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## Transportation Librarians Roundtable

**Meeting Date:** February 12, 2026

**Topic:** Annual Open Discussion Forum

**Bob Cullen:** As always, Rosalyn does a great job outlining all of that and what we need to keep in mind. Last year, as at least a few of you might recall, we did things a little differently for that year's Open Discussion Forum, and basically it was because, let's just say, there were some sensitive issues that had to be discussed. And so for that year, we did not record it and we even had the chat closed for that particular time. We do not need to do it this year unless there's a surprise that Rosalyn and I aren't aware of. I think we'll just go ahead on business as usual, as it were.

I'll just get started with a couple of things, but again, whenever anybody wants to join, either in response to anything I may have said or if you want to introduce topics—and I certainly would like to do that—go ahead and do the raise hand feature. I don't want this to be in danger of becoming one of my monologues throughout the hour. I don't have all that much off the top of my head right now to bring up. We were talking just before the TLR, before we got started with today's TLR, just talking about some of the things that are going on.

Of course, one of the things is the reauthorization legislation here at the federal level. It looks like the hearings are going to be coming up, I think it would be within the next month or two, and as always, we certainly try to do what we can on behalf of our libraries, our workplaces, those whom we serve, to make sure that the priorities that we work on behalf of and that we champion are somehow maintained in any reauthorization legislation whenever that time comes around. This time is most certainly no exception, so just something to keep in mind. I believe again September 30th is the deadline for this legislation, right? And so just whatever you can do. I hope to get a little bit more of the learning curve on all that myself with the AASHTO annual legislative briefing taking place in a couple of weeks—week after next, I guess. I just wanted to make mention of that and I think I see a hand raised and it is Enid White. Go ahead, Enid.

**Enid:** Can you give me the bill number for that reauthorization?

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** So there isn't a bill yet. I was just checking the committee website, [transportation.house.gov/surface-transportation-reauthorization](https://transportation.house.gov/surface-transportation-reauthorization), and basically they have started hearings already. I should have checked that before I said anything, but there was one this morning, so they're having hearings March 26th, April 9, April 29, and May 6. And yeah, there's no sign of there actually being a bill of legislation that's been introduced yet at this point. The last one was the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act from 2021.

**Enid:** Okay. Okay. Thank you so much.

**Bob Cullen:** Great. Thank you.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** You're welcome.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you. Shubhangi Kelekar, go ahead.

**Shubhangi Kelekar (DOT):** Good afternoon, everyone. Can you hear me?

**Bob Cullen:** Yep.

**Shubhangi Kelekar (DOT):** Yeah, I just wanted to share with you guys that our supervising librarian, Karen Kasuba, she retired in June 2025 and we now have a new supervisor and he is Matthew Colvin. He is right now on the call. So please welcome Matthew to our community and he can just tell everyone about himself.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Welcome. And if you could just say what organization you're with too?

**Shubhangi Kelekar (DOT):** Okay, Caltrans.

**Matthew Colvin (DOT):** Hi everybody. Happy to get a chance to work with you all. I've only been here a couple weeks so I'm still kind of getting the lay of the land and trying to learn a whole bunch of new stuff. You know, I actually, my career was working in corrections. So this is a very different experience for me, but I'm just looking forward to learning a new field and supporting all the work that you're doing, so hi.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Okay. Thanks. Thanks for coming.

**Bob Cullen:** Great. Thank you. Do you prefer to go by Matthew or Matt?

**Matthew Colvin (DOT):** It's Matt. It's Matthew if I'm in trouble.

**Bob Cullen:** I got you, okay. All right, great. Thank you so much for joining us today and welcome on board. Great to have you here and I hope you find today's TLR worthwhile and you join us for some coming up as well. So great, great to have you on board.

So I don't know if anybody else has anything to say. I'll just go ahead and just to help get things rolling here a little, I guess I just want to address a few things about ASIS&T. As you know, the SLA is no longer with us as of New Year's Eve, I guess was the cutoff, but we merged with ASIS&T, of course, as has been discussed a few TLRs over the past several months. And one of the things pertaining to ASIS&T, first of all, that I would like to bring up—just some good news I heard just before we got started here today was that our own cherished colleague Gabi Hysong has just been accepted to give a presentation at the ASIS&T meeting in Albuquerque in June with somebody else, and I'll have Gabi talk a little more about that if she's willing.

I do want to say though, and I hope Gabi's okay with my announcing this, Gabi also indicated that she has a retirement coming up, which is kind of sad, but if there's a silver lining to it, the retirement's not set to take place till January 2nd, 2030. So she did one of those rare favors for any boss by giving her own boss four years' notice. So that was big news as far as I'm concerned, but maybe Gabi and I think we were kind of talking about this earlier.

