



STRUCTURE STUDY PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS A SUMMARY OF INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS

JUNE 24, 2008, ST. OLAF COLLEGE

Concern about changing the SELCO Advisory Committee

- Three advisory committees is not overkill
- Is the elimination of the SELCO Advisory Committee really saving anything or are there other ways for efficiency?
- Regarding low attendance at meetings - even when there is not a quorum; members still want a *voting* voice.
- More of a communication issue – changing official status of the meeting?
- Call the Advisory Committee exactly what it is – Public Library Directors' meeting
- Do not increase SELCO representation on the SELS Advisory Committee.
- Have heard that the SELCO Advisory Committee advises the Executive Director and the Board
- Having a voting voice that goes back to the board is important – a direct voice, not via an elected representative.
- Keep the advisory committees as they are

Clarification of "one class of membership"

- As membership requirements were looked at, the difference is that all public libraries are members of both SELCO and SELS but academics, for example, are members of just SELS.
- Concern that the funding streams will truly kept separate
- Everyone is a member of the organization - who gets what will continue to be determined by the funding stream
- Some confusion with SELCO being the public library region but so many other types of libraries have joined SELCO's online system
- Not quite seeing that having just one type of member is in the best interest of everyone.
- Can the phrasing of 'one class of membership' be reworked or removed completely? Either you are a member or you are not.

Budgets

- Budget numbers say it all - disparity
- Doesn't diminish the importance of the SELS libraries
- Merger implies two equal partners
- One budget makes sense

- From a taxpayer point of view, these are all libraries, used by all – hard to get equal representation
- Merging budgets would be less transparent, rather than more transparent
- Functionally, merging the budgets would increase efficiency

Board Structure

- Suggestion was made of making SELS a sub-agency of SELCO – what is the function of SELS members to the Board? Imbalance of what the Board deals with - why have a merged board when SELS is really just a small nodule in terms of the business.
- SELCO and SELS Boards don't have the same function.
- Is there a SELS board?
- Would it be possible to have a board configuration similar to that of city councils which would then become the advisory committees would report to the Board?
- Has there been any discussion whether meeting quarterly is best for the board?
- Expected the proposal to show some change to the structure and make-up of the board – doesn't feel there is true representation
- Could be better communication from the board members to the multitype libraries they represent.
- In some ways, this *is* a political structure – perhaps looking at the political reality and the representation in this structure makes some sense. Need to look ahead, not just at the present.

Additional Questions and Comments

- What was the impetus for beginning a merger process?
- What have other regional systems throughout the state done?
- What are the anticipated costs associated with a merge?
- What have been some of the questions from the Structures Committee members as they worked on the process?
- How does SELCO interface with MnLINK and MINITEX?
- Weak state Library in Minnesota – lack of leadership

Suggestions for Future Meetings or to be shared on the website

- Organizational chart showing make-up of committees
- Definition of library sizes