

Study and Recommendations
on
Regional Public Library Districts for Minnesota

880862

Report to
Governor Perpich
and
The 1989 Minnesota Legislature

December 1, 1988



Minnesota Department of Education

Prepared by
Office of Library Development and Services
Division of Management Effectiveness

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on
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I. Introduction

In the Omnibus Education Law, the 1988 Minnesota Legislature called for a study of regional public library districts: "By December 1, 1988, the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Revenue, shall make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature about the organization, financing, and formation of regional public library districts."

A regional public library district would be a new and alternative structure for public library service at the regional level in Minnesota. A regional public library district structure may be a way to build upon the successes of Minnesota's regional public library systems, offering a new mechanism to further strengthen and improve public library services, and to address local funding disparities and promote equity in funding.

Districts can generally best be described as independent, limited purpose governmental units which exist as separate entities and have substantial fiscal and administrative independence from general purpose units of local government. The governing board is generally elected and has the power to set the tax levy. Examples of other types of districts in Minnesota include: school districts, education districts, soil and water conservation districts, sanitary districts, regional development commissions, etc.

Various models for library districts exist in a few other states and in other countries. Library districts have been the fastest growing governmental unit in public library service in the United States. Between 1952 and 1982, the number of library districts in the United States increased from 269 to 639. In 1982, these 639 library districts were located in thirteen states.*

This study has addressed issues relating to the possible reorganization into regional public library districts of the twelve regional public library systems now recognized by the State Board of Education, under provisions of Minnesota Statutes Section 134.34, Subdivision 3, as the agencies for strengthening, improving and promoting public library services in their participating areas. These systems receive Regional Library Basic System Support Grants from state and federal funds under provisions of Minnesota Statutes Section 134.34.

This study does not address the possible formation of intraregional public library districts. Intraregional public library districts would be smaller than regional public library districts and might consist, for example, of a city and surrounding townships or of portions of a county. Staff of the Office of Library Development and Services will work with interested persons in 1989 to study possible intraregional public library districts and relationships with regional public library systems and regional public library districts.

*Shavit, David. The Politics of Public Librarianship. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986, p. 31.

II. Executive Summary

The 1988 Minnesota Legislature asked the Department of Education to develop recommendations on the formation, organization and financing of regional public library districts. These districts would be multi-county political subdivisions of the state, built upon the current regional public library systems, with the power to tax.

Minnesota's twelve regional public library systems have demonstrated effectiveness in extending and improving public library services throughout the state. Systems have encountered funding problems, though, and issues of adequacy and equity of funding have been raised.

Staff of the Office of Library Development and Services (LDS), working with a Study Advisory Committee, researched the issues of regional public library districts by surveying other states, examining laws of other Minnesota special districts, conducting hearings, inviting written comments on models, and discussing issues with the LDS Advisory Council. This report presents principles and recommendations on regional public library districts culminating from the study.

Principles and recommendations can be summarized as follows:

- ° Formation of library taxing districts is a logical next step in public library development in Minnesota, but no legislative action is recommended before 1990.
- ° No one model is workable throughout the state. Scenarios to demonstrate the effects of reorganizing a system into a district need to be developed.
- ° Enabling legislation would allow current regional public library systems to reorganize as regional public library districts, but methods for formation need further study. A transition period is needed to reorganize a system into a district.
- ° The district board should be elected; its size and composition need further study.
- ° District boards would levy a tax at least at a minimum level established in state statutes. Districts meeting federal and state requirements would be eligible to receive state aid. Districts would have the authority to sell bonds, establish capital levies, issue tax anticipation certificates, and borrow money. Assets and liabilities of regional public library systems would transfer to their successor districts.
- ° Additional study is needed of the many complex issues involved. Among issues to be addressed in 1989 are the relationship of districts to separately taxed city libraries, and the possibility of organizing intraregional public library districts.

III. Why a Study of Regional Public Library Districts?

A. Minnesota's Regional Public Library Systems

Regional public library systems are the current structure for state and federal participation in development and delivery of public library services in Minnesota. In 1988, there are twelve regional public library systems serving 77 counties with a total population of 3,938,530, and receiving Regional Library Basic System Support Grants from state and federal funds. (See map of the systems in Appendix A.) On January 1, 1990, all Minnesota counties must provide at least the minimum levels of financial support for public library service specified in Minnesota Statutes Sections 134.33 and 134.34, and must participate in a regional public library system.

