University of Arkansas Libraries

Extreme Makeover Task Force
Meeting Summary
April 21, 2010
3:00 p.m., Rm. 486

Present: Alberta Bailey, Donnie Blagg, Molly Boyd, Anne Marie Candido, Todd Cantrell, Ben Carter, Donna Daniels, Sheri Gallaher, Tess Gibson, Lynaire Hartsell, Roy Hatcher, Jimmy Jackson, Necia Parker-Gibson, Sarah Spiegel, Juana Young (chair), and Tim Zou.

Summary:

The furniture layout is still incomplete. The sub-committee is speaking with furniture representatives and collecting information about various types of furniture that may be used in this project or may be used in Phase 2. The current iteration of the furniture layout includes 53 added computer workstations, not including the e-osks.

SERVICE DESK
The Service Desk subcommittee presented their proposal for the new desk configuration. The new desk is a multilevel desk, with discrete sections, made of pieces from the old Reference desk. The front protrudes into the walkway area, is ADA height, and is the space allotted to Reference as the first point of access. Can fit two people in there, or the second Reference librarian on duty could be at the consultation desk located east of the main desk, or at a satellite location elsewhere in the building. The desk could be extended South or West if additional Reference Desk space is needed, given that the ADA height desk is usually not a work surface for computers. The Public Services desire is to reduce the librarians on desk duty to one, except during busy times. Circulation is the section on the left facing the west; IT is the section on the right facing east. Reference and Circulation are switched so that Circulation can monitor the west entry gate.

Another possibility to take the front of the old Reference desk, turn it around, and install it intact as the new front of the Service desk; this configuration would not have the ADA compliant desk section. The west section of the desk could be widened into a counter for wheelchair access; however, Circulation does not want a significant portion of their workspace made non-usable either. The design will depend, in part, on what the carpenters can do with the available materials.

Shelves for course reserves or ILL pickup are not located on this diagram. Service changes regarding these components will be incorporated within the next two years for a smoother transition. The current idea is to have two counter height shelves behind the desk instead of the current tall shelves. These shelves could be east-west or north-south runs, but most personnel behind the desk spoke in favor of the north-south runs.
The cabinet on the east wall of Sherryl’s office should be moved to the back of the south wall, which would move the employee check in and lost and found cabinet out of the public space near the front of the desk and back toward the private spaces of the office.

IT needs additional countertop space for reimaging laptops or for warranty repairs. The Lab operator needs to be away from the public desk to do this work without being interrupted by user questions or requests. Might use an island or locate a service desk in the Circulation general office space or Tech Services space, since this is an operation that only requires 2 or 3 afternoons a month.

The computer carts located on the diagram in the southeast corner of the service area are on wheels and can easily be relocated to other areas; the only requirement is sufficient power.

Each service department is developing a list of minimum needs for behind the desk; Reference completed theirs, and a copy will be place on Sharepoint. It includes computing, communication, supplies, etc. needs, including a request for a multi-line phone.

Need task lighting for the desk, perhaps overhead track lights. There has been no consideration in space planning to remove the fixed desktop lamps in the lobby area. Might have to get a new desktop as removing or relocating the lamps will leave exposed holes in the desktop.

A possibility is to use the existing lamp pedestals (end cap) behind the printer run in the old Reference area. If placed end to end, two together might screen Karen Myers’s office from the printer traffic. Having counter space near the printers is useful. Need second opening through the printer bank to direct traffic in one side and out the other.

SIGNAGE
The Signage sub-committee reported their recommendations for the service desk. One large 3-D sign, possibly triangular in shape that could be read from east, west, and north, above the service desk should read “Welcome. Ask here.” Ribbon signs or “belly band” signs across the top of the front of the desks could denote each service area. Each will have several terms that relate to the functions serviced by the personnel at the desk, such as reference, research, questions OR It, computing, software, laptop checkout, Wi-fi. Each word to be separated by a square with a dot inside, to correspond with the woodwork in the lobby area. Also liked the idea of cloud tag signs, with all the functions listed in one paragraph type layout, with one particular function highlighted for the sign of the corresponding area, such as Reference. Some signs would be in Razorback red; others would be in grey or black to match existing signage is lobby area.

FACILITIES
Sheri and Facilities Management technicians walked through the space to assess the proposal for electrical alterations. The FAMA staff have not yet identified any portions of the project that could not be completed as planned, i.e., they see no “show stoppers”; however, the cost of each phase has not be identified yet. The power and data drops in the Periodicals Room will be permanent upgrades as opposed to the North end of the lobby area renovations that right now include temporary fixes in the window wells and power poles for additional power and data drops. The proposed new electrical closet might enclose a 5-feet deep space in between the
columns on the west wall of the copy room. The existing electrical outlets to the copy room will be replicated on the new wall. The actual electrical plan will depend upon the final draft of the furniture plan, to include new and relocated computer workstations. Sheri Gallaher placed Mullins on the Facilities schedule for May for cost proposals and diagramming.

FURNITURE
In the latest diagram drawn from specifications received from the Herman Miller representative, the computer workstations, called the “DNA strand” configuration, are placed on a diagonal rather than linear line to make the space more visually appealing and more instantly marked as a social space. Committee members liked chairs that had 1) rollers, 2) tablet arms or adjustable arms, 3) space underneath for backpack storage out of the way, 4) comfortable seating, 4) non-fabric (poly or mesh) construction for easy cleaning and long wear. Some of these also were stackable. All computer workstations should have the same chairs and extras will be needed for group collaboration.

The Task Force reviewed several types of furniture, including modular units for group study including whiteboard dividers from Steelcase (C-scape and Mediascape).

The north end seating area needs to have enough plain tables and chairs for use of the Reference materials contained in the remaining stacks there.

A proposal was made to establish a Web page of proposed changes to the lobby areas, outlining the changes and why they are being made, with an area for feedback and comments.

A proposal was made to get samples of furniture under consideration, place in a public area, and invite students to test and try out the furniture and provide feedback before purchasing the entire lot. A similar “sitting survey” was used to determine furnishings for the Mullins renovation of the 1990s.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 27, at 3:00 p.m. Agenda: Time reserved in the event that various subcommittees or representatives will have reports or updates to give. Circulation and IT will forward to Sheri their lists of desk needs by Thursday morning, April 22.