

AGENDA
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024 – 1:00 PM
OCONTO COUNTY LIBRARY PLANNING COMMITTEE
301 WASHINGTON STREET, COURTHOUSE BUILDING “A” ROOM #3041
OCONTO WI 54153
www.co.oconto.wi.us

This is an open meeting of a Non-Standing Committee of the Oconto County Board of Supervisors. Notice of this meeting was given to the public at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting, by forwarding the complete agenda to the newspapers and to all news media who have requested the same as well as by posting. Copies of the complete agenda were available for inspection at the Office of the County Clerk and from the County's website calendar:
www.co.oconto.wi.us

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - 2.1. Change of Sequence**
 - 2.2. Removal of Items**
- 3. Communications**
- 4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (Enc.)**
- 5. Work Group Update: March 26, 2024**
- 6. Straw Poll: Consolidation vs Current Structure with Changes to the Library Plan**
- 7. Discussion on County Sales Tax Usage**
- 8. Form Work Group for Funding Allocation (Current Library Directors)**
- 9. Discuss Changes for the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029 (Enc.)**
- 10. Public Comment**
- 11. Identify Future Agenda Items**
- 12. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)**
- 13. Set Next Meeting Date**
- 14. Adjournment**

Any person wishing to attend the meeting who requires special accommodation because of a disability should contact the Nicolet Federated Library System at 920-448-4414 at least 24 hours before the meeting begins so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Persons who are members of another governmental body, but who are not members of this committee, may attend this meeting. Their attendance could result in a quorum of another governmental body being present. Such a quorum is unintended and they are not meeting to exercise the authority, duties, or responsibilities of any other governmental body.

- c: Committee; County Administrator, Finance Director, Corporation Counsel, Library Services Board Members, County Librarians, NFLS, Oconto County Board Chair, Gary Frank, Media (via email); County Website; Central File, Official Posting Location (Physical Copy)

kp/Date Posted: 04/08/2024

MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024 – 1:00 PM
OCONTO COUNTY LIBRARY PLANNING COMMITTEE
301 WASHINGTON STREET, COURTHOUSE BUILDING “A” ROOM #3041
OCONTO WI 54153
www.co.oconto.wi.us
(Draft minutes, not approved by Committee)

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Debra Schroeder, Farnsworth Public Library Rep; Judy Patenaude, Lena Public Library Rep; Kathleen Marsh, Lakes Country Library Rep; Susan Mogged, Oconto Falls Library Rep; Joan Denis, Nicolet Federated Library Systems Board Rep; Al Sleeter, Administration Committee Rep; David Parmentier, County Board Supervisor Rep; LoAnn Elbe, Suring Library Rep; Tom Bitters, County Board Supervisor Rep

COMMITTEE ABSENT: Vicki Gooding, Library Services Board Rep.; Dawn Byars, Gillett Public Library Rep

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Sherman, Interim County Administrator/Finance Director; Kim Pytleski, County Clerk; Shannon Stoner; Amy Peterson, Farnsworth Public Library; Katie Essermann, Lakes Country Library; Rachel Pascoe, Oconto Falls Library; Jill Trochta, Suring Public Library; Lori Repinski; Linda McKenna; Mike Beyer; Russel Brock; Bonnie Hearley

1. Call to Order

Chair Schroeder called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

2.1. Change of Sequence

2.2. Removal of Items

Motion by Mogged/Patenaude to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was voted on and carried.

3. Communications

Email dated 03/11/2024 from Tracy Vreeke, NFLS to Kim Pytleski, County Clerk, regarding changed to the Library Services Plan being developed by the Oconto County Library Planning Committee; treated as information only.

4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Correction requested to add Jean Grosse as an attendee at the 02/12/2024 meeting and a typo correction for the spelling of Vreeke. Motion by Parmentier/Bitters to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was voted on and carried.

5. Guidelines for Addressing the Committee

Chair Schroeder read the *Guidelines for Addressing the Committee*.

6. Chair to Address Committee

Chair Schroeder read an address to the committee.

