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Report to the Southern System Planning Panel Lincoln Trail Libraries System Board of Directors

On Monday the 21st of February the LTLS Board meet and reviewed all the documents regarding the Southern System merger. At that time the board took the following actions

Intergovernmental Agreement

Action Item No. 2011-19

At the February 10, 2011 Southern System Planning Panel meeting the joint panel voted to ask the Boards of Lewis and Clark Library System, Lincoln Trail Libraries System, Rolling Prairie Library System and Shawnee Library System to adopt an Intergovernmental Agreement, which would provide for the forming of a Transition Board. In January 2011 LTLS Board of Directors approved the composition of the Transition Board.

Lincoln Trail Libraries System supports and endorses the merger of the 4 systems. However, the board believes the Intergovernmental Agreement does not provide the flexibility to move forward together should the timelines not be met. The agreement as currently drafted has very prescriptive deadlines, including, but not limited to, formation of the transitional board; hiring of a new director; development of a personnel policy; and the need for an extension clause should the July 1, 2011 deadline not be met. Until such time that this system is operational, current systems will continue to provide services.

Discussion: During discussion of the Intergovernmental Agreement the prescriptive deadlines of the timetable along with the absence of an extension clause and several other issues raised concerns about the feasibility of completing the merger with the timelines provided. The LTLS Board remembers that early in the planning process that it was discussed that if the July 1, 2011 date could not be met that the Planning Panel agreed to continue to move toward a merger. The LTLS Board would like the deadlines to be more flexible and the opportunity for the Transition board to operate into FY 2012 or past July 1, 2012. It is the belief of the board that the transition process should be completed prior to a formal merger. This continues the same thread that LTLS Board has had since the beginning that an Intergovernmental Agreement could be a good method of formally working together to ensure that the merger happens smoothly.

The Board also recognizes the complication in getting a benefit package in place; the fact that one system has a union contract in place, the concern about continuing service and also that some services need to be re-thought prior to a new organization. The LTLS Board continues to endorse the process but as the LTLS Director sometimes says it is better to "Go Slow to Go Fast." Process is messy but involvement is essential. Note the many comments that we are just now getting from the members. That is wonderful but we need to be sure to listen and hear and make well thought out decisions and not just decisions to be quick and move on. We want the new system to be ready to "hit the ground" running rather than continue to have to do transition processes.

Bylaws

Discussion

The Board reviewed the By-Laws as revised and didn't understand the need for changes. They were especially concerned about the elimination of the types of membership. Also the board did not understand why Directors was changed to members since the word Director is in the law and finally why the number of meetings was changed from 10 to 9 when if the Board meets the law it seems that they can have more meetings than the law provides.

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Executive Director

Action Item:

LTLS board recommends that the transition board continue until the merger is finished. A system employee should be selected to work with the transition board. This system employee would not be eligible to become the director of the new system.

The LTLS Executive Director is willing to assist in the convening of the first transition board.

The LTLS board is willing to allow Jan Ison, Executive Director of LTLS, to work with the transition board should she be selected by that board.

Discussion

This discussion is continuation that LTLS has had regarding the Executive Director position. After a lengthy discussion it was the "conclusion that a longer transition board and intergovernmental agreement would fulfill the LTLS Board's position of wanting an Interim Director. They want to be sure that a complete and reasoned search is conducted and the person working with the board hiring the director would not be eligible for the position. It is the belief that funds are in short supply and we should use system staff to meet the staffing requirements for the transition board.

Membership Criteria

Action Item:

Upon review of the Membership Criteria the LTLS board had the following concerns. The membership draft under consideration is not as robust as the current LTLS policy. LTLS policy requires members to be governing members of OCLC, which supports the underlying goal of the system to support resource sharing. No such requirement is in the new policy.

The membership staffing Criteria for schools is significantly lower than the criteria of LTLS. The public library financial support is stated only as "receives financial support" rather than a minimum per capita amount. The academic staff is stated as "Appropriate terminal professional degree" unlike the ALA-accredited graduate degree required for membership in LTLS. It is unfortunate that in a time of budget crisis we would consider lowering the membership requirements.

LTLS is interested in keeping reasonable standards for membership, which provides an opportunity for libraries to strive to meet.

Discussion:

There is concern that by lowering some school standards that it will be a problem for schools to maintain staffing as administrators are looking to cut. The Board is not interested in eliminating libraries from membership but believes that the criteria should be something to strive for and it is important to recognize that this is needed. Regarding the membership in OCLC, the desire of LTLS is that libraries be willing to share and if they cannot belong to the LLSAP that it is important for them to participate in a larger database in order for libraries to discover and borrow materials. LTLS believes that every library has resources to contribute to the shared collaborative and this is the best way to ensure that all members contribute.

Strategic Plan

Action Item

The LTLS Board of Directors endorsed the Strategic Plan

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Resource Access Policy

Discussion

The Southern System Planning Panel provided a draft of the Resource Access Policy for the LTLS Board to review. The only specific discussion was to recommend that the committee review the new LTLS Resource Access Policy regarding a new 65% level of support regarding reciprocal borrowing.

Delivery Proposal

Action

Upon review of the proposal the LTLS board believes the delivery proposal to merely be a continuation of the current service and in reality continuing four separate delivery systems.

This is disappointing when the merger provides an opportunity to re-structure delivery. The LTLS board recommends that for delivery we should look at all options including outsourcing such as the current ILDS system.

System Name

Discussion The Southern System Planning Panel provided a list of potential names for the LTLS Board to review. The consensus was that the name of the new system should to be future oriented and not have "history" as a backdrop. Also the Board was not delighted with the rivers or the between the rivers in the name. Future was the key idea from the Board.