

AGENDA
MONDAY, JULY 29, 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

Anyone who wants to address an agenda item or give a presentation and/or communication at the meeting must contact the Chair at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. Communications or presentation requests received less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting may be heard at the Chair's discretion.

- 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. Discuss Changes for the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029; possible action (Enc.)**
- 6. Confirmation and Discussion of Public Hearings (Enc.)**
- 7. Public Comment**
- 8. Identify Future Agenda Items**
- 9. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)**
- 10. Set Next Meeting Date**
- 11. 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, Media (via email); County Website; Central File, Official Posting Location (Physical Copy)

kp/Date Posted: 07/26/2024

MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 22, 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

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Debra Schroeder, Farnsworth Public Library Rep; Kathleen Marsh, Lakes Country Library Rep; Susan Mogged, Oconto Falls Library Rep; Joan Denis, Nicolet Federated Library Systems Board Rep; LoAnn Elbe, Suring Library Rep; Tom Bitters, County Board Supervisor Rep; Vicki Gooding, Library Services Board Rep.; David Parmentier, County Board Supervisor Rep; Dawn Byars, Gillett Public Library Rep.; Judy Patenaude, Lena Public Library Rep.

COMMITTEE ABSENT: Al Sleeter, Administration Committee Rep

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Sherman, Finance Director; Kim Pytleski, County Clerk; Amy Peterson, Farnsworth Public Library; Jill Trochta, Suring Public Library; Katie Essermann, Lakes Country Library; Rachel Pascoe, Oconto Falls Library; Shannon Stoner, Gillett Public Library; Tracy Vreeke, NFLS; Linda McKenna, Lakes Country Library Trustee; Andrew Stemp, Town of Doty; Mike Beyer, Town of Maple Valley; Patrick Scanlan, Town of Oconto

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 – None.

2.2. Removal of Items – None.

Motion by Elbe/Gooding to approve the agenda. The motion was voted on and carried.

3. Communications

- Email from Dave Van Zeeland, County Board District 29, dated 07/20/2024
- Email from Amy Peterson, Farnsworth Library Director, dated 07/17/2024

4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion by Patenaude/Elbe to approve the 07/01/2024 minutes as corrected (removed Peterson, Essermann, Trochta, Vreeke from list of attendees). The motion was voted on and carried.

5. Discuss Changes for the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029; possible action

Sue Mogged requested clarification of process from committee recommendation through county board vote. Kim Pytleski, County Clerk, explained the approval process and how amendments or referrals back to committee would be handled. Lisa Sherman, Finance Director, commented on the budget process once a plan comes forward. Discussion followed.

Committee discussed the financials of Option C using the base levy. The County Library Funding Estimate (old formula for funding allocations) was reviewed and a spreadsheet of Option C based on 2023 data was reviewed. Committee reviewed the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029 language and made changes (marked up copy on file with the County Clerk's Office).

Verbiage for using the 2024 base levy as the amount of money to be allocated to the libraries was discussed.

Motion by Parmentier/Elbe to accept the verbiage changes made to the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029 plan thus far (no financial language was included). The motion was voted on and carried.

6. Discuss Library Service Plan Presentation

Pytleski has not received any requests for additional presentations since the June 20, 2024 County Board meeting.

7. Confirmation and Discussion of Public Hearings

Committee discussed holding an additional public hearing in the southern part of the county. Proposed new dates of August 15, 2024, at 5 p.m. in the Gillett Community Building and 7 p.m. in southern part of the county, and August 20, 2024, at 5 p.m. at the Lakes Country Library contingent on the availability of Richard Heath, County Administrator, and Al Sleeter, County Board Chair.

8. Public Comment

The following individuals spoke under public comment: Andrew Stumpf, Town of Doty Chairman; Tracy Vreeke, NFLS; Kathleen Marsh; Patrick Scanlan, Town of Oconto.

9. Identify Future Agenda Items

- Discuss Changes for the Oconto County Library Services Plan 2025-2029; possible action with a focus on financial distribution.

10. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)

- Lakes Country Library dedication is Saturday, July 27, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

11. Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Library Planning Committee is July 29, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Mogged/Bitters to adjourn the meeting at 3:16 p.m. The motion was voted on and carried.

kp/Date Posted: 07/26/2024



Oconto County Library Service Plan: 2025-2029

*The mission of the Library Service Plan,
like the Mission of Oconto County,
is to responsibly serve and support the libraries in Oconto County.*

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

Referred by Oconto County Administration Committee
[Month] [Date], 2024

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

Executive Summary

Oconto County is required to develop a five-year plan that addresses how public library services will be provided to residents, including those who live in municipalities not maintaining a public library. This plan, which covers 2025-2029, outlines the method of delivery and level of funding to be provided to its six county libraries.

The County Board authorized a Library Planning Committee through resolution R2023-04-04. (Committee members are listed in Appendix A). This committee developed and recommended this new plan which will guide the County as it provides the necessary support and resources for the six county libraries to accomplish the following goals:

- *Provide all residents with access to all services provided by system member libraries
- *Ensure that officials and the public recognize libraries as a vital and necessary service
- *Fund libraries sufficiently to provide materials, technology, staff, and programming
- *Engage in continuous planning and education regarding provision of library services

Introduction

On **insert date** the Oconto County Library Planning Committee recommended approval of this plan that sets the course for library operations through 2029. The Committee developed this plan, held three public hearings, and presented it to the Oconto County Board of Supervisors for approval. It contains guiding principles with goals and action items articulated to ensure achievement. It details the Committee's analysis of the County library system and sets recommendations for future efforts.

Under Wisconsin law, counties that participate in public library systems are responsible for providing library services to those who reside outside of communities that maintain libraries (unlibrariated). 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 library service will be provided to residents of those municipalities not maintaining a public library. These services must include full access to all member libraries. Under State Law 43.12, neighboring counties and cities may request reimbursement from Oconto County for services provided to "unlibrariated" Oconto County residents.
2. The method and level of funding to be provided through the County in order to implement such services must be described in the plan, including the reimbursement to neighboring counties for services to residents of those municipalities not maintaining a library.

Guiding Principles of Oconto County Libraries

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

Libraries Serving Oconto County

Farnsworth Public Library (Oconto)
Oconto Falls Public Library
Lakes Country Public Library (Lakewood)*

Gillett Public Library
Lena Public Library*
Suring Area Public Library*

**Indicates a Joint Library Agreement is in place*

These libraries were created under *Wisconsin Statutes 43.52 & 43.53* and are governed by municipally-appointed library boards. All public library boards must include the local school district superintendent or an appointed designee. Only one member of the municipal governing body may be appointed, and no more than two members may be nonresidents of the municipality. Board members serve 3-year terms.

Wisconsin Statute Section 43.15(4)(b)(3) 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.”

Funding for Library Services in Oconto County

Public libraries receive most of their funding from property taxes. Oconto County levies a library tax on all county property, except for municipalities that annually provide documentation for exemption per *Wisconsin Statute* Section 43.64:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Town of Abrams | Town of Bagley* | Town of Brazeau** | Town of Breed* |
| Town of Chase | Town of Doty** | Town of Gillett | Town of How* |
| Town of Lakewood* | Town of Lena* | Town of Little River | Town of Little Suamico |
| Town of Maple Valley* | Town of Mountain** | Town of Oconto | Town of Oconto Falls |
| Town of Pensaukee | Town of Riverview** | Town of Spruce** | Town of Stiles |
| Town of Townsend** | Town of Underhill | Village of Lena* | Village of Suring* |
| City of Gillett* | City of Oconto* | City of Oconto Falls* | |

*Municipalities qualifying for exemption per *Wisconsin Statute* Section 43.64 (librariated).

**Municipalities which became exempt after the 2020-2024 Plan was created.

Background

Prior to 2010, the County provided library funding at approximately 1.6% of the previous year's total tax levy. That amount increased to 2.1% in 2010. Funding was based on a formula established in the 2009-2014 plan to address inequity tied to historical funding levels. This formula created a built-in increase if the County tax levy increased to provide a stable source of library funding. During discussions on the 2025-2029 plan, concerns arose about the formula and distribution of funding. Sources of concern were the 2.1% and additional charges the County incurs from neighboring county libraries. Thus it was determined changes were needed.