**Gabi Hysong:** We'll see. But at ASIS&T, since I'm a solo librarian—and I would love to know in your group who the solos are because we've got something unique going on—we're presenting there, Julie Snyder and I, and I think Hildy Dworkin will also be presenting: Solo Success Stories. We've done this in the past, but since this is going to be new for ASIS&T, because they're very academic-oriented and we're boots on the ground, it's like "here's how you do this as a librarian." And we've had people interested in attending or saying, "Hey, this is great" because as a librarian, they may work with a team, but we all can learn something from each other, so I'm excited about that. Thrilled. So that'll be in June, whenever the conference is, I'm not sure what day we're on the calendar yet, but we'll be working that out and it'll be more like a panel discussion, so back and forth and you can ask questions. And then retirement...

**Bob Cullen:** June is like 6th to 10th.

**Gabi Hysong:** Well, I turn 70 this year. Maybe I ought to think about retirement, but I'm one of those late bloomers. At the age of 50, I quit my previous career, sold my dream house, and went to graduate school to become a librarian. I wasn't sure if I'd get that job, but Rolls-Royce gave me an offer I couldn't refuse and they said, "Oh, the job's only going to last a year" because literally the library was always horrible. It was just—this is Rolls-Royce—but there's a whole history about Rolls-Royce in the US. And here I am, 20 years later, still driving people crazy.

So it's wonderful. And I would love to just continue working part-time, but we'll see what they do. You know life didn't change in four years. It's a little crazy, but I would love to connect with other solos and I think it'd be super. And anybody else? I just love this group. So thank you for letting me speak. Appreciate it.

**Bob Cullen:** Oh, sure. Thank you, Gabi. Outstanding news and I really appreciate, I think I'm speaking on behalf of quite a few other people here, that I do appreciate the way you really do bring some needed focus and fresh perspectives with respect to solo librarians as well, and the challenges and the opportunities. So thank you for that. I'd say on the subject of Albuquerque, I see Amy Boggess has her hand raised, so go ahead, Amy.

**Amy Boggess (DOT):** Yeah, it's Boggess. Hello everyone. Yeah, I'm one of those solos. I know there's several of us on here. Yeah, it's an interesting challenge, but I just wanted to say though, if anybody who does end up getting to come in June to Albuquerque, if you guys will let me know, I am happy to help you with planning. Maybe set up some kind of dinner or something like that. So yeah, just kind of keep me in the loop on that and if anybody needs any tips for here, just let me know, okay.

**Bob Cullen:** Great. Thank you. Thank you so much, Amy. That'll be great. And you're very kind to make that offer. And I think it works out well that that meeting's taking place right there, I guess quite literally in your own backyard. So, wonderful. Gabi, I'll go ahead and call on you first and then I see Jamie's next.

**Gabi Hysong:** I just wanted—it's like, oh, Amy, you must be in New Mexico or something. So I'm going to get your info because I also plan—my sister is coming in from San Francisco and we're going to spend some time together in New Mexico. So I'll pick your brain and yeah, we solos, maybe we can have a get-together for solos or whatever. I'm looking forward to that. Thanks.

**Amy Boggess (DOT):** Yeah, cool. Sounds good.

**Bob Cullen:** Outstanding. Jamie Luedtke, I'll go ahead and call on you next.

**Jamie Luedtke:** Hey everyone, I'm with the Association for Modified Asphalt Producers. I'm working in a slightly different space right now. I'm working with association management, but I've been a part of the SLA Transportation Group for probably 10 years now—or now ASIS&T—but I've been on the conference planning committee for the upcoming New Mexico event in Albuquerque, and they have just I think just opened a form for community events. So like we used to have the dining events and other meetings, it could be something that we consider for this, for the transportation group or one of the communities. But also I will be going. So I'm looking forward to seeing a lot of people there, but that's it.

**Bob Cullen:** That's wonderful, Jamie. Thank you for the information. Thank you for confirming that you'll be attending. It looks like we have quite a few people. Of course, Amy, that's Amy's home base anyway, but that sounds wonderful and I appreciate you sharing information. I still have to—I have submitted a tentative request about attending, but I still have to get something finalized and get approval here, so hopefully knock on wood that's going to happen. I'll be sure

to keep all of you in the loop on that, but it sounds like with Gabi's presentation and what Jamie was just talking about and the fact that again that Amy is already there anyway, I think it sounds like it should be a promising opportunity for members of our community to meet up there. I think that's wonderful.

Well, I am waiting to see if anybody else has anything else they'd like to ask about or to share, either pertaining to this particular topic or anything else. While I'm waiting for that, just as far as ASIS&T goes and the transportation librarians' presence there in terms of a group similar to the SLA Transportation community, the one update I have is that basically I'm trying now to pick up where basically I'd left off at the end of last year in December as far as helping to make that happen or working with others to help make that happen. I'm not going to go through the whole long story here but, as with everyone else here, I know it's been a busy past couple of months with everything on both the work side and also on the personal side. But I am finally, I think, getting caught up on things and that especially applies to trying to get some kind of formal transportation librarians' presence within ASIS&T.

