

# **Plan of Service 2021-2025 for Forest County Libraries**

**Approved and adopted on January 12, 2021**

by

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# **Forest County Library Board**

## **Plan of Service 2021-2025**

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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

All people of Forest County shall have access to high quality library services that educate, entertain and empower and are provided through equitable funding that supports our municipal libraries.

### **BACKGROUND - STATUTORY**

Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes establishes the state's policy concerning public libraries and explains the responsibilities for every county, including the following:

- Provide all Wisconsin residents with free access to knowledge, information and diversity of ideas;
- Recognize the critical role played by public, special, school, and academic libraries in providing that access;
- Promote the major educational, economic and cultural assets that are represented in the collective resources at Wisconsin libraries;
- Understand the importance of public libraries to the democratic process;
- Support the effective use of Wisconsin's library resources through interlibrary cooperation, the use of technology and the expertise of a certified librarian.

### **BACKGROUND - HISTORY**

There are three public libraries in Forest County;

1. Crandon Public Library
2. Edith Evans Public Library in Laona/combined with Laona School District Library
3. Wabeno Public Library housed in building on Wisconsin Historical Registrar

Since 1973, the Forest County (hereafter "county") Board of Supervisors has annually appointed a County Library Board to provide general oversight of public library services in the county. The current agreement between the county and the Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) states that the purposes of the Forest County Library Board are:

- Maintenance of a current and useful plan of library services in the county;

- Collaboration between the county and the county's librarians to develop a budget that maintains adequate and equitable funding for public libraries that serve all residents of the entire county;
- Determination of the purpose and distribution of any funds or other benefits which may come to the county to improve and extend library services from other funding sources;
- Collaboration with the county, library directors within the county, and the WVLS staff and Board of Trustees to ensure that the county's libraries achieve and maintain compliance with statutory and system requirements.

In 1961 Forest County began its affiliation with WVLS, a federated library system operating under Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The county is represented on the WVLS Board of Trustees by one person as required by 43.19 (b).

## SERVICES - INVENTORY

An inventory of basic information about public library services in the county, such as collection sizes, circulation, finances and staffing, is provided by each public library in a state-required annual report. A copy is kept at each public library and is also required to be filed with the library's municipality, the County Clerk, WVLS, and the Division for Libraries and Technology (DLT), of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Each public library in the county is an autonomous municipal public library. Each library has a board of trustees that is properly appointed in accordance with 43.54.

Each public library in the county provides library services to all residents of the county, all WVLS counties, and all Wisconsin counties through the intersystem agreements WVLS has with other Wisconsin library systems. A resident borrower is an individual who owns property, pays taxes, or resides in Forest County, even though that individual may maintain a primary residence elsewhere. By agreement of the County Library Board, its Board of Supervisors, and the boards of each public library in the county, a circulation (for purposes of county reimbursement under 43.12) is further defined as:

1. Loan or circulation, by ss 43.17, is a unit of service that involves the checking out of a single item from a library to an individual for use outside of the library for a specific period of time. (Items used in the library do not count as eligible circulations.)
2. Librariated municipality loan-An item from a public library's collection that is checked out to a patron from a municipality of the county that maintains a public library through the use of a tax levy. (City of Crandon, Laona, Wabeno)
3. Non-librariated municipality loan-An item from a public library's collection that is checked out to a patron from a municipality of the county that does not maintain a library

through its own property tax levy. (Alvin, Argonne, Armstrong Creek, Blackwell, Caswell, Town of Crandon, Freedom, Hiles, Lincoln, Nashville, Popple River, Ross)

4. Interlibrary loan- An item received from another library which is checked out to an in-county patron (from both libraried and non-libraried municipalities).
5. An adjacent county loan – An item checked out to a patron from a county that borders Forest County

The eligible in-county and cross-county non-resident circulations will be collected on a daily basis, but reported on an annual basis.

## **SERVICES - GOVERNANCE**

A. All libraries in Forest County are governed by municipal boards of trustees that meet on a regular basis. The composition of Municipal Library Boards of Trustees and their terms of service are in accordance with 43.54. Rural representatives may be appointed in accordance with 43.60. (Note: Board members shall be residents of the municipality, except that not more than two (2) members may be residents of other municipalities.)

B. The Library Board composition, in accordance with 43.54 and 43.60, is as follows:

- Crandon Library Board - 9 members including 5 citizens appointed by the city council, 1 School District Administrator or designee, 1 City Council representative, 2 citizens appointed by the county board.
- Laona Public Library/Edith Evans Community Library – 5 members including 3 citizens, 1 School District Administrator or designee, 1 Town Board representative.
- Wabeno Public Library - 7 members including 6 citizens, 1 School District Administrator or designee, 1 non-voting Town Board representative.

