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DATE: August 13, 2020

TO: MCPL Library Systems Task Force

CC: Marathon County Public Library Board of Trustees

FROM: Erica Brewster, Director, Edward U. Demmer Memorial Library, Oneida County, Three Lakes

RE: Agenda item #6: Possible recommendation to the Marathon County Public Library Board of Trustees

I am surprised to see the item, "Possible recommendation to the Marathon County Public Library Board of Trustees," on the task force agenda for the Monday, August 17, 2020 meeting of the MCPL Library Systems Taskforce.

I, along with others, have followed this process since the formation of the taskforce which came after my initial letters to the MCPL board and board president (attached), despite the limits imposed by the pandemic.

Is the taskforce ready to disband? In several cases, meetings have not covered their topic due to lack of time, lack of quorum, or cancellations. Perhaps this means that with minimal investigation the members have decided it is not worth pursuing the move because it is apparent there is no deficit in service with WVLS or marked improvement from SCLS?

I am not a member of this task force, but my time spent doing some research and analysis shows that:

- The move alone would cost Marathon County taxpayers \$60,000 in setup fees, and then \$60,000 more annually for a lower level service than currently being paid to WVLS. The additional services available a la carte from SCLC could cost taxpayers yet another \$100,000 more annually (unless it is counterbalanced by a loss of jobs).ⁱ
- Those additional service fees/jobs leave Marathon County and central Wisconsin and shift to Madison/southern Wisconsin.
- The number of library materials (and e-books and e-audiobooks, in particular) MCPL users would have access to would decrease because of the higher population served by the SCLS area decreases the number of items per capita – so MCPL users could have longer wait times.ⁱⁱ
- MCPL would be giving up influence, leadership, and direct (literally down-the-hall) access to their system service and committees and instead rely on traveling two hours (plus added cost) or always participating in meetings virtually. That is, assuming MCPL administration was taking full advantage of opportunities to wield influence, leadership, and having direct access. They have declined to participate in committees that are making strategic decisions and passing up leadership opportunities within the system.

I hope you are convinced of the value of staying with WVLS and the task force can confidently complete its work.

ⁱ <https://wvls.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Updated-Cost-Comparison-SCLS-WVLS-June-2020.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://wvls.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/DLT-Spreadsheet-System-Comparisons-Using-2019-Annual-Report-Data.pdf>