (Montana DOT Library), and Michael Molina (Oklahoma Transportation Library).

NOTE: For live comments and Q&A via Mentimeter from the audience, please see the separate spreadsheet.

July 23 – C&C Task Force meeting

As discussed in our last meeting, Jen and I presented the **TKN WG accomplishments** over the past year as well as **ongoing and future possible projects**.

Regarding the **document accessibility training**, John Moulden (FHWA) encouraged us to contact FHWA staff who have already had to go down this road. Renée said she would follow up with the contact to see if they could share their expertise.

John Moulden also brought a request from the FHWA librarians for state DOT publishers to include the **funding type (such as SPR) on the technical report documentation page (TRDP)** of their research reports. Renée responded that there is [guidance for this already on the AASHTO website](#). A suggestion was made to reacquaint RAC members with these guidelines. Renée said she could contact the RAC Region chairs to attend a future call to cover the AASHTO guidelines on research report dissemination, filling out the TRDP and submitting reports to TRID.

July 24 – TKNs and more session

The following presentations were given during the TKN session.

State DOT Libraries: A Disappearing Act?

[Renée McHenry](#), Missouri DOT

NTL Update

[Mary Moulton](#), National Transportation Library

TPF-5(181) Research Management Database Business Analysis

[Frances Harrison](#), Spy Pond Partners, LLC

July 25 – TRB Focus on the Issues

After this session, during the Q&A portion, Enid (WYDOT) raised the issue of **Sage copyright releases** with Ann Brach, Director, Technical Activities Division, at TRB. Now that Sage is hosting the [TRR](#), you would have to go to them for [reprint permissions](#) not TRB.

TRR content from 2005 to date is already on the Sage website and moving the older 1996-2004 content is underway. You would have to contact TRB for any content pre-1996.

Authors who publish in the TRR have to sign a Sage copyright release form which asks for an exclusive license of the material. If the author's organization contracted with a state DOT to fund their research and a research deliverable is produced, there is usually language in the research contract that specifies who owns the copyright for that content. In the case of WYDOT, it's jointly owned. Often, the research report is published first, with a TRR article coming later. So the author is not in a position to "give away" the rights of the state DOT. Authors are also probably not aware that they can negotiate these rights with the publisher.

Ann was aware of the issue and TRB's legal counsel wasn't aware of an issue from TRB's point of view. She thought that the agreements (older TRB and newer Sage one) were pretty much the same. Enid has already been in contact with Sage and received a copy of the release form. She commented that they are different. Ann asked for more specific examples. Enid may request this information on the RAC list to provide to TRB.

July 25 - Interactive Session

The entire group submitted questions during the morning session that they wanted discussed in the afternoon. These questions were voted on. The **State of Libraries** was selected as one of the topics to be discussed. Below are comments that were made:

Diane (WIDOT): Their unit was moved to a different building. They could not have a physical collection. You should let leadership know that librarians don't have to be attached or associated with a library collection. The content may be available in a different format.

Neil (NCDOT): They have had to change buildings and move the library. They have a fulltime librarian. She is given credit when information has been pulled for staff. The staff in Research are most aware of the library. However, the person in that role can provide further service to the agency. One example is providing P.E. exam materials. They are part of the State Library system. You can search the catalog to find their materials.

Sue (MTDOT): They hired their first librarian in 2006. In 2008, they had to prove that they needed a library and that the services had value. Their department lost a number of positions. At the time, the librarian position was vacant. She was afraid it would be lost but it survived. She expanded the role of the librarian to include a technology transfer specialist role. It helps that technology transfer is mandated by FHWA. It's important to hire someone who is a successful transportation librarian.

Chris (TRB): It's important that the Research unit be proactive. Librarians need to speak the language of the people they are serving. They are part of the Research team. How can they best help them?

Stephanie (DDOT): They have a different view. Their physical collection (mostly historical documents) has been digitized. Because of the interest in those materials, it's helped make the case for the library. With any questions, it helps to ask the librarian first. Their librarian also manages the intern program and has also been asked to serve in the role of records manager. The librarian (or library?) has had a longer tenure than Stephanie.

You should let leadership know that librarians don't have to be attached or associated with a library collection – Diane Gurtner, WisDOT

Librarians need to speak the language of the people they are serving – Chris Hedges, TRB

Linda (MnDOT): They have a premier library with 4 contract librarians and 2 student workers. She says their staff complains that they don't have enough staff to keep up with the work. For critical topics, their library staff sends out information to help keep DOT staff relevant. Increasingly, they are moving toward a digital collection. Their space is being scrutinized though. Her library provides excellent customer service to the DOT.

Ned (ITD): When they lost their librarian position, they had to donate the collection to Idaho University. The hardest part was not losing the documents but losing the expertise of that person and the roles they filled. The librarian did produce and distribute literature reviews. They managed the FHWA and TRB reports. They coordinated distribution of survey requests. Nowadays, he turns to the librarians at WashDOT and MTDOT if he has a question. He asked if building up a regional resource would work where services could be shared.

Emily (VTDOT): She's definitely convinced that there is a value in a service like this. She is interested in alternative contracting methods. They have no physical materials or physical space. She did ask what she should do with the paper copies of the TRB reports.

David (GADOT): They are running on a self service model and have received only incidental requests.

Diane (WIDOT): David may need the expertise of a librarian. They find the stuff you can't find. There is a cost-benefit to having an information professional on board.

Sue (MTDOT): They are trained to find information. They provide the right information at the right time. There are also efficiencies to be gained from having someone like this on board.

Unknown: Someone asked about whether a pooled fund could provide regional services.

Michael (OKDOT): Oklahoma is considering leading another library pooled fund. State DOTs without libraries should be turning to their regional TKNs for advice and assistance. He is chair of the WTKN.

Diane (WIDOT): She cautioned that this may or may not be the best approach.

Chris (TRB): He said that we've been struggling with this issue for many years. It may not be possible to budge people from their stereotypes of librarians. Using a different title (like information specialist) may not necessarily solve the issue.

Rhonda (WADOT): She took issue a bit with Chris' comments. She said they have 3 librarians. They recently did an agency wide survey of all DOT staff about the library as part of their strategic planning (including

The hardest part was not losing the [collection] but losing the expertise of that person and the roles they filled – Ned Parrish, ITD

Librarians find the stuff you can't find – Diane Gurtner, WisDOT

Librarians are trained to find information. They provide the right information at the right time – Sue Sillick, MTDOT

executive management) to see which services were relevant. They've just rolled out their strategic plan. It includes requesting funds for digitization. Librarians have specialized knowledge. If you are spending more than 10 minutes on Google, go see the librarian. You have to have the commitment that you need the library.

Jen (MoDOT): Words do matter, including how we refer to "librarians." Other titles may work better like KM specialist. This may make a difference in how we sell the value to management.

Bobbi (MTDOT): She participates in new employee orientations. She will explain to them that sure, it's "all in Google" but items you need may be behind paywalls. Librarians can offer services that get you what you want faster. She belongs to groups for resource sharing (she doesn't have to pay for items due to these relationships).

Unknown: Someone asked if the AASHTO KM committee could play a role or provide support for this issue.

Dale (MEDOT) asked for a show of hands for those who had libraries that had larger vs. smaller staffs. There didn't seem to be a correlation with the size of staff and having library staff.