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From: Lynne Young [mailto:Lynne.Young@CI.NORTHFIELD.MN.US]

Sent: Friday, September 19, 2008 2:53 PM

To: Ann Hutton

Subject: Structure study/structure committee meeting on September 22

Good afternoon, Ann,

I will take this opportunity to apologize that this resolution was not ready for distribution with the packet for the Structure Committee meeting scheduled for Monday, September 22. We have had several discussions at our Board meetings about the proposed merger and the controversy surrounding the June Advisory Committee meeting and subsequent events. The Northfield Public Library Board has seen much of the correspondence and other documentation that has been distributed since that time.

I am attaching a copy of the resolution that the NPL Board passed last week. I will send a print copy to you via the delivery and ask that you distribute copies at the Structure Committee meeting.

Over the years, you and I have had a number of discussions about SELCO and its importance to member libraries. You know that I am passionate about the importance of public libraries in their communities, that I firmly believe that federated library systems are stronger for their diversity and their rootedness in local community, and that cooperation and collaboration are key to our continued success. The members of the Northfield Board are also solidly behind these principles.

You may not be as aware that I have serious misgivings about the proposed merger. Issues of actual cost savings and the role of the advisory committee are key - and have been expressed very well by others. Of more concern to me, however, is the philosophy behind a proposed merger. I heard Teri Hill say at the August meeting that as a SELCO/SELS Board member she needed to be as concerned about the school, academic and special libraries as she did about the public libraries. This is completely untrue. SELCO is the older, larger, parent organization and the core members of SELCO are public libraries which should be the major concern of the SELCO/SELS Board.

With all the accusations and bitterness that currently surround the discussion of the merger - despite the good intentions, hard work and passion about libraries on all sides - I am hopeful that you will reconsider the merger time line (as indicated as possible on the agenda). I am also hopeful that we can all - board members, SELCO staff and member library directors - use this as an opportunity to work through the issues that have been raised by this discussion. Some of these issues have been simmering for years, and it may, as Peggy Havener suggested, take mediation from an outside party to bring us together again. Regardless, there is no hurry to accomplish a merger and no failure in changing course.

Lynne Young

Director

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**Striving for excellence; committed to service**

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA**  
LIBRARY BOARD RESOLUTION #2008-002

A RESOLUTION BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF THE CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA TO REQUEST A DELAY IN THE VOTE ON A PROPOSED MERGER OF SELCO/SELS UNTIL ISSUES BETWEEN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTORS AND THE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE ARE MEDIATED AND RESOLVED. WE ASK THAT THE MEDIATION BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHIN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS.

- WHEREAS, SELCO was formed in 1972 in order “to institute various cooperative library practices and services jointly among the public libraries in Southeastern Minnesota: to coordinate the efforts of the member libraries toward attaining more adequate levels of service to the public; to qualify the member libraries for the benefits to be received from such state and federal aid funds for public library service as may become available to or through the cooperative organization, and to promote cooperation between public libraries and other types of libraries.” (From articles of incorporation)
- WHEREAS, SELCO is comprised of its member public libraries as well as the Board and employees of the SELCO office
- WHEREAS, SELS was formed in the late 1970’s to facilitate resource sharing, provide back up reference service, continuing education, consulting and scholarships
- WHEREAS, The Northfield Public Library, along with other public libraries in the region, depends upon the services that SELCO provides and continues to benefit from membership in SELCO, especially through the integrated library system (ILS) and material delivery
- WHEREAS, Over 90% of the SELCO/SELS budget is provided for through Regional Library Basic System Support for public libraries
- WHEREAS, SELCO is the only conduit for state financial support to local public libraries and provides fundamental services for public libraries, SELCO is more important to the regional public library members than SELS is to its multitype member libraries
- WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of all those involved in SELCO – board, member libraries, and staff – to serve the best interests of those who use public libraries in this region
- WHEREAS, The public library directors, acting as the advisory committee to SELCO, posed a number of questions to the Structure Committee
- WHEREAS, The Structure Committee’s response has given rise to further questions and concerns, and further dialog and mediation are required prior to any action on a merger

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD OF THE CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA REQUESTS A DELAY IN THE VOTE ON A PROPOSED MERGER OF SELCO/SELS UNTIL ISSUES BETWEEN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTORS AND THE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE ARE MEDIATED AND RESOLVED.

PASSED by the Library Board of the City of Northfield on this 16th day of September 2008

Submitted respectfully:

Barbara Altstaetter  
Susan Beeby  
Robert K. Bruce  
William Bruihler  
Bruce Colwell  
Sarah Currier  
William Gruszewski  
Margit Johnson  
Leanne Noble