



# Memorandum

To: Library Board  
From: Bart Olson, City Administrator  
CC:  
Date: July 6, 2017  
Subject: Shared services proposal

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## Summary

Review of a proposal to share front desk and management staff between Parks and Recreation and the Library.

## Background

This item was last discussed, in brief, at the June Library Board meeting and the June 27<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. During those meetings, staff from each entity discussed a meeting held in June between Mayor Golinski, Tim Evans, Russ Walter, and myself where a concept to delay the hiring of a Library Director and share a variety of services between the Library and Parks and Recreation was discussed at a high level. This proposal to consolidate service delivery and share resources with the Library has been generated out of the successful sharing initiatives put forth by Oswego, Montgomery, and Yorkville and a desire to save money for both entities.

The five points of the proposal are as follows:

- 1) Hold off on the Library Director recruitment for the time being and leave the position blank, or hire someone from within and leave the promoted staff's position vacant for the near future.
  - a. Either decision would have a massive impact on the Library budget in the immediate future; likely eliminating the Library's ongoing budget deficits and allowing the Library to have a surplus of funds which could fund additional or extended services.
  - b. Special consideration to the legal responsibilities and requirements of the Director position would need to be researched by the City Attorney and the Library's Attorney for either option. While we feel the Library has wide latitude to enter into intergovernmental agreements to share resources and service delivery (similar to the existing intergovernmental agreement whereby the City provides a variety of administrative support), there may be some formal restrictions on the Library Director title under the state statute.
- 2) Utilize the Parks and Recreation Director and other City staff to provide high level guidance and management to the Library Board and staff, offsetting any issues caused by leaving the Director position vacant or hiring from within.
  - a. It is common throughout the country to have Library services as a function of a Parks and Recreation Department, usually titled as "Leisure Services". While Tim Evans has no Library background, we think his general business, management, and budgeting skills would be a major asset to the Library.
  - b. The legal structure for using Tim as a Library Director in-name-only or using him as a supervisor of the Library Director could be accomplished through an intergovernmental agreement. While the structure of responsibilities of the Library Board and Director are

set by city code and statute, we feel that the ability of the Library Board to direct day-to-day decision making and management to someone who is a City staff member is allowable.

- 3) Move front desk recreation staff up to the Library to work the front desk during normal Library hours.
  - a. This has the benefit of supplementing existing staff during normal business hours, which would allow the Library to offer more services during normal business hours and/or expand hours through rescheduling of front desk Library staff. Recreation staff could be cross trained on Library operations, and Library staff could be cross trained on Parks and Recreation operations. The end result could be that families could check out a few books, sign up for a few Library events, and register for a few Parks and Recreation classes all at the same time in the same location. The in-flux of Parks and Recreation patrons would result in an increase in Library foot traffic.
- 4) Have Parks and Recreation staff utilize all open areas of the old and new Library to schedule Library and Parks and Recreation classes, events, and seminars.
  - a. This would take the programming and management of seminars and events off of the plates of existing Library staff, and could result in an increase in total Library programming. This would give the Parks and Recreation staff more facilities to work with and could result in an increase in Parks and Recreation programming. Both entities would likely benefit from increased revenues from enrollment in the classes.
- 5) Have the Parks and Recreation tri-annual catalog co-branded with the Library and include all Library programming and events.
  - a. This would be an increase of the existing Library materials in the Parks and Recreation catalog. It would be an increase in exposure for the Library and would likely result in an enrollment increase for Library classes.

While we recognize the legal questions left unresolved in items 1 and 2 above, we think the benefits of sharing resources in 3, 4, and 5 outweigh any concerns. Additionally, the potential savings from leaving a management position vacant in the Library can reverse the Library's structural deficit.

### **Recommendation**

This is an informational item. Staff would like feedback on the proposal.