

MERGER STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING AT EASTERN SHORES LIBRARY SYSTEM MINUTES

Eastern Shores Library System

November 11, 2015

Called to order: 2:03 P.M.

Adjourn: 3:41 P.M.

PRESENT:

Steev Baker, Amy Becker, Patrick Busch, Sue Cantrell, Geri Feucht, Mark Hanson via teleconference, Alex Harvancik, Bret Jaeger, Margaret McFadden, Doug Rakowski, Bruce Smith

ALSO PRESENT:

MWFLS: Heather Fischer, Mike Gelhausen, Candy Graulich, Ruth Spielmann via teleconference. **ESLS:** Amy Birtell, Alison Ross, Robert Nitsch, Susan Potter, Paula Siefert, Trixine Tahtinen, Oostburg Public Library, Director and Library PLAC Representative; Melissa Prentice, Mead Public Library, Public Services Manager; David Nimmer, W.J. Niederkorn Library, Director (Port Washington); Betty McCartney, Elkhart Lake Public Library, Director; Martha Rosche, Plymouth Public Library, Director; Nicole Lynaugh, Cedar Grove Public Library, Director; John Hanson, U.S.S. Liberty Memorial Library, Director (Grafton); Robert Nuernberg, ESLS Board Member and President of the board; Howard Hoppe, ESLS Board Member and Treasurer of the board; Bill Goehring, ESLS Board Member and Sheboygan County Board Member; Steve Ruggieri, ESLS Board Member ; Sherry Speth, ESLS Board Member

ABSENT:

Jim Mielke

Called to Order: Meeting was called to order by Bruce Smith at 2:03 p.m. The meeting was posted in accordance with open meetings law.

Public Comment: none

Approval of Agenda: It was moved by Harvancik and seconded by Rakowski to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor.

Discussion of Merger Related Topics and Questions:

1. Discuss how you've projected using the potential increased revenue due to the prospective shift in state aid (two counties worth)?

- ESLS will need more staff for services. This would include salaries, expanded delivery, OCLC cost, mileage, audit costs, consulting fees, youth services, ILL, ongoing technology updates.
- Will hire WiLS to help facilitate a strategic plan

2. Discuss what flexibility might exist for changing established processes if the two systems are to merge into a new system? Are you open to considering other cost-sharing formula models for various services fees charged back to libraries?

- Would like MWFLS to use the version of Polaris that ESLS is using
- Would provide training to new members
- Would work together on circulation rules and fine structures
- Would work on cost formulas
- Increased collaboration
- Create a new 4 county system

3. Has your system considered needing the MWFLS building or do you see that being sold and using proceeds to pay for transition expenses and/or add to combined system reserves?

- MWFLS building would be sold and money used for transition costs or put into an endowment. Libraries could add to the endowment.
- ESLS building is rented and they have 8 years left on the lease.

4. Do you project having to increase fees to libraries in the next few years?

- Difficult to anticipate costs, but if state funding remains flat, then some services may need to be cut.
- Strategic plan may provide some answers.

5. Please confirm which of your services are opt in/out?

- Optional services; Envisionware, Bluehost, ESLS digitation project, WISCAT (1 library with OCLC)

6. How does your board feel about the potential of a system merger?

- Very interested and an opportunity to grow larger
- Library directors are supportive
- 3 years ago learned that ESLS needed a neutral party to help with the process (merger talks with Manitowoc/Calumet and ESLS), difference of philosophy in combining 2 systems

7. Washington County has a contract with each municipal library for service and deals directly with each library for statistics. It is expected that whatever system MWFLS merges with that county payments will continue to come directly from Washington County and not go through the system. What are your thoughts about this?

- County funding would continue as it is currently being done in both systems.
- ESLS would consider having Washington and Dodge Counties submit their county invoices to ESLS to pay out checks, but wouldn't mandate it.
- Washington County would continue as is because their county clerk has adhered to process and wouldn't deviate from it.

8. How is original and copy cataloging handled? Is this all centrally done or are libraries responsible? Who works on authorities and clean-up efforts? How are patron records cleaned up? Is this done on a regular basis or at the library's discretion?

- ESLS does original cataloging. Member libraries create a brief entry so they can circulate the items.

- Member libraries are responsible for their holdings records.
- Cleanup is centralized at ESLS.
- Authority control is outsourced.
- Patron record cleanup done on the library level.
- Duplicates have not been a problem in ESLS.
- Cataloging committee will be created in 2016, was on hiatus.

9. What reporting software is available to libraries? Are libraries allowed to run reports or are they all centrally run? What kind of training will new member libraries receive when joining a new ILS? Our outreach department relies heavily on patron histories. Does your ILS allow for this to occur? It is also important for outreach to be mobile. Is there a mobile app or other option for circulation on the road? Does their ILS have a collections module compatible with Unique Management Service? Does each library set its own lending periods, number of renewals and fine structure?

- Canned reports are available with required permissions. Libraries have access to overdue notices and holds reports through the canned reports.
- ESLS uses Fine Tools as a licensed product for more complex reporting. ESLS uses SQL for more complex reporting also.
- Circulation reports by municipality are sent to the member libraries monthly.
- Polaris is capable of sending notices via text, email or phone.
- Training can be done for circulation, cataloging, serials, and acquisitions with ESLS member library volunteers. MWFLS staff will be able to shadow for training.
- Outreach includes reading histories. There is an outreach module available in Polaris, but ESLS doesn't use it. Can be purchased if wanted. There is no mobile app, but can use offline for circulation or access through a VPN.
- Polaris is compatible with Unique Management Services.
- Libraries set their own loan and fine structures. Renewals are agreed upon by the libraries so they are standardized.