Plan Foundation and Guiding Principles

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.

- ❖ To maintain the independence of municipal and joint libraries.
- ❖ To uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and meet the needs of ALL residents.
- ❖ To protect each person's right to privacy and freedom from censorship.
- ❖ To guide all patrons toward a love of reading and awareness of books and other library services and materials.
- ❖ To maintain and improve patrons' quality of life by providing resources that enhance and contribute to individual knowledge, enjoyment, and ability to reach life goals.
- ❖ To ensure libraries are integral parts of public education, and an easily accessible, convenient focal point of community life.

Goals and Actions

GOAL 1: Provide all residents access to all library services provided by all member libraries.

1. Continue membership in the Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS). Meet all requirements under Chapter 43, Wisconsin Statutes in order to maintain membership in NFLS.
2. Continue to provide on-line services through memberships in the *Outagamie–Waupaca Library System (OWLSnet) Consortium*.
3. Ensure that Oconto County libraries and libraries in other systems of NFLS member counties are compensated adequately for providing services to nonresidents.
4. Maintain an Oconto County Library Services Board in accordance with Section 43.19, Wisconsin Statutes and this Plan.
5. Charge the Oconto County Library Services Board with the responsibility to coordinate the implementation of countywide library services.

6. Continue and expand in-house delivery of e-services in collaboration with OWLSnet.
7. Continue to provide programming to bring in groups or reach out to communities.
8. Consult the business community to see what services could be provided to meet their needs.
9. Respond to requests to provide services to individuals with special needs.
10. Survey collections annually to remain relevant and current.

GOAL 2: Ensure that officials and the public recognize libraries as a vital, necessary service.

1. In conjunction with each local library, OCLSB will develop a publicity campaign to increase public awareness of the value and impact of libraries.
2. Libraries will inform service areas of events/activities via on-going media communications.
3. Each Library will provide a short presentation annually at a County Board meeting to inform the Board of services provided at their library.
4. Libraries will continue to serve as vibrant community life centers, offering opportunities to gather, learn and grow.
5. Libraries will promote collaboration with school districts and community organizations to best utilize resources available and present programs of interest.
6. Libraries will provide staff with training opportunities that promote skills to improve vital customer services 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 to provide materials, technology, staff, programming.

1. Oconto County shall annually apportion **2.1%** of the previous year's base tax levy amount from non-exempt municipalities to fund its public libraries. The County shall appropriate additional funding if the specified levy does not meet the minimum funding level under *Wisconsin Statutes Section 43*.
2. The County shall also apportion from non-exempt municipalities additional funding to reimburse libraries in neighboring counties for services provided to residents in unlibrariated municipalities as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes.
3. Oconto County shall pay its annual appropriation to the libraries by March 1.

GOAL 4: Engage in continuous planning regarding provision of library services.

1. The OCLSB shall annually review the plan and forward recommended revisions to the Oconto County Board.
2. The Oconto County Board may appoint a Library Planning Committee (LPC) to revise this plan or develop a new county library service plan when circumstances warrant.
3. Local libraries shall annually provide detailed statistical information to their governing municipalities and the County to document services provided.

INSERT Funding Allocation REVISE/REWRITE

Conclusion

This Library Services Plan is intended to ensure that Oconto County provides necessary resources for each of its six libraries to carry out their mission as outlined in this document. The Oconto County Board shall formally review and adopt this plan for it to take effect.

