

DECEMBER 2019 UPDATE TO MEMBERS

Good afternoon WVLS colleagues and friends,

As a general update to the information shared with you thus far regarding Marathon County Public Library's consideration to join the South Central Library System (SCLS), following are highlights of MCPL Board activities and recent events:

- In **September**, the WVLS presentation to the MCPL Board stated *"If the Board sees the value, WVLS staff and trustees are willing to form a committee with MCPL counterparts to create a structured, objective analysis of MCPL Administration's desire to more closely align with Madison Public Library, to identify the challenges of maintaining membership in WVLS, and to develop a strategic process to achieve its goals. Perhaps colleagues from other systems and resource libraries could be invited to these meetings to share their best practices and to vet solutions."*
- In **October**, the MCPL Board voted to approve the creation of a Task Force to investigate migration to another system. (This vote occurred following the SCLS presentation on its services to member libraries. Three MCPL Board members were appointed to the Task Force - Sharon Hunter (MCPL Board President), Gary Beaström (Marathon County Supervisor) and MaiGer Moua.
- In a **November 8** response to WVLS Board President Tom Bobrofsky's invitation to MCPL Director Ralph Illick to attend a WVLS Board meeting, Ralph indicated that *"[MCPL is] not aware of any service issues that we seek to resolve at the present time. ... We believe that there may be added benefit to our membership [in the South Central Library System], based on factors that would include the potential for collaborating with many other peer-sized libraries, a significantly larger aggregate system collection, and other factors to be explored."*
- During the **November 18** presentation to the MCPL Board, WVLS Director Marla Sepnafi commented that the WVLS Board was *"pleased to see that MCPL did not have any service issues to bring to [their] attention at this time," [however they] could not help but think that, given the process the [MCPL] Board is undergoing, there must be unaddressed issues - if not related to service, then what? Given that continuing question on our part of 'why', [the MCPL board was reminded] that WVLS staff and two Marathon County representatives on the WVLS Board, Michael Otten and Sonja Ackerman, are willing to serve on the task force and to lend assistance in whatever manner is most helpful."*
- The WVLS Presentation at the **December 16** MCPL Board meeting provided an opportunity to introduce WVLS to them and to reinforce the reasons why this system is best suited to support MCPL in providing the best service possible to Marathon County residents. The presentation shared significant ways in which WVLS collaborates with colleagues across the state and nation to provide service to member libraries; conversations with peer libraries in Green Bay, Milwaukee and Waukesha and their suggestions for collaborating and outreach with colleagues within and outside their respective systems; examples of ways in which WVLS helps member libraries connect with others; and, how WVLS might be able to help MCPL collaborate with peer libraries. The only topic raised by board members following the presentation had to do with MCPL's single vote in the V-Cat Consortium. WVLS CIO Joshua Klingbeil informed them that the V-Cat Council had recently developed a committee to research and analyze voting methodologies.

- The **December 16** MCPL Board meeting agenda included a line item regarding the Task Force. During the conversation on this topic, it was announced that Sara Guild (Marathon County Supervisor and chair of the county's Extension Education and Economic Development Committee which includes MCPL in its purview) would be chairing the Task Force. Task Force meetings will be scheduled one hour prior to MCPL Board meetings, January-June 2020. The first meeting of the Task Force will be held on **January 27, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.** followed by the MCPL Board meeting at noon.
- WVLS had requested appointment to the Task Force however an invitation from the MCPL Board has not been granted. Also, names of additional appointments are not known at this time. At the November MCPL board meeting it was suggested that someone from another public library system (not WVLS or SCLS) might provide consultation, but on December 16 a DPI representative was potentially mentioned in that role.
- WVLS is developing a place on our website to archive correspondence, presentations and other information related to this topic.

WVLS is monitoring this very closely and will share any additional information as necessary. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Best wishes for a wonderful New Year!

Marla

Marla Sepnafski, Director
WISCONSIN VALLEY LIBRARY SERVICE
300 N First Street
Wausau, WI 54403
715.261.7251
msepnafs@wvls.org
<http://wvls.org>

 [December Cover Letter and Presentation.pdf](#)