Extending public library services to persons not having the service, and organizing public libraries into larger units of service to provide the best possible service at the most reasonable possible cost through economies of scale have been major goals of the Minnesota public library development program for decades. In 1879, the Minnesota Legislature authorized cities to organize public libraries. In 1905, cities were allowed to contract with other cities and counties to provide public library service. In 1919, legislation authorizing the formation of county libraries was enacted. The state's regional library law, with specific provisions for the formation of multicounty regional libraries was passed in 1959. Regional systems formed before that date were formed under Minnesota Statutes Section 471.59, Joint Exercise of Powers.

Flexibility has marked the structure for regional public library systems in Minnesota. While this flexibility is generally judged to be a strength because system organization and services can respond to varying local needs, it also means that each Minnesota regional public library system is different from the others.

There are two general organizational patterns, consolidated and federated, for regional public library systems in Minnesota. Consolidated regional libraries operate all public library services to persons throughout a regional area. A regional board governs the system. Services are delivered through a headquarters library, branch libraries, and usually through bookmobiles. Consolidated regional libraries are organized under the regional library law, Minnesota Statutes Section 134.20, and are based on contracts among participating counties and cities.

Federated regional public library systems provide cooperative services to strengthen the public library services of component city and county libraries. Most federated systems operate direct service to some portion of the population of the service area, usually through bookmobiles. Rural residents also use the services of member city and county libraries. Each member city and county library retains its own library board, staff and budget. Most federated regional public library systems are organized under the regional library law, based on contracts among participating cities

and counties specifying which public library services the system will provide. One federated system, however, is organized under Minnesota Statutes Section 471.59, Joint Exercise of Powers, and another is organized under Minnesota Statutes Section 317 as a nonprofit corporation.

A chart outlining the organization, board size, services and other system characteristics is included as Appendix B.

B. Multiple Funding Units

Minnesota's regional public library systems are supported by federal and state grant funds, and in most instances by local funds from participating counties and cities. Negotiating budgets among many different funding units is a complex, time consuming task for regional public library boards and administrators. Sometimes, a local unit of government is unwilling to provide the financial support requested by the regional library board. This unwillingness often holds down the level of funding from other governmental units in that system. It also results in counties funding regional public library systems at differing rates, with the system board reducing services in those counties not providing full funding and expanding services in counties providing more adequate funding. Questions of equity ultimately arise.

C. Local Funding Disparities

Not only do funding disparities exist among counties in a regional public library system because budget decisions are made by multiple Boards of County Commissioners, but also there are funding disparities between cities that tax separately for public library service and their surrounding counties. Whether measured by Adjusted Assessed Valuation or by a per capita rate, separately taxed cities generally support public library service at a much higher level than their surrounding counties. Residents of the area taxed at a lower level use the city libraries, however, and questions of equity in funding arise. Funding levels of cities and counties separately taxed for public library service in 1988 are detailed in Appendix C.

D. Extension of Access

The Minnesota Legislature, after considering and researching the issues in committee almost every year for more than 10 years, enacted legislation in 1987 requiring all counties to provide local funding for public library service and to participate in a regional public library system by 1990. Implementation of this program, called Extension of Access, affords an opportunity to re-examine regional public library systems and determine whether or not new organizational structures should be encouraged.

E. County Concerns

For several years, the Association of Minnesota Counties in its legislative platform has called for a study of county functions,

including library services, to determine whether or not some current functions of counties should be provided by another unit of government. Boards of County Commissioners, particularly in some parts of Minnesota outside the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, have expressed concern about the costs of providing public library services. Some County Commissioners have expressed the view that provision of public library service should no longer be a county responsibility. Some have suggested that the service be divided up from the current 12 regional public library systems into the 435 school districts. A few have suggested that special districts be formed for public library service.

F. County Library and City Library Concerns

A need has been identified to study the possibility of library districts within regional public library systems or regional public library districts. These intraregional library districts might consist of a portion of a county, or of a city and surrounding townships. Currently, county commissioners from geographic areas not part of a county library service area but instead from a city served by a city library have a voice in and a vote upon budget decisions for the county library. In some counties, for example, one or more cities tax separately for and operate a public library and the county operates a public library for the remainder of the county. Yet county commissioners from those cities have a voice in and a vote on the county library budget. A library district organized to include all of a county except those cities could alleviate this concern.

City libraries, particularly those surrounded by heavily populated areas, report increasing use by nonresidents. In some cities, more than half of the library's use is by nonresidents. Residents of cities usually pay higher taxes for support of the library than persons who are taxed for library service under the county levy. A library district consisting of a city and surrounding townships would equalize the tax levy.