C. The County Library Board recognizes its duties and responsibilities under the Wisconsin Statutes, especially 43.11(3).

## **SERVICES - FUNDING**

A. Each public library in Forest County is supported by funds from:

1. The municipality in which the library is located abides by the statutory requirement to support that library in accordance with 43.52.

2. Forest County reimburses its public libraries for the cost of providing circulation to residents of the county who are not residents of a municipality that supports a public library at least at the 70% level in accordance with Act 150.
3. Adjacent counties within WVLS service as reimbursement for service given by public libraries in Forest County to people from those counties who do not live in municipalities that support a public library at least at the 70% level in accordance with Act 150.
4. Non-WVLS adjacent counties as reimbursement for service given by public libraries to people from those counties who do not live in municipalities that support a public library at least at the 70% level in accordance with Act 420.
5. Occasional grant money from federal, system, or other sources.
6. Gifts and donations.

B. The municipalities in Forest County that support public libraries have elected to exempt themselves from the county tax levy. They are eligible for this exemption because local tax support for their public library is at an equal or higher level than the support provided by the county.

C. This county plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and up-dated every five (5) years.

## GOALS

1. To provide all county residents with open access to services provided by all WVLS members in accordance with 43.11 (3) (c), and services that meet community needs by providing exceptional programs, materials and outreach, that promote literacy, lifelong learning, and civic interaction.

### **County Level Objectives to be carried out by the County Board of Supervisors:**

- Maintain membership in WVLS by complying with statutory requirements for county membership in a library system in accordance with 43.15 (4) (b).
- Appoint one representative to represent this county on the WVLS Board of Trustees.
- Provide financial support **at least** at statutory levels in accordance with 43.15 (4) (b) (2) and 43.12.
- Abide by agreement with WVLS which, among other things, states that libraries in this county provide library service to all residents of this county.
- Appoint a County Library Board to oversee library activity in this county.
- Adopt and maintain a County Plan of Service which will be reviewed annually and updated every five years.

**County Level Objectives to be carried out by the County Library Board:**

- Maintain a current and useful plan of library services within the county and review it every year and revise it every **five** years.
- Hold meetings at least quarterly and invite trustees from all public libraries in the county to attend and participate in discussions of issues being considered by the County Library Board.
- Oversee library services within the county.
- Work with the County Board and its librarians to develop and maintain adequate county funding for public libraries in this and other WVLS counties which serve residents of the county who live in areas which do not maintain a public library.
- Determine the purpose and distribution of any funds or other benefits which may come to the county to improve and extend library services from other funding sources.
- Work with the County Board, county librarians, and the WVLS staff and Board of Trustees to help the county's libraries to achieve and maintain compliance with statutory and system requirements.

**Local Level Objectives to be carried out by Local Municipality:**

- Maintain membership in WVLS by complying with statutory requirements for municipal library membership in a library system in accordance with 43.15 (4) (c).
- Sign agreement with WVLS which, among other things, states that the library will serve all residents of the WVLS area in the same manner as it serves the residents of the municipality which established the library.
- Provide financial support at statutory levels in accordance with 43.15 (4) (b) (2) and 43.12.

**Local Level Objectives to be carried out by Local Libraries:**

- Directors of public libraries in the county will annually provide statistics to the Clerk of the County which will be used to determine the county's financial responsibility to support libraries in this and other WVLS counties for service to residents of the county who live in areas which do not support a public library in accordance with 43.12 (2).
- Directors of public libraries in the county will regularly attend meetings of the County Library Board to provide background and/or input into decision-making, etc.

2. Promote equitable funding for library services provided for county residents and press for increased percentage of reimbursement by Forest County to its libraries for circulations to residents of its non-librariated municipalities, to be more reflective of surrounding counties.

3. Support continuing services provided by Wisconsin Valley Library System in accordance with Wis. Stat. 43.11 (3) (c).
4. Develop many types of literacy in the community, including digital literacy, early literacy, cultural literacy, and life skills.
5. Regularly assess the needs of library users and non-users so we can strengthen services and programs to best meet their needs and expand on services outside of library buildings.
6. Build awareness about the diverse services we provide and promote the impact of our libraries to the community.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

In accordance with Goal #1 of this plan, the Forest County Library Board will review the plan every year and revise it at least every five years.

Copies of the plan, and any revised plans, will be filed with the Forest County Board, the Library Board, each public library in Forest County, WVLS, and Wisconsin's Division for Libraries and Technology, of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

**WISCONSIN VALLEY LIBRARY SERVICE  
MEMBER COUNTY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT  
2013 Revision**

THIS AGREEMENT is by and between the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, a federated library system organized in accordance with Chapter 43 of the WISCONSIN STATUTES, hereinafter called "WVLS," and  
Forest County.

