



Sailor Advisory Committee

November 18, 2025

10:00 AM

MINUTES

Attendees: Michael C. Brown, Michael Johnson, Jason Marshall, Paula Mitchell, Susan Payne, Rudy Rodela (Chair), Stephanie Sopka, Liz Sundermann-Zinger, Bill Taylor, Amanda Watson, and Shane Williams.

Call to order: The meeting started at 10:03 am.

Adoption of the Agenda: There were no changes to the announced agenda.

Approval of Minutes: There were no corrections or additions to the draft minutes from the August 26, 2025, meeting. The minutes were adopted as drafted without objections.

SLRC Oversight Commission Updates: Rudy provided highlights from the recent SLRC Oversight Commission meeting, spotlighting the annual report, strategic plan, and a behind-the-scenes tour of the State Library Resource Center.

MSLA Report was deferred to the next meeting.

State Broadband Commission Report was deferred as we do not have a commission liaison. Rudy will follow up with the State Librarian on a successor for Carla Moore.

State Library Resource Center Report: Liz summarized the SLRC Oversight Commission meeting held on September 30th and provided updates on staffing, budget challenges, and upcoming events.

- **Commission Meeting Highlights:** Liz summarized the SLRC Oversight Commission meeting held on September 30th, focusing on the annual report and strategic plan, and mentioned a tour of the State Library Resource Center, encouraging others to visit.
- **Staffing and Organizational Changes:** Liz reported the hiring of a full-time COO, ongoing recruitment for a communications person and head of HR, and anticipated having these positions filled by year-end to strengthen the organization.
- **Service Reconfiguration and Event Planning:** Liz explained efforts to reconfigure services for efficiency, including modifying the conference schedule to smaller, targeted events

such as a LATI-focused conference and a special collections workshop, both designed to meet specific needs while saving costs.

- **Special Collections Management:** Liz described plans for a special collections event to address varying management practices across libraries, covering topics like deaccessioning, gift policies, and collection analysis, in response to commission member inquiries.
- **Budget and Legislative Advocacy:** Liz detailed ongoing budget constraints, noting flat funding from the legislature and a \$1.8 billion state deficit, and outlined advocacy efforts including a deficiency request to secure mandated funding for SLRC.

Sailor Network Bandwidth and Infrastructure Updates: Michael C. Brown provided updates on bandwidth upgrades, ongoing issues with Comcast, upcoming orders for additional counties, and the status of an E-rate RFP for a key Internet connection, with plans for contract award and activation in the next fiscal year.

- **Bandwidth Upgrade Progress:** Michael C. Brown reported recent delays by Comcast in completing a critical bandwidth upgrade in Cambridge, which was finally completed the morning of the meeting, and outlined plans for further upgrades in Anne Arundel, Harford, and possibly Wicomico counties.
- **E-rate RFP and Contract Timeline:** An E-rate RFP is out for an Internet connection with a contract ending June 30th; bids are due soon, and the new contract is expected to be awarded for July 1st activation.

Marina Resource Sharing System Transition: Paula Mitchell updated the group on the ongoing collaboration with Autographics for the Marina resource sharing system, detailing project planning, upcoming meetings, workflow customization, and efforts to ensure a seamless transition for library staff and patrons.

- **Project Planning and Stakeholder Engagement:** Paula Mitchell described weekly meetings with Autographics since mid-October, the assignment of key Autographics staff, and the scheduling of a special Marina meeting on December 11th to introduce the project manager and review the initial Z target form for gathering system contacts.
- **Workflow Customization and Training:** The team is focused on customizing workflows for each library system to minimize disruption, with Autographics aiming to automate processes and Emma preparing to provide baseline Marina training to the vendor.
- **Patron Experience and System Integration:** Paula explained that the goal is for patrons to experience minimal change, with continued use of local library search interfaces and seamless integration with Marina, leveraging improvements such as enhanced search and consistent item images.

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- **Transition Timeline and Communication:** The implementation is targeted for July 1st, with efforts to minimize blackout periods and maintain borrowing continuity, especially for systems reliant on SLRC collections; ongoing communication with library systems and targeted outreach for unique needs are planned.

Digital Maryland and Sailor Databases Update: Michael Johnson (SLRC) reported on Digital Maryland's growth in visits and new items, ongoing collaborations with the State Archives, developments with the DPLA hub transition, and challenges with Sailor database usage statistics due to bot traffic, as well as efforts to increase K-12 school engagement.

- **Digital Maryland Usage and Projects:** Digital Maryland has seen a sustained increase in monthly visits, now consistently over 100,000, and added 4,600 new items in the first quarter, with continued collaboration with the State Archives to support community archives and digitization projects.
- **DPLA Hub Transition:** Digital Maryland, as a DPLA hub, is monitoring the transition of DPLA's support from the Library of Philadelphia to Cleveland Public Library, with no immediate impact but ongoing attention due to potential uncertainties.
- **Platform Evaluation:** The team is considering alternative platforms to Content DM for Digital Maryland, with initial research underway and a formal project expected to begin in the new calendar year.
- **Sailor Database Usage and Reporting:** Sailor database usage statistics are delayed due to malicious bot traffic affecting Gale's general one file, and the team is working with Gale to resolve reporting issues and filter out invalid data.
- **K-12 School Engagement:** Efforts are underway to analyze and improve K-12 school usage of Sailor databases, working with Chelsea Brewer at the Department of Education to identify and address low-usage counties, despite the vacancy left by Kim Coles.

Sailor Customer Service and Technology Initiatives: Shane provided a brief update noting stable help desk operations, ongoing Office 365 migration for improved communication, and the completion of an internal AI assessment to inform future training and AI literacy programs.

- **Help Desk and Office 365 Migration:** Shane reported that the help desk is stable and the team is migrating to Office 365 to streamline communications and enhance support for Sailor and the public.
- **AI Assessment and Training Plans:** An internal AI assessment was conducted with strong participation, aimed at guiding future training, tool implementation, and the development of AI literacy programs for patrons and the community.

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Future Meeting Dates

Sailor Advisory Committee	SLRC Commission
August 26, 2025	September 30, 2025
November 20, 2025	December xx, 2025
February 17, 2026	March xx, 2026
May 19, 2026	June xx, 2026

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 10:34 am.

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