7. Committee Response to Chair's Address

Chair Schroeder opened the floor for members to respond to item #6. Tom Bitters, County Board Supervisor Rep., read the following motion “I make a motion to create a Consolidated County Library System for Oconto County Wisconsin as per the requirements of Wisconsin State Statutes, Section 43.21, entitled Consolidated Public Library Systems. The new Oconto County Consolidated Library system shall be comprised of all existing joint libraries in Oconto County, all existing municipal libraries in Oconto County, and all unserved districts in Oconto County.” Kim Pytleski, County Clerk, raised a point of order and explained that the agenda did not notice the possibility for action, the motion was out of order. Discussion followed. Pytleski explained the need for agendas to notice to the public possible items of action. Discussion continued and Bitters withdrew his motion.

8. Vice Chair to Address Committee

Kathleen Marsh presented a PowerPoint to the committee. The PowerPoint is on file with the County Clerk's Office.

9. Committee Response to Vice Chair's Address

Chair Schroeder opened the floor for members to respond to item #8. Lisa Sherman, Finance Director/Interim County Administrator offered comments and points of clarification on county sales tax. Discussion followed regarding funding options, purpose of committee, extension of current plan, Brown County Library bill, and general comments.

10. Discuss Changes for the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029

Committee discussed plan structure. Pytleski explained the Library Plan life cycle and funding mechanisms. Plan structure, apportionment and distribution options, levy limits and sales tax options were discussed. Request for Bitter's motion to be on the next agenda.

11. Public Comment

The following addressed the committee: Linda McKenna, Mike Beyer, Tom Thielke, Tracy Vreeke (read recommendations and FAQ's as requested at the 02/12/2024 meeting), Connie Meyer, Bonnie Hearley, Patrick Scanlan, and Ben Pytleski.

12. Identify Future Agenda Items

The committee identified the following future agenda ideas.

1. Discussion and possible action for a consolidated library system
2. Current structure with changes to funding options
3. Optional use of sales tax; Sherman to report on this option
4. Work group reports
5. Input from Oconto County Librarians

Joan Denis out of attendance.

13. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken) – None.

14. Set Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting of the Library Planning Committee is Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. Small work groups will held in the LEC on March 26th (Bitters, Denis, Schroeder) to discuss the option of consolidation and April 30th topic to be determined. No quorum will be present.

15. Adjournment

Motion by Elbe/Patenaude to adjourn the meeting at 3:31 p.m. The motion was voted on and carried.



Oconto County Library Service Plan: 2025-2029

Oconto County Library Planning Committee
[Month] [Date], 2024

Adopted by Oconto County Board of Supervisors
[Month] [Date], 2024

Executive Summary

Oconto County is required to develop a library service plan that addresses how public library service will be provided to residents of those municipalities in the county not maintaining a public library and the method and level of funding to be provided by the county for this service.

On August 20, 2009, the County Board adopted the 2010-2014 County Library Service Plan. This was the County's first plan since 1976. The 2010-2014 Plan was updated with two subsequent plans covering the periods of 2015-2019, and 2020-2024. Now, a need exists to create a 2025-2029 plan.

The County Board authorized a Library Planning Committee through a resolution (R2023-04-04) passed on April 18, 2023. The members of the Library Planning Committee are listed in Appendix A. This Committee developed and recommended this new library services plan to the Board of Supervisors.

The goals established by the Planning Committee are as follows:

GOAL 1:

Provide all county residents with access to all library services provided by all system member libraries

GOAL 2:

Ensure that the public and government officials recognize libraries as a vital and necessary service to everyone.

GOAL 3:

Fund libraries sufficiently in order to provide the public with current materials and technology, knowledgeable staff and educational programming, as needed.

GOAL 4:

To engage in continuous planning and education regarding the provision of public library services to Oconto County residents.

The above goals are the same as the previous plans. The focus of the 2025-2029 Plan is to further advance each goal.

This Library Services Plan is intended to serve as a game plan to promote and provide the necessary resources for the six county libraries to carry out its mission statement and accomplish the goals listed above.

Introduction

On _____ the Oconto County Library Planning Committee, recommended approval of this plan that sets the course for library operations through 2029 . The current mission statement (listed below) was not changed from the previous plans. A set of guiding principles was proposed with goals and action items articulated to guide the achievement of those goals. This report will describe in detail the Planning Committee analysis of the Oconto County library system, its goals and actions, and set out recommendations for future efforts.

