

DALNET Finance Committee Minutes
March 20, 2000
University of Detroit Mercy
Outer Drive Campus

Present: M. Auer, UDM; J. Bosler, MCC; N. Bulgarelli, B.H.; B. Harris, WSU;
B. Holley, WSU; A. Walaskay, OCC.
Guests: L. Bugg, WSU; P. Jose, OCL

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m.

Because this was a special meeting of the DALNET Finance Committee, an agenda had not been sent out previously. The topics for the meeting agenda were identified as: 1) DALNET Director Position 2) Archdioceses of Detroit High Schools membership in DALNET.

2) DALNET Director Position

The Committee began by discussing whether DALNET needs and can afford a Director. Wayne State University is interested in separating WSU staff members from DALNET functions. Committee members agreed that DALNET has become a larger, more sophisticated entity and can be organized more effectively. Further, there was agreement that a DALNET Director position could be created to consolidate administrative planning functions with one person. Currently, various DALNET staff members, who also work half-time for WSU, have different DALNET jobs and responsibilities parceled out depending on their capabilities and DALNET needs.

Upon consultation with the DALNET Treasurer, the Finance Committee can recommend to the Board that there is enough money to pay for a Director position if the DALNET Project Manager position is phased out, as planned, in October, 2000. In addition, it is understood that the DALNET libraries will have to maintain their current level of annual maintenance funding.

There was consensus among the members of the Committee that a DALNET Director position should be posted and that it must be offered in compliance with all WSU hiring standards. Reporting channels were also discussed. An organizational chart will be drawn up to clarify the DALNET reporting structure. Because this is not a job designed for a specific individual, a national search was recommended. Because of employee contracts and time deadlines, there is some immediacy in acting expeditiously. It was agreed that a search process must be organized as soon as possible.

At the same time, there are a number of tangential issues that must be addressed.

- Considering a DALNET Director is a major transition for DALNET. How successful will recruiting be?
- Can *epixtech* employees be released from their contracts so as to be considered by DALNET?
- Can *epixtech* employee contracts be extended? Can *epixtech* employees be put on the WSU payroll?
- *Epixtech* pays its employees on a different wage scale than WSU pays its employees. What kind of a salary offer can DALNET make so as to be competitive? How will that affect the applicant pool?
- Since DALNET has a project manager on a contract until October, 2000, how can a transition be effected?
- Should DALNET be unprepared to name a DALNET Director, where does that leave the current Project Director? Does DALNET need to consider funding the Project Manager position and the Director position for a short period of time?
- Would *epixtech* staff members be willing to stop working for *epixtech* for a one year extension with DALNET?

It became clear that DALNET needs to clarify whether *epixtech* will waive restrictive employee contract provisions for its personnel if they were to receive a DALNET offer of employment.

Committee members were concerned about having input into the hiring process. While it is the responsibility of WSU to provide for DALNET service, staffing the DALNET Director position has become a joint concern of WSU and of DALNET. There was an argument made that it is Wayne State University's responsibility to arrange staffing. Such thinking was appropriate for the initial DALNET / NOTIS operation. However, with the joint Ameritech-DALNET Partnership Agreement, DALNET moved to a shared governance with WSU. In order to be successful in a shared vision for the information hub concept, more of the membership will be relied upon to assist with marketing and product development. Commitment will depend on a shared governance approach.

Committee members considered studying the ramifications of creating a DALNET Director position as well as other DALNET staff vacancies. Additional technical staff positions were suggested. Currently, there are two DALNET System Office vacancies. There is a concern that the remaining staff are overworked. Burnout is an issue. In the normal course of operations, the current vacancies can be viewed as promotion opportunities for staff. The vacancies will probably be filled as quickly as possible. DALNET would have to grow significantly to increase staff. There is no plan currently to decrease staff. Once all the positions are filled, day to day operations should become more normal.

Logistics were considered. Discussion of the DALNET Director position at the Board Meeting will require the Board to go into executive session. There is need for a point person to lead the move to a DALNET Director. Committee members recommended that a subcommittee be created to assist with the posting of the DALNET Director position. The specific role of such a subcommittee was considered along with a recommendation as to who would be on the subcommittee. This group will outline job duties and responsibilities, and a process for smooth transition. The time line is 4-6 weeks. The sub-committee will be comprised of: J. Bosler, L. Bugg, B. Harris, B. Holley and P. Jose. The chairperson will be B. Holley. The Finance Committee will recommend that the Board proceed in offering the DALNET Director position with guidelines for a subcommittee and suggested participants. B. Holley will convene a meeting as soon as possible pending Board approval.

3) Archdiocese of Detroit High Schools Membership

There was little remaining time to discuss the Archdioceses of Detroit membership in DALNET. The Archdioceses has a number of high schools that are interested in DALNET membership. The Committee agreed to make a proposal to the Archdiocese as a single entity rather than a proposal to each separate high school. Pricing was not discussed. This issue will be further considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee. The Committee may have to agree on a financial proposal to be made to the Archdiocese in the near future.

4) Adjournment

The Finance Committee adjourned at 10:00 a.m. to the DALNET Board Meeting and the Appreciation Luncheon.

Respectfully submitted,
J. Bosler, Chair