The one update I have right now is that Kelly Bunting, who had been with the SLA Engineering community—I think quite a few of you have met Kelly over the past few years at the SLA conferences—she has basically assumed a lot of the role and responsibilities as the liaison with one-time SLA members in terms of facilitating the transition into ASIS&T, particularly with respect to people forming Special Interest Groups or some other kind of presence there at ASIS&T. Christine Pelosi, whom I know a few of you have met either in person or online, had been doing that. Kelly has essentially been taking over more of that role now that the transition has actually fully and formally taken place.

I did have a chance to talk with Kelly yesterday just to see about next steps and all of that, and one other key first step that has to happen is again to have another meeting with interested people who carried over their SLA membership into ASIS&T at this time, and that's going to have to be the starting point. It's known as iConnect there within ASIS&T. So it really that's going to be the starting point to make the determination based on our discussions there as to basically how we want to proceed or what each of us envisions in terms of what the Transportation Librarians group within ASIS&T should be. And so at this point, I haven't even reached the starting point, but I think the conversation with Kelly really at least clarified a lot of things for me, and particularly how do we begin the process, and that's what's going to happen soon.

I realize not everybody here is probably affiliated with ASIS&T, right? So I told Kelly yesterday this might be as good a point as any to at least introduce the subject. And of course I'll be doing follow-up emails and calls with individuals or with groups coming up within the next week or so just to try to get that process going. But that's where we stand now. I wanted to share that with everyone. I can't think of anything offhand to say, just wish me luck and I will be in contact. I do see a clearer path than I've had in recent weeks to at least get that process started. Gabi, go ahead.

**Gabi Hysong:** Yeah, we solos... you know, you can start out as a community. You don't have to be a Special Interest Group right away, because I believe a Special Interest Group requires at least 50 signatures to get that started, and we solos didn't have 50. But at least it gets your presence out and you're on ASIS&T. So if you want to start out as a community, there's nothing formal, really hard and fast to do, but I can double-check on that. Rather than you trying to—okay, it will be a Special Interest Group—it's like we're going to try to make ourselves a Special Interest Group during and maybe after the conference where people realize, "Oh, you might have some good ideas." So then we can become a SIG, Special Interest Group, but starting out as a community, that's a good way to get you out into the community, so you may want to look into that. I can send you that info if you need it, unless Kelly's already sent you some info.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you, Gabi. Kelly has sent me some info, Gabi, but I'll double-check on that. And if there's anything that still needs to be addressed, I'll touch base with you about that. Also, I'm going to touch base with you anyway, Gabi, because you've actually articulated what several of our colleagues have brought up too about in terms of becoming a SIG but also starting out, like you said, like more of a community. And so I'll be in contact with you soon. I certainly appreciate that.

And that's one of the things too—I know I've already probably been rambling on a good deal about things—but that's one of the things that has gotten tighter focus, if you will, at least based on some of my communications over the fall with people and particularly with the other members of the SLA Transportation Community Board while we were still in existence. We did have one final meeting in December and that's what at least a couple of the board members were certainly highlighting—what might be the viability of starting out as a community before we take that step towards being a SIG. In other words, just to do that at least in terms of—I don't want to use the term "baby steps"—at least those first few crucial steps into a new sort of territory, if you know what I mean.

I did want to bring that up, of course. I'm open to any questions and comments. I appreciate again your words there and your kind offer to be of assistance, Gabi, so very, very helpful. Unless anybody else has anything to say, I would ask about all of that, the whole brave new world of ASIS&T. We can certainly move on to other things. I guess on the subject of the ASIS&T meeting and all that, one of the things I'd like to throw out now to see if this generates any discussion or set of recommendations would be this: Are there any other meetings that anybody here is planning to attend, would like to attend, or perhaps just find out more about? I know we've had a couple of people mention going to ASIS&T, for instance. American Library Association—is anybody planning to attend that? I guess their meeting is in July this year, I think that's what I heard. But I don't know if anybody's planning to go to that. Jamie.

**Jamie Luedtke:** I will be there also. It's in Chicago this year. I can't remember the exact date. It's like the very last weekend of June. But I'm local to the area, so I plan to go.

**Bob Cullen:** Have you gone in previous years?

**Jamie Luedtke:** Yeah, I have. I try to go when it's in Chicago just because I'm in the area, so I haven't been to a lot of the more recent conferences. I think they return to Chicago every three years since their headquarters is here, but it'll probably be—I know they're probably working on some special planning since it's the 150th anniversary of the association. So it's a big year for them. Wow, yeah.