Under Wisconsin law, counties that participate in public library systems are responsible for providing library services to county residents who reside outside of communities that maintain their own libraries. Because Oconto County is a member of the Nicolet Federated Library System it is required to engage in regular planning to ensure that county residents have access to adequate library services. While county library service plans can address any appropriate issues, *Wisconsin Statutes* Section 43.11 requires that the Oconto County plan address at least the following:

1. How public library service will be provided to residents of those municipalities in Oconto County not maintaining a public library. The services provided must include full access to all member libraries. Under State Law 43.12, neighboring counties and cities, such as Brown County and Antigo, have been charging Oconto County for library services to Oconto County residents. In 2023 the charge was \$133,364. In 2024, the charge is estimated to be \$157,856.
2. The method and level of funding to be provided by the County in order to implement services described in the plan, including funding formula changes and levy impacts, the feasibility of creating a new library to serve municipalities without a library, and the feasibility of creating a consolidated library system.

The committee developed this plan, held _____ public hearings and presented it to the Oconto County Board of Supervisors for approval.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Oconto County Libraries is to serve the public; to welcome and support all people in their enjoyment of reading and pursuit of lifelong learning; to provide equal access to information, and to ideas and knowledge through books, programs and technology. The Oconto County Libraries believe in the freedom to read, to learn, and to discover.

Library Services in Oconto County

Library service in Oconto County is provided by six legally established public libraries:

Farnsworth Public Library (Oconto)	Gillett Public Library
Oconto Falls Public Library	Lena Public Library
Lakes Country Public Library (Lakewood)	Suring Area Public Library

These libraries were created under the authority of Section 43.52, *Wisconsin Statutes* by their respective cities and villages, and are governed by municipally appointed library boards. All public library boards

must include the local school district superintendent, or their designee, as a member. In addition, one member of the municipal governing body may be appointed to the library board, and up to two members may be nonresidents of the municipality. Library board members serve three-year terms.

Section 43.15(4)(b)(3), *Wisconsin Statutes*, specifies that a county must enter into a written agreement with its public library system “to participate in the system and its activities and to furnish library services to residents of those municipalities in the county not maintaining a public library.” The current agreements between Oconto County and the six libraries were signed in 2017.

Libraries in the county provide a wide variety of materials, programs, and services to their patrons. Below are some selected statistics relating to library usage.

<u>Library</u>	<u>2022 Service Population</u>	<u>2022 Registered Users</u>	<u>2022 Circulation</u>	<u>2022 Circ. To Non- Residents</u>	<u>2022 Program Attendance</u>
Farnsworth	9212	2897	49,572	18,080	3,020
Gillett	2183	1253	17,451	3,856	4,370
Lakes Country	9183	2025	45,313	25,963	846
Lena	3025	625	12,304	5,220	860
Oconto Falls	9674	2270	54,886	27,646	2,242
Suring Area	6030	973	20,336	4,560	1,530
Total	39,307	10,043	199,862	85,325	12,868

Funding for Library Services in Oconto County

Public libraries receive funding from a variety of sources including the county, cities, villages, and towns contributions as well as fines and fees for services. Property taxes provide the majority of that funding.