10. Would you be willing to add the 2 MWFLS staff members to your staff if a merger were to occur?

- The 2 remaining MWFLS staff could still possibly work in Horicon and check in at ESLS once a week. This is just a suggestion.

11. Do you look for continuing education opportunities for support staff as well as librarians? What have you offered in the past for support staff continuing education? What other types of recent CE programming have you offered to members?

- CE is for everyone, not just for the directors.
- ESLS is a member of SEWI, and works with Nicolet Federated Library System.
- ESLS does in house CE; brainstorming of ideas, ILL boot camp, oral history workshops, tech training in member libraries so they learn to troubleshoot on their own.

12. Have you surveyed your current members or held an all-system directors discussion about an expanded/merged system to get their input? If so, what feedback and support or dissention did you get?

- Not too much discussion on the library level yet.
- ESLS director has given them information, but haven't had time to get together to discuss.
- Positives: stronger system with more libraries; increased collection is probably the best part
- Negatives: turnaround time with delivery with larger delivery area; shared costs and if the cost will increase; libraries have budget constraints; concerns about going to a formula based cost and having weighted votes (currently ESLS bills member libraries equally and they all have an equal vote).

13. Please tell us about the role of the resource library and the funding they receive. What services do they provide as part of their contract?

- Mead Public Library, the ESLS resource library, uses their money for collection development; econtent and Overdrive Advantage. Any other services, such as educational offerings would need to benefit the entire system.
- ESLS uses 10% of its state aid to contract with Mead.
- ESLS and Mead work well together

14. How often does the system meet with their member directors? How is the input from member library directors factored into decision making for policies and fees?

- Committees are fairly new to ESLS. They are adding more and they are becoming permanent rather than ad-hoc.
- Committees: circulation, technology, system agreement and policies.
- PLAC is the public library advisory committee and SLAC is the system library automation committee. Each committee meets every other month the other one doesn't meet.
- Each library takes a turn hosting.
- Youth services meets twice a year
- Committees make recommendations to bring to the entire group to vote. Then if necessary the recommendation will go the ESLS board for the final vote.
- Meetings are offered virtually.
- Votes need a 2/3 majority to pass.

15. What is your vision for future system and library technology services?

- Consolidate some shared services to one location, such as file servers and security.
- Expand on the current Wi-Fi.
- More consistency with technology among the libraries. If one library is down and tech isn't available then another library could troubleshoot the library that needs it.
- Work more together to solve problems.
- More training
- Offer Discovery Layers in Polaris.

16. Do you have a strategic plan and, if so, can you provide us with a progress update regarding your implementation of the plan?

- Will create a strategic plan in 2016. Will wait to see if a merger occurs because that would affect the plan.

17. Is the ILS formula idea for simultaneous accesses to the ILS or just the presence of the software? What is the distinction made between EasiCat service and Polaris M & L?

- Polaris M & L is the maintenance licenses.

18. Please discuss with us the 3 responses by libraries on their 2014 annual reports that answered no to the system effectiveness statement.

- Referred to IT support, strategic planning and communication.
- Lack of IT support and found out that the member libraries needed more. This was fixed with new IT staff.
- Strategic planning will happen in 2016.
- ESLS is currently working on effective communication with their libraries.

19. Does ESLS view this as a potential to start a new 4-county system (including considering a different ILS) or does ESLS see this as two counties joining ESLS?

- ESLS views this as starting a new 4-county system.

20. Please tell us more about the bookmobile service and if this is something that would be extended to Dodge and /or Washington Counties.

- Sheboygan and Ozaukee Counties fund this completely.
- Serve non-librariated areas only; day cares, assisted living, schools and community stops.
- 30,000 items and connect through a VPN.
- Will investigate to see if other counties are interested.
- Non-served communities pay for this service.

21. Are both your counties committed to staying in ESLS?

- Both counties are committed to ESLS.

22. Go into greater detail about technology services. What kind of support do you provide beyond the ILS...onsite, via a support connection (like fastsupport.com)? Do staff coordinate group purchases of computers, equipment, make recommendations for purchasing of equipment etc...? How much support are they able to provide libraries that have self-checkout machines and a sorting machine? Or are libraries on their own to work with the vendors on this equipment?

- Reinitiate team viewer so tech can troubleshoot virtually.
- System will educate libraries on how to troubleshoot if they want, or the system will take care of the computer issues. Easier if libraries know how to fix their computers so problems can be taken care of sooner.
- Emergency line can be accessed at any time.
- System isn't too familiar with how self-checkouts work with Polaris. Some ESLS member libraries have self-checkouts and they are working fine.

- Polaris supports RFID technology.
- No serious discussion of moving to Sierra at this time.

23. If MWFLS decides to pursue a merger with ESLS, the cost-sharing formulas have to be figured out either during this process now or during the negotiations. It's everyone's best interest (including the libraries in ESLS) that this be figured out and agreed beforehand. What do you see the process and timeline being to work out these formula agreements?

- ESLS has started talking about a cost-sharing formula and making a change. Important to move forward with a formula structure but don't know exactly what it will be.
- Estimated numbers ESLS gave to MWFLS are the closest ESLS can get for 2016.
- Votes are based on the number of licenses per library for financial votes
- One of the first things to discuss with MWFLS to see if they're interested votes based on licenses. It was mentioned that a smaller library could remove computers to keep their costs down. Circulation and holdings are variables too and determine costs.
- Libraries will have a voice in this decision by having representatives from the counties bring the recommendations to all of the directors.

24. Does ESLS pay each library's WISCAT membership?

- Libraries pay for their own WISCAT membership.

25. What would the potential breakdown, by county, be of the board of trustees if merged?

- 11 based on population. This would be up for discussion.

Adjourn: It was moved by Baker and Becker seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:41 pm. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Cantrell