**Bob Cullen:** Wow, yeah. Thank you. Thank you, Jamie. So, well, that's good. I just wanted to get a sense of that. I've never been to an ALA conference and I'm aware of a few people in our community have done that, so I appreciate that. Sarah, you had your hand raised. Did you have something you wanted to say?

**Sarah Zepeda - CDOT:** I applied to go through CDOT and I'm just waiting for approval. It's been really a little frustrating. They wanted the agenda, which isn't sent out until April, so I gave them last year's agenda and kind of said, "These are some things that I would want to go to." But yeah, I'm just kind of waiting for approval. But I thought this would be a great one. I also wanted to go to the special libraries—I know Special Libraries isn't still a thing, but I think there was one in New Mexico.

**Bob Cullen:** Right, the ASIS&T one. Yeah.

**Sarah Zepeda - CDOT:** Yeah. So yeah, that's the one I kind of wanted to go to as well. So yeah, just kind of waiting for approval, but otherwise I'd really like to attend the ALA in Chicago.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay, great. Well...

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** I gotta tell you guys something about the conference. I've filled out all my paperwork way ahead of time, even before we had the schedule and before we had the program and so on, and I submitted it all. And the person who you submit that kind of information to, she said, "Not sure when you're going to be able to register yet, but you should know that the last time I submitted a package"—because there's like you submit the stuff for the expenses and so on, but then there's separately a permission to travel—and when she's been submitting stuff to people way ahead of time to give them plenty of time, they send it back to her and tell her to wait until a month before the conference to submit your request to travel. And I was like, oh, and am I going to be able to do like last year where it was a whole four days before the conference started that I was able to book my flight? So anyway, we have layers and layers and layers of permissions now required for pretty much anything. But I'm going to be relentless. And I have every intention of being there.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you. Yeah, I was wondering about that, Rosalyn, because I know you've attended a few years. Unless I'm mistaken, it was like maybe we were trying to go to one year ALA and the next year SLA—kind of that pattern.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** I went to ALA one year because SLA was happening right in the middle of my family's vacation week together. That did not work out, but I did go to Pittsburgh this past year, so fortunately it wasn't that far or that expensive to get to Pittsburgh from DC.

**Bob Cullen:** Right. Great. So ALA was the other one that came to mind. And if anybody has any other meetings or not even conferences per se, if there's any—excuse me, little bit of this water—any other events or webinars or anything, please let us know if they jump to mind during the remainder of this hour or even after we're finished up today. Please don't hesitate to let us know. Yes, Jamie.

**Jamie Luedtke:** A shameless self-promotion: So I do a lot of event planning now and the Association for Modified Asphalt Producers is hosting a workshop on modified asphalt in Baton Rouge next month from March 9th through the 11th. So if you have anyone on staff—I know funding is always and getting approval to go is always a challenge—but if there's people you work with who are working in the modified asphalt space, we have a really great program of about a day and a half. Speakers from the industry, and it's a really great opportunity for folks who work at agencies. Please feel free to reach out because we typically had this in Dallas last year and had great participation from TxDOT, but our agency and Department of Transportation attendance, we're not seeing as much traction there yet. But I am planning all of it, so I can answer any questions. I know things are challenging right now.

**Bob Cullen:** Well, thanks for letting us know. Again, that's in Baton Rouge, you said, right?

**Jamie Luedtke:** Yeah, yeah.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay. It's a nice state capital too. It's a nice city also. Very good. Well, good. That's something to keep in mind. And as always, I think it's always great to exchange possible other conferences or other types of meetings that might be beneficial to each of us, but also maybe to other people we know, people with whom we work. So I think that's great.

I'll go ahead and throw out this question, pivoting at least a little here: Does anyone here have any innovations—they can be big innovations or small innovations—any innovations that you've

tried implementing recently within the past couple of months or so that you'd like to share with us? Or for that matter, just to be adventurous, are there any innovations that have been percolating in your mind that you think you might want to try out, but you haven't gotten to that stage yet, that you might want to share with us now? Has anybody been feeling particularly innovative lately? How about Jennifer? Go ahead, Jennifer Heron from Michigan DOT.

**Jennifer Heron (MDOT):** Yeah, I can chat. I know I just moved my library, which was exciting and fun, as chaotic as it is with everything out of order. I used something called Power Apps, and I think I was just chatting with Amanda about that. Something I'm going to be doing is, since everything's crazy, I'm scanning all my shelves and I'm going to update my catalog that I made in Power Apps so that users can now get a direct shelf location. So when they're looking for something, they don't have to guess—our section can be the same kind of call number. So I'm excited to get everything scanned and then update our catalog and they can go to like "Shelf 33" instead of kind of wading through everything. So excited to finally get that updated.

**Bob Cullen:** Well, that's great, Jennifer.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Congratulations.

**Jennifer Heron (MDOT):** Yeah, the big part's done. Now it's just chaos, but it's fine.

**Bob Cullen:** Along those lines, Jennifer, what's been the biggest challenge? I guess even what do you anticipate being the biggest challenge?