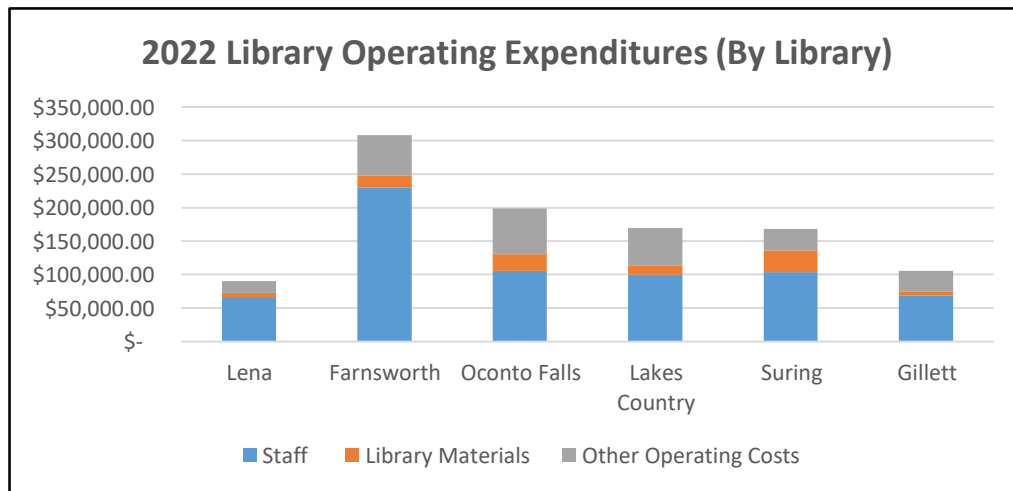
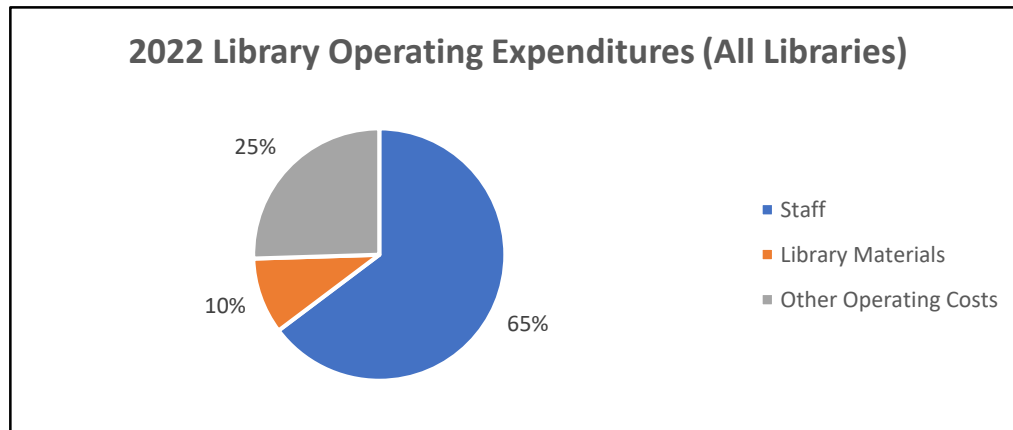
Oconto County levies a portion of the general tax on all county property, except for any municipality that provides an exemption resolution, which is allocated to the individual libraries. Below is a list of those communities eligible to be exempt from the County Library Tax.

City of Oconto	City of Oconto Falls	City of Gillett	Village of Lena
Village of Suring	Town of Maple Valley	Town of Breed	Town of How
Town of Bagley	Town of Lakewood	Town of Lena	Town of Brazeau*
Town of Doty*	Town of Mountain*	Town of Riverview*	Town of Spruce*
Town of Townsend*			

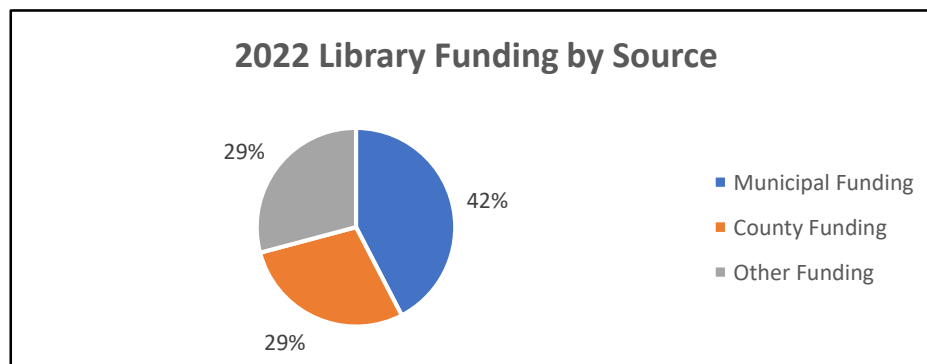
*New municipalities that became exempt from the County Library Tax since the 2020-2024 plan was created.

As required by law, the county library tax is used to compensate municipal libraries for serving county residents without local libraries as well as residents in municipalities with a local library.

In 2022, the county's six public libraries total operating expenses were reported as \$1,039,978 to the Department of Public Instruction. Operating expenses can be broadly grouped into categories as staff costs, collection costs, and all other operating expenses. The expenses in these areas for the libraries in Oconto County is presented in the charts below.

