

# UPDATE ON MCPL STUDY OF WVLS AND SCLS

## November 2020 (1)

Colleagues and Friends,

### MCPL TASK FORCE AND BOARD MEETINGS ARE MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16

**TASK FORCE:** The next meeting of the MCPL Task Force and Library Board will be on **Monday, November 16**. The [information packet](#) for the **10:00 a.m.** meeting plans for a discussion on reasons for either remaining with WVLS or moving to SCLS.

**Persons wishing to attend the meeting by computer or phone** may log or call into the conference beginning ten (10) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following website: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/960786989> or number: 1 866 899 4679. Access Code for dialing in: 960-786-989.

**LIBRARY BOARD:** The Library Board meeting will follow the Task Force meeting at 12:00. The agenda in the meeting packet, available [here](#), states:

(10 minutes) Task Force for System Membership Review: Update, Progress on formulation of recommendation to the library board, timeline – For Discussion and Possible Action

**Persons wishing to attend the meeting by computer or phone** may log or call into the conference beginning ten (10) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following website: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/138600213> or number: 1 877 568 4106. Access Code for dialing in: 138-600-213.

### DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

#### SWOT SUMMARY

The [October 2020 Update](#) mentioned that Task Force members were directed to complete a SWOT analysis and email their responses to Task Force Chair Mark Arend, and that the summary of SWOT responses was going to be reviewed and discussed during the [October 19 MCPL Task Force meeting](#).

#### OCTOBER 19 LETTER FROM WVLS TO TASK FORCE

Concerned with the SWOT Summary comments stating "communication between WVLS & MCPL", "Relationship between the two have deteriorated" and "there is a considerable degree of distrust between administration and staff of MCPL and WVLS" as WVLS weaknesses, WVLS sent a letter on October 19 to members of the MCPL Task Force, MCPL Board, and Marathon County Extension, Education and Economic Development Committee (attached) stating in part:

*"Given the collective positive experiences WVLS continues to have with MCPL, we are as perplexed by what was shared in the September 2020 letters as by what was not. There is a glaring contradiction between what MCPL leadership team presented in those letters and what was formally stated in February 2020, when the MCPL Board indicated WVLS provided effective leadership in its 2019 annual report. It is both unfair and premature to use the anecdotal dissatisfaction expressed in the letters as part of the SWOT analysis, absent any opportunity for discussion and resolution following presentation of proper context with which to thoroughly understand their significance when examining all the services WVLS provides to MCPL."*

#### NOVEMBER 3, 2020 REPORT FROM DPI TO MCPL TASK FORCE

On November 3, DPI Division for Libraries and Technology Public Library Administration Consultant Shannon Schultz responded to questions raised by members of the Task Force at recent meetings. The report “addresses the impact of a MCPL departure on the remaining libraries in WVLS, including the options they would have, and how they would continue to receive services. It also addresses the ability for MCPL to service as a resource library and whether other libraries would be able to join SCLS if MCPL changed its affiliation. The statutes, system staff, library directors, and both online catalogs were consulted to obtain these answers.” (This report is also included in appendices to the attached November 13 WVLS Response to the MCPL Task Force SWOT Analysis document.)

### **NOVEMBER 13 WVLS RESPONSE TO MCPL TASK FORCE ANALYSIS**

On November 13, a WVLS Response to the MCPL Task Force SWOT Analysis was also sent to members of the MCPL Task Force, MCPL Board, and Marathon County Extension, Education and Economic Development Committee. The 21-page report (attached) offers further analysis and perspective on key MCPL decision points associated with the Task Force Charge. We hope stakeholders and decision-makers find the report helpful.

### **ADDITIONAL UPDATES**

At the end of 2019, the Marathon County Public Library (MCPL) Director asked his Board of Trustees to consider moving Marathon County from WVLS to the South Central Library System (SCLS), headquartered in Madison. The Library Board formed a Task Force which has held nine one-hour meetings in January-March and May-October 2020.

