

Guiding Principles for the Consolidation of Library Services in Hennepin County

Vision

To be a premier library system in the country by building on the strengths and talents of the Hennepin County Library and Minneapolis Public Library systems.

Service to the public

The primary focus of the united library system is on providing better and more seamless service to the public -- in buildings, on-line and through outreach.

Programs and services will be responsive to the diverse and changing needs and interests of all county residents -- individuals, families, businesses, organizations and neighborhoods -- and will support the needs of the communities served. The united library system will improve learning and literacy among all residents, and will better promote workforce and economic development.

The complementary strengths of the Hennepin County Library and Minneapolis Public Library, and their respective contributions to library resources and services throughout Minnesota, will be preserved by improving access to combined collections, services and electronic resources.

Best practices of both systems will be adopted to maximize long-term operating efficiencies, service effectiveness, and the advantages of new technologies.

The united library system will implement 21st century service as defined in the Hennepin County Library Framework for the Future and the Minneapolis Public Library Blueprint for Service Delivery.

Governance

The name of the united library system will be Hennepin County Library. All individual library names will be retained, including Minneapolis Central Library.

The united library system will be a department of Hennepin County, under the direction of the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners and library director.

A ten member Hennepin County Library Board will be appointed by and be advisory to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. The Library Board will include representation from throughout Hennepin County. Three of the initial appointments will be residents of the city of Minneapolis.

Financial support

The united library system will be supported by a fair and sustainable financing structure that ensures overall long-term viability and accountability. While the tax base will change over time, consolidation will not significantly shift the relative taxes currently paid by Minneapolis and suburban taxpayers for library services.

Operating funding will be provided by a countywide property tax, which will replace the existing separate levies. The city of Minneapolis will initially contribute the current library share of ongoing LGA (\$6.8 million) plus an additional \$1.0 million to cover the projected 2008 operating deficit of the Minneapolis Public Library. This annual contribution will phase out over ten years as consolidation efficiencies are realized and the countywide property tax base continues to grow to assure 21st century library service without the city's contribution.

A long-term goal of the united system is to provide comparable library services throughout the system. The city of Minneapolis will fully fund the first three years of any increase in service hours at libraries in Minneapolis, including the potential reopening of the three closed libraries, as specified by the city as a condition of consolidation. These contributions will phase out over the subsequent five years.

Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, if implemented, the new countywide stadium tax will be available to provide additional funding above current resources for the expansion of library hours system wide.

Private financial support from foundations and individual and corporate donors for the united library system will be strengthened as the efforts of the Hennepin County Library Foundation, Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library, and other organizations are combined and coordinated.

Capital assets and liabilities

Hennepin County will be responsible for all assets of the united library system, including unissued referendum bond proceeds. Outstanding debt liabilities will remain the respective responsibilities, until retired, of Minneapolis and suburban taxpayers. Hennepin County will replace the city of Minneapolis as recipient of the state's capital grant for a planetarium.

Hennepin County will implement the Framework for the Future Capital Plan, subject to annual confirmation. The city of Minneapolis will complete the amount of its financial commitment to the Community Libraries Capital Projects program.

Hennepin County will assume any liability for acts or omissions occurring after the date of consolidation, including employment-related claims. The city of

Minneapolis will retain any liability for acts or omissions occurring prior to the date of consolidation, including employment-related claims.

Employees

All employees of Minneapolis Public Library will become employees of Hennepin County on the effective date of the consolidation.

Employees of both systems will be respected and treated fairly throughout the consolidation process. Employees of both systems will retain employment and accrued benefits.

Terms and conditions of employment for non-organized employees in the united library system will be established by Hennepin County. Terms and conditions for union employees will be negotiated by Hennepin County and the certified exclusive labor representatives.

The city of Minneapolis will fund remaining contributions for MERF members of Minneapolis Public Library over and above normal pension contributions.

Implementation

The effective date of consolidation will be on or before December 31, 2008.

Implementation plans will be reviewed by the Hennepin County Library Board, and approved by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners, Minneapolis City Council and Mayor, and Minneapolis Public Library Board.

Consolidation planning and implementation will be jointly managed by the directors of the two library systems, in consultation with county and city finance, legal, human resources and intergovernmental relations staff, and others as appropriate.

Implementation costs will be shared by Hennepin County, the city of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Public Library. Any state support will reduce shared responsibilities proportionately.

Adopted by the Committee on the Future of Libraries in Hennepin County on February 15, 2007.

Adopted by the Library Advisory Committee on February 27, 2007.

Adopted by the Minneapolis Public Library Board on March 7, 2007.