**Jennifer Heron (MDOT):** I think the biggest challenge was getting all the books off the shelves. We didn't have boxes for our move, which is exciting times, so we had to stack everything on the floor. So I think the biggest hurdle was they wouldn't really schedule taking the shelves down until the shelves were cleared and it was hard to clear the shelves. It was just kind of one of those things where it was just very little bit a little bit. So I think that's the biggest—clearing the shelves, getting the shelves torn down, rebuilt and then getting stuff back on the shelves because they had to clean the windows and that's where we stacked all the books. So it was just kind of a hustle.

**Bob Cullen:** I would say so. Wow. But I think it's great that it's been well underway and I think that's great. Strikes me as very ambitious, but I somehow think that you're just the person to get something like that done.

**Jennifer Heron (MDOT):** It's nice that it's over. It's nice to talk about like now it's not done, it's not looming. So that was the biggest fun part.

**Bob Cullen:** Of course. Well, thank you very much, Jennifer. I see that Amanda Carter has her hand raised, so I'll call on Amanda next. Amanda, of course, was our distinguished TLR speaker from last month and she's from Oregon DOT.

**Amanda J. Carter:** Oh yes, Oregon Department of Transportation. I just want to say that I did recently get off a call—we don't use phones, I guess, anymore—with Jennifer, and she did a little bit of a demo of the Power Apps of how she's using it. She's done a lot of great things, so I just want to brag on her a little bit of the amazing things that she's done with Power Apps for the library services there at Michigan.

**Jennifer Heron (MDOT):** Thank you.

**Bob Cullen:** I appreciate that, Amanda. And Jennifer, you didn't even have to pay Amanda to say that.

**Amanda J. Carter:** Nominal fees, nominal fees. It's okay.

**Bob Cullen:** Excuse me. So wonderful, then. Thank you for the feedback there, Amanda. Gabi, go ahead.

**Gabi Hysong:** Oh yeah, I would love to know more about the Power Apps. But I moved my library about three years ago and I wasn't allowed to get boxes. They're so expensive. And what happened was I had our maintenance folks take the books off the shelves—the ones that I wanted to move to the new space—they put them on pallets and shrink-wrapped the pallets and numbered the pallets so that I would know those things with call numbers B through whatever are on pallet #1. But when they delivered everything to the new space, the pallets were completely out of order. So it's like, "where's pallet #10?" And it took me about a week, but I got it all arranged, and that included the parts for the parts petting zoo—those things were palletized too, but didn't have to be in a particular order.

But that's what we did with our books. Just put them on pallets, shrink-wrap the pallets and then they delivered them to the new space. But I like the idea of numbering the shelves because people get so confused about call numbers, and I always remind them—I always tell them a call number, think of it as the street address. It tells you where that book lives. And they're like, "Well, I don't know Dewey Decimal." And I go, "You don't need to, we use Library of Congress anyway." And it doesn't matter if you know it or not. So, I'd like to learn more about the Power Apps. It's like, oh, that could be something I can use because our security is very strict and I can't use AI—any external AI or anything—and then it might be something... yeah, number the shelves and in our OPAC just go "this is on shelf #21," so that would probably help the user. Thanks.

**Bob Cullen:** Thank you. I'm very much enjoying the energy here. This is great. Go ahead, Sarah.

**Sarah Zepeda - CDOT:** Hi. Yeah, we moved our library last January and I asked the moving company—because we had moved our whole office from the 4th floor to the third floor—and I asked the moving company if they had rolling shelves, and they did. And so what we did is we just kind of put our shelves onto the rolling shelves, we moved them and it was just really easy. We numbered them, so I think that's always an option. No one on the move committee was aware of this. I think we were kind of going to probably have to do something similar—put things on pallets or in boxes—but I had worked somewhere where we had moved previously and they had the rolling shelves, so I kind of knew about it. So that was just kind of nice to know. Yeah, that's always something to ask for. If you do have to do a move, ask the moving company if they have rolling shelves. And they usually do.

**Bob Cullen:** You didn't have any problem with that, Sarah? When you asked about the rolling shelves, they were pretty much readily available?

**Sarah Zepeda - CDOT:** Yes, it was really surprising actually. Because it was an office, they did have carts and bins for everyone else's things, but for us, they did have the rolling shelves.

**Bob Cullen:** Wonderful. Well, that's great. Thank you for sharing that information. So I don't know if anybody else has anything to add, follow up, or if there's any other topic that anyone might want to introduce. Let me go ahead and we can by all means come back to this subject. I really appreciate Jennifer getting the ball rolling on all of this, but let me just throw this out if anybody has any thoughts or experiences to share as far as this goes. I was just asking about innovations. How about external factors? And I mean the overarching kind of factors that can bless or curse any workplace. And of course, the one thing that jumped immediately to mind would be like technological—I mean, has AI become your best friend or your biggest challenge? Any particular technological challenges that have proven to impact your own strategic or even

tactical priorities these days of how you want to get things done or how you feel you need to get things done? I talked about technological, but anything else, perhaps? Anything of a legislative nature or just of a structural nature that has been more of a part of your life than usual? Does anybody have anything like that to share? Hopefully AI is being kind to everyone. Go ahead, Amanda.

