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March 16, 2017

To PLSR Chapter 43 Workgroup Members:

As requested, I had a conversation with Paul Farrow about the PLSR project last week. As a former state legislator and the current Waukesha County Executive, he has a unique and valuable perspective.

During my conversation with Paul, I asked him whether he felt we should be studying any particular organization or state for the purposes of redesigning Wisconsin library systems. Paul indicated that he wouldn't recommend focusing too much effort studying other organizations or states. While learning the landscape can certainly add context, it isn't usually that enlightening to compare two *unlike* entities in his opinion. The part of the proposal that he would study in detail are the outcomes. He asked: *Exactly what are you trying to fix? What are the outcomes you seek? Are they measurable? How, specifically, will the changes improve our libraries and the lives of our citizens?*

Here are the questions he indicated that would be forefront in his mind when reviewing a proposal for major change such as the PLSR project:

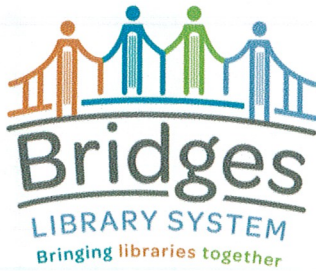
- 1) Does the solution result in an improvement in effectiveness?
- 2) Are the proposed efficiencies supported by a fiscal impact analysis?
- 3) Does the solution add to or reduce local control?
- 4) Does the solution provide opportunities to collaborate and strengthen relationships so that our organizations are not siloed and then required to act within arbitrary borders?
- 5) Are economies of scale properly analyzed to avoid future diseconomies of scale?
- 6) Has the study analyzed the potential for utilizing services that already exist within counties in Wisconsin—this could not only reduce duplication of effort, it has the potential to improve the outcome. (For example, utilizing a county purchasing department results in better purchases on major expenditures.)
- 7) Will the proposal inadvertently create more layers of bureaucracy in the long term?

I will report on my conversation with WLA Lobbyist, Steve Conway, in a future communication. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely, -
Connie S Meyer
Connie Meyer, Director

Serving the libraries of Waukesha and Jefferson Counties

OUR MISSION: Improving member libraries through leadership, collaboration, & support



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March 28, 2017

To PLSR Chapter 43 Workgroup Members:

Steve Conway (WLA lobbyist) and I discussed the PLSR project and, as requested, I raised the question about whether or not we should study any particular organization or state for the purposes of redesigning our library systems to help with the legislative approval process down the road. Steve indicated that in his experiences legislators (and their aides) appreciate background information before making a decision. He believes that legislators have an understanding of librarians' ability to study an issue and that any recommendation coming from us will benefit from our past relationship-building efforts. Steve indicated that it will be important for the library community to universally support whatever change we bring forward. The legislative process is difficult. There are many opportunities for proposed legislation to fail. If we are to be successful, we must have a plan that the library community supports and people willing to do the work to ensure it becomes law.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Connie Meyer, Director

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