

Antigo Public Library
617 Clermont Street
Antigo, WI 54409

715-623-3724
www.antigopl.org

Sept 12, 2019

Dear Members of the Marathon County Public Library Board,

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts regarding MCPL's consideration of joining the South Central Library System.

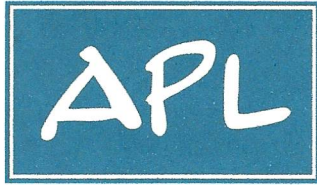
I worked at Waupaca Public Library and they are a member of OWLS (Outagamie Waupaca Library System) for 16 years, and they offered great support for their member libraries (16 libraries in two counties). WVLS serves 36 libraries in seven counties and also offers excellent support for its members. Belonging to WVLS has been an amazing experience. The partnership with NWLS for Inclusive Services enabled me to supply my remote branch locations with materials and resources which would previously be unavailable. WVLS technology support enabled me to supply those same branches with the fastest internet service within 30 miles of any cellular or other internet service fast enough to watch a streaming video or download a web form. Almost every company and government service requires users to utilize a website for service and help and my library locations are literally the only option for a lot of Langlade County residents to be able to access them. WVLS made all this happen.

WVLS offers scholarship opportunities to ARSL (Association of Rural and Small Libraries) conference, which speaks directly to its member libraries needs, as the overwhelming majority of its members fall into this category. Equally valuable are the transportation options to the state conferences WLA and WAPL, which WVLS provides. This saves our member libraries time and money as we can carpool together and network while being transported to locations around the state. The distances involved to these conferences can make just the mileage reimbursement for librarians to attend a real barrier to accessing these sources of state mandated CE training.

Working with MCPL as our system's resource library is a boon to Antigo Public Library because their staff have specialized expertise, and they are happy to offer aid when we need it. We feel like part of a much larger team, and our unifying goal to serve all our patrons to the best of our ability speaks to this core value and MCPL is an hour away from Antigo. MCPL staff have a lot of skills and expertise to offer the members of WVLS libraries, and it would be beneficial to see more of them at regional continuing education events, trainings, Listening Sessions and WLA Conferences.

My staff and I are honored and grateful to have Marla Sepnanski as the WVLS director. Her steady and insightful leadership, wisdom and support have been an inspiration to me as Antigo's Library Director. She is humble and never self-serving, as she has the good of all those she leads and serves in the forefront of all her decision making. She will be awarded the WLA/ DEMCO Librarian of the Year in October at the state conference, and I can think of no one more deserving.

Serving All the People of Langlade County



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Having MCPL leave WVLS as our resource library is unimaginable. The consequences for library services for residents of Langlade County would be dire, as it would essentially spell the end of WVLS as a system, leaving libraries currently in WVLS fragmented and floundering.

There isn't a large library geographically as close as MCPL for Langlade County. The ability to have physical support in geographic proximity in a time of need is paramount. MCPL should weigh this criteria carefully as Madison is 140 miles away.

The potential transition to another library system for Langlade County would be horrendously expensive. As I am seeing with other library and system negotiations and mergers around the state, this can take years. The necessary funding for Langlade County to transition isn't available for me or my WVLS colleagues and would leave thousands of Wisconsin residents without library services they have become accustomed to and deserve.

I am unaware why MCPL would consider leaving WVLS, as it provides excellent service to its member libraries for the cost of its membership. Knowing how much it takes for me to attend WVLS meetings, which is an hour away, just in mileage reimbursement per year, I'd imagine the travel expenses alone for MCPL staff to travel to Madison for meetings would require a very large budget.

If there are any unaddressed issues within MCPL as to why they would even consider leaving WVLS, I'd encourage MCPLB leadership to investigate those specifics in further detail before making a decision which would devastate the services I am currently able to offer my patrons, and the patrons of all my fellow system libraries.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration,

Dominic Frandrup - Director
Antigo Public Library