### **OCTOBER 26 EMAIL FROM NWLS DIRECTOR TO WVLS DIRECTOR**

While an October 2019 letter from MCPL Board President to the WVLS Director indicated that the MCPL Board *was only investigating its options and had not decided* to join SCLS, there is persistent feedback and documentation that the decision by the MCPL Board to leave WVLS is a foregone conclusion. The following October 26 email from the Northern Waters Library Service Director to the WVLS Director is an example:

*Marla,*

*I am writing to you to express my concern about the potential of MCPL leaving WVLS and moving to SCLS. Over the past few weeks, I have heard troubling statements made by SCLS individuals that make me question how the task force is being informed.*

*On **September 24th**, I was part of a PLSR delivery workgroup where the SCLS Board President confidently interjected that we should be acknowledging that the Wausau hub was likely going to be operated by SCLS since **MCPL was going to be joining SCLS**.*

*On Tuesday, **October 20th**, I had a phone conversation with Corey Baumann who handles NWLS issues with delivery. During the conversation, Corey mentioned that it was certain in his mind, and **from what he has been told, that MCPL will be leaving WVLS and joining SCLS** and that is what he is planning on.*

***These comments make me worried that the Task Force is either being kept in the dark about conversations that are occurring outside of the authority of the group and/or the Task force is being treated as a formality of process instead of a professional decision making entity.***

*Beyond this concern, I do want to say that no library nor library system exists in a vacuum. NWLS relies on the MCPL location for our connection to statewide delivery. NWLS is also part of the LEAN WI Partnership with WVLS and IFLS. Any change made by MCPL will impact other organizations outside of*

*WVLS and may have unintended consequences that I believe that the library community should consider.*

*Thank you for your consideration of these issues,  
Sherry*

*Sherry Machones*

*Pronouns: she, her, hers*

*Director - Northern Waters Library Service*

*Inclusive Services Consultant for NWLS and WVLS*

*WLA President*

*WLA Library Development and Legislation Committee Member*

*WLA Federal Relations Coordinator*

*SRLAAW Chair*

*ALA Chapter Councilor*

*715-682-2365 ext.1*

[smachones@northernwaters.org](mailto:smachones@northernwaters.org)

These comments by SCLS representatives as reported by the NWLS Director are consistent with feedback received from other colleagues and what has been recorded in official documents. Following are examples:

**August 17, 2020 Task Force Meeting Notice.** The [notice](#) stated that a “possible recommendation” might be made to the MCPL Board scheduled to meet an hour later on the same day minus a SWOT analysis and staff interviews even though both were activities the Task Force planned to undergo as part of its investigation. However, during further discussion at the August meeting, Task Force members identified enough unfinished business to occupy four more meetings and they deferred a recommendation “to the end of the year.” The Library Board approved the extension.

**2020 South Central Library System Plan.** The South Central Library System 2020 Plan of Service, approved by the SCLS Board of Trustees and submitted to DPI in the fall 2019, shares an unambiguous declarative statement: “[MCPL is] interested in joining in 1/1/2021 which makes 2020 the year to prepare for the new member.”

**October 2019 Fall Conference.** Marshfield Public Library Director informs WVLS Director that the MCPL Director told her that the decision to leave WVLS would be made in 2019, further implementation in 2020 and complete in 2021. A director of a public library in SCLS informs WVLS staff that SCLS was creating two committees to revise fee structures due to onboarding of MCPL.

**September 26, 2019 SCLS Board Meeting Director’s Report.** "Marathon County, The September 16 Marathon County Public Library Board of Trustees meeting was cancelled due to a lack of a quorum. My presentation has been rescheduled for October 21<sup>st</sup>. The coordinators and I have been working on funding models for having Marathon County as a member."

**August 21, 2019 State Interlibrary Loan Conference** A SCLS Courier Representative made this statement: “MCPL is looking to join SCLS and steps have been taken to make this happen.”

## FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

The [Marathon Co. Public Library System Exploration Information and Updates page](#) on the WVLS website includes information about MCPL Task Force meetings since January along with the letters mentioned above.

Anyone with an interest in the MCPL Task Force process and future of WVLS should take the time to read this information. MCPL also maintains its own Task Force web page [here](#).

WI Statute [43.18](#) outlines the process for a county withdrawing from a library system. The earliest date Marathon County could withdraw is January 2022, following adoption by 2/3 vote of a resolution by the Marathon County Board of Supervisors at least 6 months prior to the close of the system's fiscal year.

Please feel free to contact me with any thoughts, questions or concerns you may have about the information shared in this update. Your feedback is always welcome.

Stay safe everyone,

# UPDATE ON MCPL STUDY OF WVLS AND SCLS

## November 2020 (2)

Colleagues and Friends,

I just received a document from MCPL Task Force Chair Mark Arend that will be discussed at tomorrow's Task Force meeting. The document "Advantages and Disadvantages" compiles Task Force members' opinions for either remaining with WVLS or moving to SCLS. Please see attached.

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If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Thank you,