

September 15, 2008

Dear Gretchen,

In a recent letter from Peggy Havenor of Albert Lea, she stated she was disturbed and appalled by a depiction of the Advisory Committee members at the June meeting. I was witness to the behavior of *some* members at said meeting. Quite frankly, I was disturbed and appalled by the sophomoric and rude behavior of these so called professional people; enough so, that I felt it was necessary to send words of apology to our meeting guests. My standards for professional conduct are high, mostly due to serving on several civic, public and non-profit boards.

As far back as October 2006, I have notes from an Advisory Committee meeting addressing the intended structure study process. Frequently brought up ever since, the topic has appeared on various committee and board agendas. Information was brought back to my own board from you. And whose responsibility is it to keep oneself informed? Has there been a lack of information or accessibility to it? I don't believe so!

At the June meeting of the Advisory Committee, in what was suppose to be a first review of proposals by the Structure Study Committee, along with a question, answer and input session, quickly turned into a semantic debate. In short order accusations were made, along with a call for a vote to scrap the whole idea of a merger of SELCO/SELS. A civil conversation with professionals? Far from it! It smacked of a prior discussion/meeting by a faction of the group, with a desired outcome already determined.

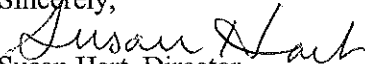
An attempt has been made to "redefine" what occurred at the meeting by calling the behavior "passionate" and then ripping into SELCO management and attitudes. Creating accusations and innuendos and repeating them often does not turn them into reality. This is an old tactic used by politicians.

As you know my board is 100% for the merger. Anyone who listens to auditor comments during their own reviews, knows what is being proposed makes good fiscal management sense. The Adhoc Advisory Committee's questions have been satisfactorily answered over and over again. Let the directors' determine how they want to meet and in what capacity. Accepting representative governance seems to be the stumbling block for some.

For now, move ahead. We are not serving the public and meeting their needs the same way we did in the 80's. Good grief we are not even in the same century! However, our mission remains the same...we enrich lives. Change is a way of life. It happens through public libraries **and** school libraries; equally important to those whose lives are touched by the professional people involved with them.

Thank you and also the entire Structure Study Committee for all the work you have done to date on the restructure issue.

Sincerely,

  
Susan Hart, Director  
Rushford Public Library