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 |
| Vicki Gooding | Library Services Board-At Large |
| Al Sleeter | Administration Committee |
| David Parmentier | County Board Supervisor-Served by a Library (librariied) |
| Tom Bitters | County Board Supervisor-Not Served by a Library (unlibrariied) |

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

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Amy Peterson, Librarian | Farnsworth (Oconto) Public Library |
| Shannon Stoner, Librarian | Gillett Area Library |
| Katie Essermann, Librarian | Lakes County Public Library |
| April De La Ruelle, Librarian | Lena Public Library |
| Rachel Pascoe, Librarian | Oconto Falls Public Library |
| Jill Trochta, Librarian | Suring Area Public Library |
| Richard Heath, County Administrator | Oconto County |
| Kim Pytleski, County Clerk | Oconto County |
| Lisa Sherman, Finance Director | Oconto County |
| Tracy Vreeke, Director | Nicolet Federated Library System |
| Connie Meyer, TITLE | XXXX |

Questions and Answers About Oconto County Libraries

Q What is the Oconto County Library Service Plan?

A State Statute requires each county to develop a plan that addresses how public library services will be provided to all residents of the county.

Q How long will this Library Service Plan be in effect?

A After the County Board of Supervisors approve the plan, it will be in effect for the years 2025-2029. The plan will be reviewed annually by the Oconto County Library Services Board. Recommendations of any possible changes or revisions that should be made will be forwarded to the Oconto County Board of Supervisors Admin Committee.

Q Who financially supports libraries in Oconto County?

A There are 29 library funding entities in Oconto County, 3 cities, 3 villages, 23 towns.

Currently, 3 cities, 2 villages and 12 towns directly support Oconto County libraries and are exempt from the county library tax.

11 towns and 1 village do not directly support county libraries and will be referred to as the unlibrariated. Per State Statute, they are taxed by the county to reimburse county libraries for library services.

Q How are Oconto County Libraries structured?

A **Lena Public Library, Suring Public Library, and Lakes Country Library** in Lakewood are joint libraries. They are financially supported and governed by the funding entities who entered into an agreement with their particular library.

Members of the Lena Public Library are: Village of Lena, Town of Lena, Town of Spruce.

Members of the Suring Public Library are: Village of Suring, Town of Bagley, Town of Brazeau, Town of Breed, Town of How, Town of Maple Vally, Town of Mountain.

Gillett Public Library, Oconto Falls Public Library, and Farnsworth Public Library in Oconto are municipal libraries. They are governed by and receive funding from the cities of Gillett, Oconto Falls, and Oconto respectively.

Q Who are the unlibrariated funding entities taxed by the county for library services?

A **Town of Abrams, Town of Chase, Town of Gillett, Town of Little River, Town of Little Suamico, Town of Oconto, Town of Oconto Falls, Town of Pensaukee, Town of Stiles, Town of Underhill, Village of Pulaski.**

Q In 2024, what was the total tax paid by the unlibrariated for use of library services?

A The total library tax paid by the unlibrariated in 2024 to county libraries was \$457,035. Additionally, \$157,048.47 was collected and paid to neighboring counties to reimburse them for use by the Oconto County unlibrariated.

Q How is it decided how much funding is given to each library?

A Starting with the 2025 Oconto County Library Services Plan, the disbursement will follow State Statute directives using statistics gathered by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in the Public Library Annual Reports.

Per State Statute 43.12(b) language, Oconto County Library cost of service for each library will be determined by dividing the total operational expenditures of the library during the calendar year for which the number of loans are reported, not including capital expenditures or expenditures of federal funds, by the total number of loans of material made by the public library during the calendar year for which the loans are reported.

(total operational dollars/total number of loans of material in that same calendar year=cost per circulation).

State Statute 43.12(b) goes on to set the minimum amount to be paid to each Oconto County Library. The minimum is 70% of the calculation of, the previously determined cost per circulation multiplied by the number of circulations to residents of the county who are not residents of a municipality that maintains a public library.

(70%(cost per circ X number of circs to County non-librariied)=minimum reimbursement)

Q Why is Oconto County responsible to pay a cross-county bill for reimbursement of library use?

A Per State Statute 43.12, consolidated library systems may request reimbursement of costs incurred when providing library service to residents of neighboring counties that are not represented by a library, the unlibrariied.

Q How is the amount of the cross-county bill figured?

A State Statute uses the same criteria and statistics as outlined above for both local library reimbursement and cross-county library reimbursement.