**Amanda J. Carter:** DOT again. So we are in a funding dilemma. We were also in there last year. So no, this is not a... what do you call it? My brain's also not working today because I'm off tomorrow and my brain thinks I'm already off. But we are having some more financial issues for the Department of Transportation. So there is a short legislative session happening right now that ends at the end of October—I mean October... I don't know what month I'm in—at the end of February or the first week of March. And so hopefully by then we'll know whether or not we have funding and if we don't, there's going to be another run of mass layoffs. We're talking hundreds. We're talking more than last year, and so there's a lot of concern for that.

So there's a lot of stress happening at the DOT here in Oregon. So I am trying to do what I did last year in making the library kind of a safe space or kind of a quiet space for people. And I found out it worked yesterday. I was in there for the second day in a row—I typically only go in once a week—and I was in there yesterday and somebody walked in and they asked me, ironically, they didn't realize it, they asked me: "So do people tend to come in? It seems quiet in here. Do you often get visitors?" And as the visitor that had walked in and asked me that, I thought it was kind of funny. But he sat down for a moment and we started to chat. And then my phone rang. And so I did... there are visitors often. And then he told me later that he comes in some days when I'm not there. He doesn't always know if I'm there because I'm kind of on the 5th floor by myself. I also recently had a move but had very similar experiences to everyone else talked about it. So that was a whole thing, but it's good to know that they're using the library as a space to go in, so I'm trying to maintain that.

But with that, we're also trying to cut corners when we can, but we need things like... so one question I have for the group is if you use any software for your ADA compliance for adjusting or fixing the PDF files, let me know. Send me an email because not only are we looking forward to some staffing cuts, but we're currently in staffing cuts. So our administrative person who used to do the ADA compliance and who used to manage a lot of the research coordination for all these research projects, he's out right now on an extended leave. So my manager's doing it. Every time I mention, "Oh, somebody said something about ADA compliance or an app that they used," he's very interested. That's why I met with Jennifer Heron about the Power Apps, because she has one—a great one with her—that has the research rankings and whatnot that my manager was very interested in.

So Power Apps is my point here—I'm going to try to revert and go that way because we are looking for digital repositories and kind of different things to continue to grow the library and their research guides and gray literature and a bunch of other things. So as we're looking at digital repositories, I just want to thank Jennifer again for showing me what she's doing with Power Apps, because that might be a more affordable alternative in the meantime until we can grow it further. And so there's a lot of great things happening there. But if you have any recommendations for me digital repository wise for gray literature or ADA compliance wise that will ease, that will reduce the amount of time it takes to fix tables specifically, let me know.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay. Thank you, Amanda. So if anybody has anything, perhaps now's the time or even beyond today's TLR if you have anything to follow up with Amanda about, anything to share with her in terms of recommendations or insights, please do so. I think that'll be very helpful. That's in large part why we're here at these TLRs, right, to help each other exchange that kind of information. Rosalyn, go ahead.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Has that question been answered by our 508 accessibility community of practice about the type of software? Anybody here who's been on that group? Maybe not.

**Amanda J. Carter:** I didn't see it in the LibGuide is what I'm asking.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Okay. All right.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay. Please keep that in mind though in terms of any resources or recommendations that you might be able to offer Amanda. Gabi, go ahead. The floor is all yours.

**Gabi Hysong:** Oh, I'm learning so much. This is wonderful. My biggest gripe is because we're a Department of Defense contractor and we're British-owned, it's like a double whammy. We have to meet the new cybersecurity rules which have been put in place, and my analogy is our security team is like: How do you stop cars from speeding? Well, you take the wheels off of everybody's vehicle, and nobody gets anywhere. But nobody's speeding. And so then you have all these workarounds.

My issue is I'm very customer-oriented. Somebody needs an article and I click on the website and Netscape says, "Sorry, it's blocked." I have to use my personal computer at home, which is fine. My manager... everyone knows I have to use it because waiting five days to a week for our IT security to unblock something and then they get confused... nope, I'm all about customer service and my manager knows that and he's perfectly fine because it's not like Rolls-Royce secrets are floating around on my computer. These are articles from libraries, dissertations, and so our cybersecurity is just the bane of everyone's existence. And we know we need it, but does it have to be so stringent? But I developed a workaround and that's how I'm doing it.