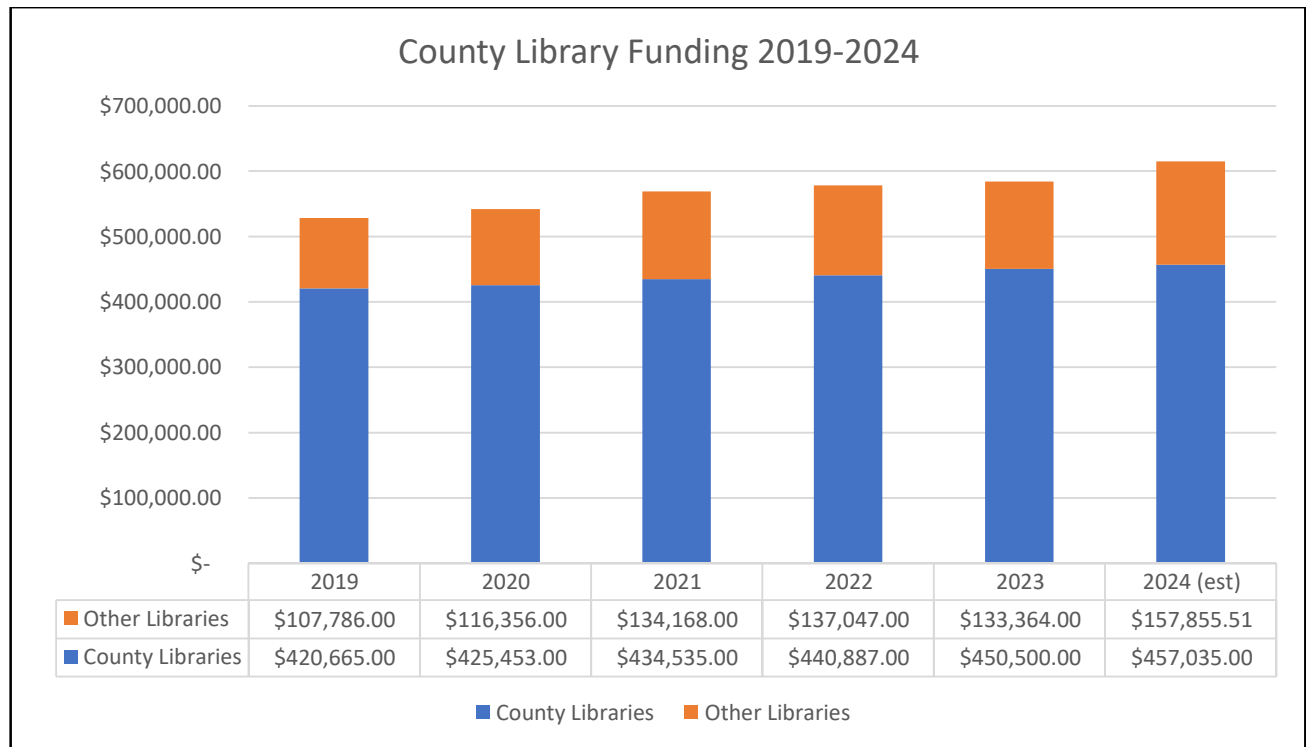


Total income for all libraries was \$1,533,496.00. This includes local municipal funding, county funding, and other funding. Other funding can include State funds, Federal funds, contract income, funding carried forward from prior years, and all other income. Municipal funding for libraries was 42% of income, county funding was 29% of income, and other funding was 29% of income. This is presented in the chart below.



In addition to funding to the six county libraries, in 2023 Oconto County also provided \$133,364 to two other library systems, (Brown County Library System, Antigo Library) per Wi State Statutes § 43.12. The County allocated \$4,000 for the operations of the OCLSB.

Oconto County's support for library services has increased 16.4% since 2019. Funding for local libraries has increased 8.6% since 2019, while payments to other libraries increased 46.5% since 2019. The chart below shows the amount of county funding for library services levied since 2019.



Funding to the six libraries within Oconto County is based on a formula established in the original 2009-2014 plan. The formula was created to address an inequity in funding that was tied to historical funding levels and did not relate to actual circulation or usage. This funding formula took into consideration many factors that measured library activities in the community they serve. In addition, the allocation from the County was set at 2.1% of the previous year's county tax levy. This formula created a built in increase if the County tax levy increased. It also created a more stable source of funding for the six local libraries. Prior to 2010, County provided approximately 1.6% of the previous year's tax levy to the County Library system.

During the discussions on the 2025-2029 plan, some of the concerns discussed include the amount levied as a tax on unserved communities and the allocation of the funding to each library. Therefore, the formula for allocating the funds was revisited to determine if changes needed to be made. Discussion also took place regarding the 2.1% allocation formula as set for the amount distributed to the six libraries, especially in light of the additional charges Oconto County has incurred from neighboring county libraries.

