

Video Conferencing Update for Board Meetings

Video conferencing for board meetings is a vital resource for IHLS. It allows IHLS to be as transparent and accessible as possible to our member libraries and the public we serve. With that in mind the following is the current plan to host board meetings via video conferencing technology.

Primary method for more than 5 video sites

When more than 5 video locations are needed for a board meeting, the preferred method of communication will be using the RAILS Polycom bridge. This will allow any video conferencing room on the state CMS network (ISL), local college network (SIU, SIC...), or library system network to connect to the meeting via H.323 (Polycom) room systems.

Primary method for 5 video sites or less

When five or fewer sites are needed for a board meeting, Zoom can be used as our primary method of establishing a meeting. Zoom will still connect to all the same video locations that the RAILS bridge allows, but opens up the possibility for more participants to join using personal computers, phones, tablets, etc. The video quality of the Zoom call is also higher and screen sharing tends to be more legible. This doesn't eliminate our reliance on the RAILS bridge, as calls to libraries registered to the bridge still have to be routed through it, however it opens the possibility of having more options available.

The reason the demark is at 5 sites is because that is the number of Zoom H.323 connector licenses we own. We can purchase more of these at \$49/mo or \$490/year.

Secondary (Backup) method in cases where the primary option is unavailable

Every attempt will be made to reconnect a lost video site, but sometimes because of network congestion or other factors, the video portion of a call just can't be made reliably.

If one or all sites lose connectivity to the video meeting, the best option is for them to dial into the telephone conference call number. Calling into the conference number can be done with a personal cell phone using the speakerphone option or a phone at the site. For board meetings, the dial-in number is the same each month unless otherwise noted beforehand.

Phone Number: 800-444-2801
Meeting ID: 2132471

Possible update to Zoom

In order to allow more than 5 Zoom connections to H.323 sites throughout the state we just need to determine how many Zoom licenses we need. Connectors are \$49/month/connection or \$490/year/connection.

We've had as many as 10 connections:

- IL State Library
- IHLS Carbondale
- IHLS Champaign
- IHLS Edwardsville
- Decatur Public Library
- Effingham Public Library
- Marion Carnegie Public Library
- Olney Public Library
- Morrison-Talbot Library (Waterloo)
- Gilman-Danforth District Library

We might be switching Marion Carnegie Public Library to Southeastern College (Harrisburg) soon. The total connections would still be 10.

With 5 additional sites that would be an annual charge of $\$490 \times 5 = \$2,450/\text{year}$ to connect all 10 sites using Zoom.

Some training would need to be done to show the sites how to use the features of Zoom and choose how they want their screen to show participants. By default, participants are shown in a grid view.

The only downside to using Zoom as opposed to the RAILS Polycom bridge is scheduling. Zoom meetings can be scheduled, however they don't automatically dial out to video sites as Polycom meetings do. They must be manually connected at the beginning of a meeting by a host. It is as simple as choosing the site from a drop down list, but it is still manual.

If all our locations connected through Zoom, we wouldn't need to be reliant on the RAILS bridge at all for connections. However, I see this ability to bypass the bridge as a secondary option and not something to pursue aggressively unless new problems arise with the bridge.

[Timeline for updates](#)

The timeline to implement updates is very fast. Once we are licensed, then we can start adding sites to our list. The training is the part that would take more time, but out of the box Zoom connects in grid view and should work fine even without additional training.

[Related item for consideration](#)

It has also come to our attention recently that Gilman-Danforth has had video quality issues for a long time. This is because they have a single T1 for all their internet access. They are in the process of upgrading their connection, but because of contracts on existing service this may take a while. For that reason, it may not be best to include Gilman-Danforth on board video calls until it is resolved.