And then on top of it, our IT is outsourced. So it's not like we have in-house representatives and so then they nickel-and-dime us to death on everything. So I had a vendor that changed the single sign-on. Well, our IT wants \$10,000 for me to fix that because my vendor made a change and I'm like... you so lucky you're in the UK because I would have to come over and kill you. It drives me crazy. It's like 10 grand. I can use that for research and oh no, our 10,000... and it's not like you have to do anything really. But it's just one of those things and it drives me nuts. And so I know other DoD contractors have to deal with that. But since we're British-owned and Department of Defense, it's like "welcome to my world." So thanks for letting me vent.

**Bob Cullen:** That's quite alright. Thank you, Gabi. Never a dull moment, right? I'd like to call on Michael Nugent next. Go ahead, Michael.

**Michael L. Nugent:** All right, this is directed at Amanda from Oregon DOT. When you're talking about ADA, are you talking about remediating documents? So like you going in...

**Amanda J. Carter:** Yes. So remediated—and specifically I found out today because apparently it's not from Word to PDF. It's like these apparently the ones they're trying to fix are already PDF/A, which I don't understand why they're anyway, but yeah, it's PDF/A remediation.

**Michael L. Nugent:** Okay. Well, there is a tool that I use. It's called PAC 2024 and PAC stands for PDF Accessibility Checker. It's free and you can download it and it can help you remediate. You will find more errors than you thought were even possible, but it should give you a little bit of help to move through it. Now I do know for everyone here, if you're using the Adobe built-in checker for accessibility, I think it does a very poor job checking tables. I recommend you have to check your tables by hand no matter what. But Amanda, if you want to have a meeting, we can, I can demo the thing for you and I can show you how this works.

**Amanda J. Carter:** Okay, that'd be great, Michael, and thank you. I think part of that is the tables that are tripping everyone up and the processes that they had, which I don't think that there's a good solution for that. And I know that they've got the processes and that's a good point about the checker in Adobe may not work because we are using Adobe, I think. So I will reach out to you because after speaking with him today, I'm going to put together a little guide of resources of apps that may help, or checkers and other resources I found. He already knows about the LibGuide, but I'm still going to add that. So I'm going to kind of collect a few things. I may be reaching out to you not today, maybe like next week or a little bit later, but definitely you're on my list, Michael. Thank you.

**Michael L. Nugent:** Okay.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay, great. Thank you very much, Michael. And this is what I like all of you do too, it's just the resources and the perspectives and things that get shared here. It's one of the things I absolutely definitely appreciate about our community. We're candid with each other, but we're also very supportive and that counts for a lot. Not every community has that, believe me. Time does fly when you're having fun and it is, at least according to my clock, we only have about another 7-8 minutes to go before the end of the hour. I don't know if anybody else has anything to share or to ask about. Of course, please raise your hands.

Let me go ahead and—I think I've had fairly good luck with some of these questions I've thrown out. I'll try this one: How would you say, at least in recent months or even since the start of this year, sort of 2026, how would you say that expectations at your respective workplaces have been evolving? In other words, are the expectations that people there have for you... do you sense that they are in the process of maybe changing with new expectations developing, or has it been business as usual? Has it essentially been the same as it was in 2025 or 2024? Anybody care to try to take on that question?

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Well, I can say that we found out that one of our librarians, Tyler, our acquisitions librarian, is going to be leaving in a few weeks and so three of us are going to be trying to do that job as well as our own. So any of you have dealt with federal government procurement know what a delightful experience that is. So we're just all clapping our hands at the thought of all the professional improvement we're going to be doing over the next few months. And yeah, it's going to be an interesting time. So some of it's things I've done before he came. So we're definitely getting some more expectations of what we're going to be getting done in the next year or probably three years, honestly.

**Bob Cullen:** Well, does make life all the more interesting. That's right. So Tyler, I guess he moved on to December then, right?

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** No, he's going to be leaving next month.

**Bob Cullen:** Oh, excuse me, I'm sorry. I didn't catch that. Okay, but it's happening though, right?

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** The second... it's a few weeks off, yeah. Yeah, sad.

**Bob Cullen:** Yeah, it'll be... must wish him well, though.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** And three federal librarians now. Both our manager who's from outside of the library since David left... so BTS currently does not have a director, a deputy director, or an NTL director, and one of the other offices' chiefs has gone. So we have an acting director. We're excited about that.

**Bob Cullen:** Who is the acting director? Is he somebody who's within NTL?

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Yeah, it's Ed Strocko, who is an office director already here at BTS.

**Bob Cullen:** Oh, excuse me, okay.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** He had also been in charge of the library before David came. They had put it in his office for a while, so he's familiar with what we do.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay. Well, that's great. That's always a huge plus. I did want to go ahead and call on Wisconsin's favorite son, John Cherney. Go ahead, John.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Yeah, favorite son. That's me. I don't know about that, but...