During the development of the 2020-2024 plan, it was determined that changes to the formula were needed to address the changing use of the libraries. More emphasis was placed on uses of electronic items and services and programs provided by the libraries. As a result the formula, located in the funding allocation section later of this plan.

Plan Foundation

The Oconto County Library Planning Committee created guiding principles that would lay the foundation of the plan. Below are the guiding principles that were approved.

Guiding Principles

- ❖ To maintain the independence of community and joint libraries.
- ❖ To have no library experience a decrease in its annual appropriation solely because of the funding change.
- ❖ To meet the needs of residents with concern for all ages, backgrounds, interest, abilities and levels of education.
- ❖ To uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and serve people of all ages and at all levels of need.
- ❖ To protect each person's right to privacy and freedom from censorship in choosing library materials.
- ❖ To guide all people toward a love of reading and an awareness of books and other library services and materials.
- ❖ To be a place to turn to for discovery of ideas and the power of information that helps people reach life goals.
- ❖ To maintain and improve the quality of life for all citizens of the community by providing resources that enhance and contribute to individual knowledge, enlightenment and enjoyment in the most efficient manner possible.
- ❖ To ensure libraries are integral parts of public education and an easily accessible, convenient focal point of community life, connecting the people of the region.

Goals and Actions

The above guiding principles were then used to develop four specific goals with action items for each. These goals, along with the action items, will be used to carry out the mission statement of the Oconto County Library System.

GOAL 1:

Provide all county residents with access to all library services provided by all system member libraries

Actions:

1. Oconto County Libraries will continue membership in the Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS); Oconto County shall meet all requirements under Chapter 43, Wisconsin Statutes in order to continue its membership in NFLS.
2. Libraries will continue to provide on-line services to county residents through its memberships in its *Outagamie–Waupaca Library System (OWLSnet) Consortium*.
3. Oconto County shall seek NFLS assistance and any other resources to work with neighboring systems and counties to resolve any intersystem service inequities, so that Oconto County libraries or libraries in other systems of NFLS member counties are compensated adequately for providing services to nonresidents.
4. Oconto County will continue to maintain an Oconto County Library Services Board in accordance with this plan and with Section 43.19, Wisconsin Statutes.
5. Oconto County shall designate the Oconto County Library Services Board to coordinate the implementation of countywide library services.
6. Libraries will continue and expand in-house delivery of e-services in collaboration with OWLSnet.
7. Libraries will continue to provide programming, as they are able that brings in groups or reaches out to communities.
8. Libraries should look to the business community to see what services could be provided to meet their needs.
9. Libraries will respond to requests to provide services to the disabled and to individuals with special needs.
10. Libraries shall survey their collections each year to remain relevant and current.

GOAL 2:

Ensure that the public and government officials recognize libraries as a vital and necessary service to everyone.

Actions:

1. OCLSB in conjunction with each local library will develop a public relations campaign to increase the public's awareness of the value and impact of Oconto County's libraries.
2. Local libraries will inform their service areas of events and activities through on-going media communications.
3. Local libraries will provide a short presentation each year at the County Board meetings to inform the County Board of the services provided at that library.
4. Libraries will continue to serve as a vibrant center for community life, offering opportunities to learn, know, gather and grow.
5. Libraries will promote collaboration with school districts and community organizations to best utilize the resources available. Libraries will also seek opportunities to collaborate with other organizations to present programs of current interest.
6. Libraries will provide staff with training opportunities that promote skills development, improve vital customer service and fulfill the library's mission.
7. Libraries will annually review library service needs and set objectives based on statistics, surveys, and user feedback.

GOAL 3:

Fund libraries sufficiently under Section 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes in order to provide the public with current materials and technology, knowledgeable staff, and educational programming.

