Thursday, May 13, 2013 Mets Board Teleconference

Attending: Terry Catapano, Thomas Habing, Jukka Kervinen, Betsy McKelvey (recording), Leah Prescott, Sébastien Peyrard, Leah Prescott, Nancy Hoebelheinrich, Richard Gartner, Tobias Steinke, Brian Tingle

Planning for DLF 2013 face-to-face meeting

The 2013 DLF Forum will be in Austin, TX. The Forum will be Nov 4-6, with pre-and-post-conference events potentially on the 3rd and 7th. There may also be availability on the 6th.

In April, Louisa Kwasigroch contacted Betsy and Tom about a potential METS Board Meeting at the Conference and we told her that we were interested.

The question of having a METS board meeting in Europe was raised. The last European meeting was in 2006 or 2007.

Meeting at the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries (TPDL) or the International Conference on Preservation of Digital Objects (iPres) was suggested. The deadlines for 2013 workshop submissions have passed for both conferences (March 4 for TPDL and May 19 for iPres.)

Over the next week, board members will consider sites for the meeting taking into account lead time and travel budgets:
iPres 2013 – Lisbon
iPres 2014 –Melbourne
TPDL 2013 – Malta
TPDL 2014 – query sent to organizers 5/20

Change Requests

The National Library of Finland submitted four change requests. The discussion of those requests is documented here on the mets wiki. Tom will get back in touch with the Library. After further discussion, any changes approved by the editorial board will be posted to the METS listserv for a two week discussion period will be further considered as described on the wiki.

NLF Request #1: Add some new MDTYPE values: LIDO, EN15744, EN15907

Discussion:
Lido is being used as an intermediary metadata format for sending data to Europeana Digital Library. It is in use already.

In correspondence with Tom, the library has indicated the requests for film (EN15744, EN15907) are not important at this time.

Recommendation: Endorse the LIDO standard only.

NLF Request #2: Add VERSION attribute to mets element

Discussion: While having a VERSION attribute might be useful, there are at least a couple alternatives that could be used to indicate to which version of METS a specific document conforms. One is to use the optional and standard xsi:schemaLocation attribute to reference a specific version of the METS schema. Currently the latest METS schema is always available at http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/mets.xsd. However, all previous versions of the schema are also available at specific URLs, such ashttp://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/version18/mets.xsd. Thus, to indicate that a METS document conforms to a specific version you could add this attribute to the root mets element:

```
xsi:schemaLocation=http://www.loc.gov/METS/

http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/version18/mets.xsd
```

Another method used to specify a specific version of METS is via a profile. A METS profile may require a specific version of METS, by specifying a specific profile the METS document is in essence declaring that it conforms to a specific version of METS. This approach is limited in that the METS Profile schema does not contain a specific element used to identify a specific version of the METS schema; therefore, the only way to indicate a specific METS schema version in a Profile is via one of the free-text descriptive elements, such as the profile <abstract>, <profile_context>, <description_rules>, etc. In other words there is no easily machine-processible way to determine the METS schema version by referring to its profile, other than implicitly based on prior knowledge of the profile.

One other factor to consider is that since all 1.x schema are backward-compatible with documents that conform with earlier 1.x schema, a sophisticated parser could query for certain elements or attributes in a document to determine which version of the METS schema it complies with. NOTE: This might make for an interesting Schematron project: a Schematron which identifies the lowest METS Schema that can be used to validate a given METS document.

The Editorial Board should rethink the decision and considering adding a version for METS 2.0 in both the schema and the profile. Perhaps an appinfo on the root (highest level) element.

Recommendation: Reject. Recommend using a profile or xsi:schemalocation.

NLF Request #3: Add PID and PIDTYPE attributes to various METS sections

Discussion: The goal is to define direct links between copies of a METS document stored both in xml and in a database so that when the document is updated in one location it can be updated in the other. A flexible unique identifier for almost every top level METS element is needed; xml:id would not be flexible enough.

This could be a good use case for the xsd:anyAttribute element. One 'gotcha' discovered during an earlier exploration of this idea is that the xsd:anyAttribute approach is only viable for elements that don't have xlink attributes (caveat: if you want validation). The 'anyAttribute' approach could 'future proof' METS 1.x and satisfy a lot of requests for attributes that will inevitably come up in the future.

Document this carefully so that people understand the tradeoffs and what might be lost in interoperability if the use anyAttribute. What are the best practices when using anyAttribute.

Recommendation: Check with library to see if the xsd:anyAttribute approach would meet their needs and think carefully about which top level elements could carry it.

NLF Request # 4: Add LANGUAGE attribute to the mdWrap element

Discussion:

This request might be less appropriate for METS than for the metadata that is being wrapped. Most of the endorsed schemas have mechanisms for this. But it would be convenient to have it as parts of METS when developing multilingual systems and there is a need to decide which version of metadata to show.

Be careful with colliding versions of xml:lang.

Note that the schema doesn't allow for multiple mdWraps or multiple mdRefs in a dmdSec. So example wouldn't work as shown.

Recommendation: Look at this carefully and suggest an alternative for this use case and also revisit idea of having a language attribute and look at all containers for human readable text and for the addition of a language/script attribute.

(Jukka volunteered to go through schema and identify every place where we expect human readable text to occur so that we can see scope of problem.)

NLF Request #5: Modify the CREATED attribute wherever it occurs to accept partial and inaccurate dates in the EDTF format

Discussion:

We can't change the semantics of the data attribute without breaking backward compatiblity.

Alternative would be to come up with a different attribute. Going forward having created by untyped and then having an attribute to specify the date/time scheme would be a good idea. But we can't do this now.

Recommendation: We need to reject. Explore use of anyAttribute.