

JANUARY 2021 UPDATE TO MEMBERS

Colleagues and Friends,

MCPL BOARD SET TO VOTE ON SYSTEM MEMBERSHIP ON MONDAY!

The next meeting of the MCPL Board of Trustees will be on **Monday, January 25 at 12:00.**

The [information packet](#) indicates plans to discuss and possibly take action on the MCPL Task Force recommendation that Marathon County leave the Wisconsin Valley Library Service. Note that the final 3-page MCPL Task Force Report may be found on pgs. 42-44 in the Board meeting packet.

Persons wishing to attend the meeting by computer or phone may log or call into the conference ten (10) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following website: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/307141637> or calling (Toll Free) 1 866 899 4679; Access Code: 307-141-637.

Following are the highlights of the December 21, 2020 meeting of the Marathon County Public Library Task Force:

- In a 3-1 vote, the six-member MCPL Task Force approved a recommendation for Marathon County to withdraw its membership from the Wisconsin Valley Library Service and to join the South Central Library System. Votes to withdraw from WVLS were cast by MCPL Board President **Sharon Hunter**, MCPL Trustee **Scott Winch**, and recently retired Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning Director **Rebecca Frisch**. MCPL Trustee and Marathon county Board Supervisor **Gary Beastrom** cast the dissenting vote. DPI Public Library Administration Consultant **Shannon Schultz** abstained. MCPL Task Force Chair **Mark Arendt**, whose consultant assistance as the retired Winnefox Library System Assistant Director was solicited by MCPL, also abstained after stating that he would vote only in case of a tie.
- Sharon Hunter cited 15 reasons why Marathon County should leave WVLS. The list parallels the list of “Advantages to Moving to SCLS” in the *Advantages and Disadvantages Comparison Sheet* reviewed by the MCPL Task Force in November.
- Rebecca Frisch stated that MCPL is included in the [2016 Marathon County Comprehensive Plan](#) and [2018-2022 Strategic Plan](#), and strongly suggested that these documents be cited in the appendix of the MCPL Task Force Report provided to the MCPL Board.
- Scott Winch agreed with the comments made by Hunter and Frisch above and stated the decision should be guided only by what is best for Marathon County.
- Gary Beastrom expressed reservations about the loss of MCPL as a regional resource library, as well as potential for a “black eye” for the county if the decision to leave adversely affected either Marathon County resident use of library services in

surrounding counties or WVLS ability to fully participate in existing library service partnerships in the northern half of the state.

- In preparation for writing a draft MCPL Task Force Report for the MCPL Board, Arendt instructed Task Force members to send him their lists of system membership advantages and disadvantages.

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

The Marathon County Public Library System Exploration Information [and Updates page](#) on the WVLS website shares information about MCPL Task Force meetings since January 2020, including WVLS presentations to the MCPL Board prior to the task force process, responses to requested information by the Task Force and reactions to the [December 2020 MCPL Financial Report](#), [October 2020 SWOT Analysis](#) and [September 2020 MCPL Staff Letters](#). The WVLS website also shares an extensive list of letters the MCPL Task Force and Library Board, and Marathon County Supervisors have received from Marathon County and area library leaders. Anyone with an interest in the MCPL Task Force process and future of WVLS should take the time to read this information.

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.

This matter is of grave concern to WVLS member libraries and libraries across the state served through WVLS' partnerships with several other public library systems. Please feel free to share your concerns with the [Marathon County Public Library Board](#), [Marathon County Board of Supervisors](#) and with your [legislators](#).

Hope to see you virtually on Monday!

Marla

Marla Sepnafski, Director
WISCONSIN VALLEY LIBRARY SERVICE
300 N First Street
Wausau, WI 54403
715/261-7250
msepnafs@wvls.org
<http://wvls.org>