Actions:

1. Oconto County shall annually appropriate 2.1% of the previous year's county tax levy amount to compensate the public libraries in Oconto County for providing services to County residents. Oconto County shall appropriate additional funding if the 2.1% of the tax levy does not meet the minimum of funding levels under Wisconsin Statutes Section 43. In addition to the 2.1% funding, Oconto County shall allocate additional funding to satisfy payment under Wisconsin Statutes for payment to neighboring County libraries.
2. Oconto County shall pay its annual library appropriation to the public libraries in Oconto County by March 1st of each year.
3. Oconto County shall provide a budget of \$2,000 to the OCLSB to enable them to promote the libraries of the county (i.e., newsletters, flyers, presentations, media, etc.).
4. The OCLSB will present an annual summary of activities of the county libraries to the County Supervisors and other elected officials by June 1 of each year.
5. Libraries and the OCLSB will investigate and develop alternative revenue streams and fund sources while seeking additional grant funding as appropriate.

GOAL 4:

To engage in continuous planning and education regarding the provision of public library services to Oconto County residents.

Actions:

1. The OCLSB shall review this plan as necessary and shall forward to the Oconto County Board any recommended revisions.
2. The Oconto County Board may appoint a Library Planning Committee (LPC) to revise this plan or develop a new county library service plan whenever circumstances warrant during the term of this plan.
3. The local libraries in Oconto County shall, at least annually, provide detailed statistical information to their governing municipalities and Oconto County about services provided to residents of all jurisdictions within the county.
4. The OCLSB shall work with all public libraries in the county to regularly share information with municipal and county officials about library use, programs, and activities provided to county residents.
5. The local libraries will work with NFLS toward ongoing training for staff.

Funding Allocation

The Planning Committee also determined a need to more fairly allocate the funding provided to county libraries. The allocation formula that was created is as follows:

<u>Statistic</u>	<u>Percentage Allocation</u>
Circulation & Electronic Materials	30
Circulation to Non-Residents	15
Program Attendance	20
Users of Public Internet	20
Total Service Population	<u>15</u>
Total	100

The statistics to calculate this formula are taken directly from the reports each library must annually submit to the Nicolet Federal Library System. Each year, the figures will be inputted into the formula and applied to the county funding amount. As a result, the funding amount for each library will be known approximately 6-8 months before the actual budget year. This will allow each library ample time to draft a budget to carry out the goals as established by this plan.

The Committee also recommends that if the above formula results in a reduction in funding, that library will be held harmless. That is, the library would receive at least the same amount as they received the previous year. Any increase due to the hold harmless funding will be taken from the other libraries allocation based on the overall percentage of the total funding.

Conclusion

This Library Services Plan is intended to serve as a game plan to promote and provide the necessary resources for the six county libraries to carry out its mission statement.

The Oconto County Board will need to approve this plan. A draft of the resolution to adopt this plan is included in Appendix B.

Appendix A- Oconto County Planning Committee Members

Oconto County Library Planning Committee Members:

Debra Schroeder, Farnsworth (Oconto) Public Library
Dawn Byars, Gillett Public Library
Kathleen Marsh, Lakes Country Library
Judy Patenaude, Lena Public Library
Susan Mogged, Oconto Falls Library
LoAnn Elbe, Suring Library
Joan Denis, Nicolet Federated Library System Board Representative
Vicki Gooding, Library Services Board-At Large
Al Sleeter, Administration Committee
David Parmentier, County Board Supervisor-Served by a Library
Chris Augustine, County Board Supervisor-Not Served by a Library

In addition, the following individuals provided input into the planning process

Amy Peterson, Librarian – Farnsworth (Oconto) Public Library
Jill Trochta, Librarian - Suring Area Public Library
, Librarian – Gillett Area Library
, Librarian - Farnsworth Public Library
, Librarian - Lakes County Public Library
, Nicolet Federated Library System Representative
Erik Pritzl, County Administrator– Oconto County

RESOLUTION # _____ - 24

TO: The Honorable Chairperson and Members of the Oconto County Board of Supervisors

RE: **ADOPTION OF OCONTO COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES PLAN 2025-2029**

WHEREAS, the Oconto County Library Planning Committee was entrusted to develop the 2025-2028 Oconto County Library Services Plan; and

WHEREAS, this Committee has been meeting for more than a year to create a new plan (attached); and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on _____ on the proposed 2025-2028 plan; and

WHEREAS, this new plan conforms to the requirement imposed by the State of Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the County Library Services Board on _____ recommended approval of the new plan; and

WHEREAS, there is no additional fiscal impact of this plan versus the current plan as the funding allocation provided by the County remains the same level, 2.1% of the previous county tax levy.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Oconto County Board of Supervisors hereby adopt the attached Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029.

Submitted this ____ day of _____

By: ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

,Chairperson