

Walworth County Library Planning Committee
County Board Room 114
Walworth County Government Center
100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin
July 7, 2021

As facilitator, Lakeshores Library System (LLS) Administrator Steve Ohs called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Committee Members Present: Susan Pruessing, Emily Kornak, Walter Burkhalter, Edgar “Skip” Mosshamer, Brian Broga, Jill Rodriguez, Peter Wautlet, Nancy Russell, Catherine James

Walworth County Administrator Ex-Officio Member: Mark Luberda

Public: Chad Robinson and Lisa Selje from Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn

Agenda: Skip Mosshamer moved and Susan Pruessing seconded to approve the agenda. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

A. Introductions:

- Mark Luberda – Walworth County Administrator for past 15 months. As ex-officio, Mark is not a voting member. Mark will bring information back to the Walworth County Board, and he will try to make sure questions are answered. Mark thanked the group for agreeing to participate.
- Susan Pruessing – Member of the Walworth County Board
- Nancy Russell – Walworth County Board Chair
- Emily Kornak – Director of Lake Geneva Public Library
- Walter Burkhalter – Director of Fontana Public Library
- Catherine James – Board President of the Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn
- Skip Mosshamer – Board President of the Barrett Memorial Library in Williams Bay
- Jill Rodriguez – LLS Trustee and Lake Geneva Strategic Planning Committee
- Brian Broga – LLS Trustee
- Peter Wautlet – Citizen Member for Walworth County and CPA for Baker Tilly
- Stephen Ohs – LLS System Administrator

B. Chair Selection – If any:

- Steve Ohs will serve as the facilitator unless a chair is selected by the committee. The committee can reconsider this at a later date. Skip Mosshamer moved and Susan Pruessing seconded to have Steve Ohs continue as facilitator for the meetings. All were in favor and the motion carried.

C. Presentation (Note that minutes will be based on the recording of the meeting):

- Charge of Committee: Steve Ohs listed the committee’s charge in creating a plan of library service to be submitted to the county board for approval. The plan must include access to all county residents to library services throughout the library system, a method of reimbursing libraries for cost of services, and the allocations of trustees on the system. In addition, the committee may want to decide on any other reimbursements, the time intervals for renewal of the plan, county appointments to library boards and any other matters deemed necessary.
- Steve suggested using DPI’s template, start with generalized framework and customize as necessary. The library directors will be able to provide their input throughout the

process. Libraries directors meet monthly, and Steve will give the directors updates. Steve suggested that the funding formula discussion begin with the second meeting in order to get this piece of the plan completed as soon as possible. Stakeholder groups need this in order to complete their 2022 budgets. Steve hopes to get the formula ready by providing a status report to the county for their input prior to the finalized plan. Brian Broga recommended staying as close to the statutes as possible.

- Stakeholders are the county residents, the public libraries, the municipal governing bodies, county government, regional library systems, and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI).
- A series of slides were presented showing the “2019 fast facts of Walworth County library services”, a list of services provided by the libraries, the components of the library funding process, and a brief explanation of the county reimbursement requirements based on the services provided to unserved residents (or residents of municipalities without libraries).
- A series of slides were presented showing the difference between home county and adjacent county usage. Brian asked if this is included in the plan, and Steve stated yes, it is. Jill asked if only adjacent county usage is considered for reimbursements, in addition to home county use, and Steve stated yes. Susan asked if out-of-state counties are included in reimbursements; Steve replied that out-of-state is a separate situation from in-state borrowing. Skip asked if the reimbursements have to go through the library system or may libraries request this directly. Steve said this is not a requirement; but LLS practice has been to do this annually on behalf of the libraries and on behalf of the county. In some counties, libraries have to request funding on their own. Nancy Russell asked if patrons can get a library card if they own a home in Lake Geneva but actually reside in Florida. Emily Kornak responded that anyone owning a home in Lake Geneva is offered a card. Lake Geneva charges about \$50 for “out-of-state” cards. This is common practice in Wisconsin. Steve explained that people frequently cross county lines and use libraries. Libraries in adjacent counties that provide services to residents from a home county without libraries are reimbursed by the home county at a statutory minimum of 70% of the cost of services.
- A series of slides presented information on how municipalities may exempt themselves from county library tax. Municipalities must provide a minimum level of funding based on equalized values. This is a statutory calculation that is provided by LLS staff each year to the directors of the libraries. Municipal clerks must then file their exemption information to the county clerk prior to the county setting their budget.
- Every library and library system in the state must file an annual report after the close of the year. Much of the data contained in the libraries’ annual reports is prefilled by LLS staff by exporting data from the software platform used for their integrated library system (ILS). Brian noted his understanding that the basic formula for the reimbursement involves the circulation and the expenses incurred by the library. Steve stated that is correct. Related to this, he recommended that any chosen formula be put into an easily readable spreadsheet that any stakeholder or member of the public can readily understand.

D. Statement of Purpose:

- Steve provided a starting point for the statement of purpose (or intent) for the plan. The consensus was to eliminate the passive voice in the draft language and to focus on providing a high quality of library services, supporting municipal public libraries and enhancing regional coordination within the statutes. Peter Wautlet asked if the statement should include equitable funding as a purpose of the plan. Brian reminded everyone that the funding formula should adhere to the statutes as much as possible. Mark Luberd noted that 70% reimbursement is the minimum. The last plan had some considerable differences in reimbursements due to an averaging of the reimbursement rates for each library use.

Next Meeting:

Prior to the meeting, Steve would like to distribute a review of library funding mechanisms and examples of possible funding formulas. During the meeting, he hopes to achieve a consensus on a funding formula to recommend for use beginning 2022. Mark asked Steve to distribute the presentation material to him via e-mail for the county's records. Mark also reminded everyone that this committee is formed through the statutes. If anyone has a question on the content of information e-mailed, they should not "respond to all" in order to avoid an inadvertent quorum or negative quorum. Any questions concerning material sent out should be asked of Steve Ohs.

Skip asked that all formulas be sent out as an Excel spreadsheet. Steve noted that he uses Google sheets but will translate them to Excel and distribute them via e-mail. Mark asked that the current plan be distributed as well. Peter asked what the problems of the last plan were. Steve will provide a narrative that explains the previous issues. Catherine James noted that she is also asking for raw data to be shown as a part of the spreadsheet formulas.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 6:00 pm. Jill Rodriguez has asked to be excused from that meeting. Steve will try to get the material out as soon as possible.

Skip Mosshamer moved and Brian Broga seconded to adjourn at 7:35 pm. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Notes recorded by:

Janice Martin, Office Manager for Lakeshores Library System