**WHEREAS,** the WVLS has provided system services such as reference, interlibrary loan services between libraries, continuing education opportunities for library personnel, professional consultant services, and other supportive library activities for the improvement of library service to residents in all WVLS participating counties since 1961, and

**WHEREAS,** under the provisions of the Wisconsin library law (WISCONSIN STATUTES, CH. 43) the WVLS has served the counties of Clark, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, and Taylor, and

**WHEREAS,** in accordance with the WISCONSIN STATUTES, Section 43.15(4)(b), this county has:

- 1) adopted and will continue to maintain a plan of library service as per s. 43.11(3) and
- 2) entered into a written agreement with WVLS Board of Trustees (being updated and revised by this document) to participate in the system and its activities and to furnish library services to residents of those areas of the county not maintaining a public library, and

**WHEREAS,** this county has, for many years, actively participated in the WVLS, on behalf of and for the benefit of all of this county's libraries and residents, and

**WHEREAS,** this county's Board of Supervisors has had and will continue to have developmental input into the establishment and implementation of WVLS policies and procedures through appointment of its allocated number of members to represent this county on the WVLS Board of Trustees, and

**WHEREAS,** this county understands and agrees that the Board of Trustees of the WVLS, which represents all WVLS participating counties, shall have control, supervision and authority over the system policies, services, personnel and activities of the WVLS under the authority of the WISCONSIN STATUTES, Chapter 43, and

**WHEREAS,** this county understands and agrees that the annual budget for the WVLS shall be established by the WVLS Board of Trustees, that the budget shall be funded by such portion of state aids available to the system as the Board shall decide, and by annual appropriations from all counties participating in the WVLS, and

**WHEREAS,** this county understands and agrees that each participating county's annual share of financial support of the WVLS has been and will continue to be determined each year on the basis of a formula which includes the following three factors: (1) the population of each county according to the latest annual Department of Administration estimates available at the WVLS Fall budget time (and the percentage such population is of the total system population); (2) the latest equalized full value of all real and personal property of each county (and the percentage such valuation is of the total equalized full value of the system area);



and (3) the latest total corporate and individual income taxes paid from each county to the State of Wisconsin (and the percentage such total is of the total of such taxes paid from the system area). These three percentages factors for each county are averaged and the average percentage is applied to the total amount which the counties annually appropriate for system support, and

**WHEREAS,** in accordance with WVLS policy, this county's Board of Supervisors has and will continue to annually appoint a county library board which shall maintain a currently useful plan of library services within this county: oversee library services within this county; and work with the County Board of Supervisors and the county's librarians to develop and maintain adequate county funding for established public libraries which serve residents of the county who live in areas of the county which do not maintain a public library; to determine the purpose and distribution of any funds or other benefits which may come to the county to improve and extend library services from WVLS or other funding sources; and to work with the County Board of Supervisors, librarians from within the county and the WVLS staff and Board of Trustees to help this county's libraries to achieve and maintain compliance with statutory and system requirements, and

**WHEREAS,** this county has previously indicated, by means of a county resolution, its intent to participate in the WVLS as a member county,

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:**

**1. THIS COUNTY,** by means of this 2013 revision of the WVLS/Member County Participation Agreement:

- a) Renews its intent to participate in the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, and
- b) Agrees to continue to comply with the requirements for county participation in a library system as stated in the WISCONSIN STATUTES, s.43.15(4)(b), and
- c) Agrees to continue to participate in the development of and comply with the requirements of county participation in a library system as promulgated by the WVLS Board of Trustees.

**2. THE WISCONSIN VALLEY LIBRARY SERVICE,** by means of this 2013 revision of the WVLS/Member County Participation Agreement:

- a) Renews its acceptance of this county as a member of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, and
- b) Agrees to continue to provide to this county, as a member in good standing, all WVLS services to which this county and its libraries are entitled by law or by system policy.

This Agreement shall become effective as of 1/1/13 and shall continue in force until it is terminated by either party upon the provision of a six month advance written notice of termination prior to the start of the calendar year.

This Agreement is subject to amendment at any time by mutual agreement of both parties.

All agreements, or parts of agreements, in conflict herewith, are hereby repealed.

SIGNED BY:

Alice A. Sturgis

(President, WVLS Board of Trustees)

09-18-12

(Date)

Maula P. Popowich

(Director, Wisconsin Valley Library Service)

9.18.12

(Date)

Forest County

(County Name)

Paul M. Mellow

(Chair, County Board of Supervisors)

9/11/12

(Date)

Alice A. Sturgis

(Chair, County Library Board)

09-14-12

(Date)