**Bob Cullen:** It'll look good on your LinkedIn profile.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Oh yeah, but thank you, Bob. Yeah, I just wanted to mention—it's a great question. Expectations at WisDOT for the library... we were a solo shop and we lost our physical library. So I'm trying to redefine what we are. And a lot of—and it's great, I've been there for a while and they like me—but we have an election coming up where the administration could change and this has happened before where the priorities change kind of drastically in terms of library and information services and what we do.

So I'm trying to... I've discovered that a lot of our current administration, they don't—and this is partially my fault—they really don't understand all the work that goes into librarianship to make items accessible. And so I'm trying to come up with kind of a "Wisdom of the Librarians" toolkit that we've had with the pooled fund—three versions of that—to show everything that goes into what we do. You know, the invisible work of librarianship. What is cataloging? Digitization—it's not scanning. I know these are simple concepts, but enhancements and metatagging and archiving and permanent preservation of digital documents. So I've discovered that, like I was saying, our current administration likes the idea of a library but doesn't know everything that goes into it. And as I try to highlight these in some sort of report, along with some statistics, that it'll be useful if we have an administration change in November. Trying to future-proof what we do, although that's never a guarantee. Thanks. From the favorite son of Wisconsin.

**Bob Cullen:** Oh, thank you. You know, again, it was great getting to catch up with you in person at TRB last month.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Sure, definitely, Bob. That was great. Thanks.

**Bob Cullen:** And thank you for what you've been sharing with us here. Now, that toolkit concept... I think it sounds like a great way to proceed there. Great resource to develop, to show what you're doing. And I think the answer is yes to this, and maybe it's only because you and I, John, over the years have discussed this general topic—it sounds like there's an ROI angle to this that you're working into the toolkit. Am I right about that?

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Yes. Yes, benefits, yes. Limited version. Not what Minnesota did so exhaustively and greatly maybe like a decade ago.

**Bob Cullen:** Oh, what do you mean with Jerry? I remember. Yeah.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Jerry and Sheila and... so they did the ROI study, was it 2013 or? I'm not sure, but.

**Bob Cullen:** Thereabouts.

**Marilee Tuite:** Yes, you're correct. It was 2013 and it was Sheila's baby. Yep, yep.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Oh, thank you, Marilee.

**Bob Cullen:** Yeah, but that's not me... that sounds great and I just it seems to me—I mean, we're bumping up against the end of the hour here, so I don't want to go too much into it—but John, you did bring to my attention certainly just the whole aspect of ROI, but just generally what you're doing with that toolkit. I hope things do go well in terms of its development.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Oh, it...

**Bob Cullen:** You'll have to let us know.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Sure, I will.

**Bob Cullen:** What the outcome is.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** And a big point which I wanted to mention real quick was that this is not new for us. We've discussed it and looked at it before. And another thing I'm going to highlight is partnerships like this, great group and all the ideas. It's not me coming up with this stuff, obviously it wouldn't be nearly as good, but it's been done before very thoroughly by organizations like AASHTO, TRB, state DOTs. So hopefully that'll give us some more ammunition.

**Bob Cullen:** Great. Hope so too. Please keep us posted and thank you, John.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Sure.

**Bob Cullen:** We're up against the end of the hour, but I am going to go ahead and call on Gabi to help pull us across the finish line here.

**Gabi Hysong:** Yeah, John, I would like to get ahold of you because when I started 20 years ago with Rolls-Royce, they said, "Oh, the job's only going to be guaranteed a year." And I could see why—the library was horrible. But I've done a lot of ROI. Have you read anything by Mary Ellen Bates and simple ROI? And every time I've gotten a new manager, I would send them the most excruciating reports in detail about what I did so they don't go, "Well, she just sits there and looks pretty all day long." Neither of that! But I would love to interface with you because you're a solo and I've managed to keep the library open for 20 years through the changes of our CEOs over the years and new managers and all of that. So thanks.

**John Cherney (WisDOT):** Sure, would love that.

**Bob Cullen:** Okay. Thank you then. Once more, I appreciate all your helpful comments and recommendations, Gabi. And I do want, on behalf of Rosalyn and myself, I want to thank everyone else here for taking the time to join us today for your wonderful responses and recommendations and insights. I think it's been a wonderful hour.

And I made mention of this before—I've gone from dreading the Open Discussion Forum all those years ago (that was Amanda Wilson's idea originally), but I've gone from dreading them to really looking forward to them. And today has certainly been no exception. I think from my vantage point, it's been a very productive hour and that's because of all of you here. So thank you so much for that and I hope that everyone has a great rest of the day and great rest of the week. And next TLR will be exactly a month from today on Thursday, March 12th. So please stay tuned for further details about that and other TLRs coming up beyond March. Again, thank you very much and enjoy the rest of the day. Take care.

**Rosalyn Alleman (OST-R):** Thanks, Bob.

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