Recognizing these concerns, staff of the Office of Library Development and Services will study intraregional public library districts in 1989.

IV. Study Methodology

A. Survey of Other States

To identify use of multicounty library districts in other states, a questionnaire was distributed to chief officers of state library agencies at their spring meeting, April, 1988. Five states were identified as having library districts which were multicounty, separate governmental units with the power to tax for library service. They are Colorado, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana and Washington. When the state statutes of these five states were examined, only three states - Kentucky, Missouri, and Washington - had district statutes specific to multicounty library service.

B. Telephone Interviews With Other States

Contact persons at the state library agencies of the three states were interviewed by phone. They were asked questions concerning the formation, organization, funding, implications and impact of multicounty library districts. Although the statutes of Kentucky provide for multicounty library districts, none have formed. A chart of the responses to the questions of the contact persons in Missouri and Washington was given to the Study Committee to use in their work.

C. Laws of Other Minnesota Special Districts

The Minnesota Legislature over the years has enacted laws creating or enabling special districts to perform a variety of functions. As a part of this study on regional public library districts, laws for other special districts were examined, with particular attention given to provisions for formation, organization, and finance of special districts. Statutes were examined for education districts (Minnesota Statutes Sections 122.91 through 122.96), regional development commissions (Minnesota Statutes Section 462.381 through 462.398), soil and water conservation districts (Minnesota Statutes Sections 40.04 through 40.14), Metropolitan Council and related metropolitan districts (Minnesota Statutes Section 473), hospital districts (Minnesota Statutes Sections 447.31 through 447.50), school districts (Minnesota Statutes Chapters 122 and 123) and intermediate school districts (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 136D).

D. Regional Public Library District Study Advisory Committee

The Director of the Office of Library Development and Services appointed a Regional Public Library District Study Advisory Committee of seven members. Three members are administrators of regional public library systems, two members are or have been board members of regional public library systems and of city libraries, one member is director of a county library, and one member is a staff member of the Department of Revenue. Committee members are listed in Appendix G.

The Advisory Committee was charged to:

1. Review and advise LDS staff on the plan and methodology for the study.
2. Review current regional public library system needs and advise LDS staff whether or not the needs warrant a structural change to regional public library districts.
3. Receive ideas and suggestions from all interested persons.
4. Advise LDS staff on alternative models for regional public library districts and on successive drafts of the study report.
5. Participate in regional hearings and receive comments on alternative models and drafts of the study report.
6. Advise LDS staff on final recommendations to be made to the LDS Advisory Council, Minnesota Department of Education top management, the State Board of Education, the Governor and the Legislature.

Four meetings of the committee were held between August 29 and November 14. Committee members devoted twenty hours to committee meetings, additional hours for participation in hearings, and time between meetings and hearings for independent study.

Committee members addressed problems and needs of the current regional public library system structure. Alternative models of regional public library districts (Appendix D) were developed for use at hearings around the state. Committee members studied all pertinent information including written materials, testimony given at regional hearings, and written information submitted following regional hearings. The committee developed a set of principles and recommendations which was discussed by the Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators and by the Advisory Council to the Office of Library Development and Services. Finally, the committee refined its principles and recommendations and developed statements of rationale for each.

E. Department of Revenue Involvement

The statute calling for development of recommendations on the formation, organization and financing of regional public library districts specified that the Department of Revenue was to be involved. This involvement occurred through appointment by the Commissioner of Revenue to the Study Advisory Committee of the Specialist in Local Government Levy Limits and Aid Determination in the Local Government Aids Section of the Property Tax Division.

F. Hearings

Seven hearings on regional public library districts were held around the state. Hearings were convened by an LDS staff member and by one or more members of the Regional Public Library District Study Advisory Committee. At each hearing, a background paper on the study and three alternative models for districts (Appendix D) were distributed.

The first hearing was held in Rochester on October 7 during the annual conference of the Minnesota Library Association. Subsequent hearings were held in St. Paul (October 10), Marshall (October 11), St. Cloud (October 12), Detroit Lakes (October 12), Virginia (October 13), and Owatonna (October 14). A total of 175 persons participated in the hearings, including county commissioners, city elected and appointed officials, library board members, library staff members, and other interested persons.

Participants in hearings had opportunities to present formal statements, to ask questions, and to informally discuss regional public library district concepts. A summary of reactions and comments from the hearings is provided in Appendix E.

At the hearings and through other means, persons were invited to submit written statements on regional public library districts. Twenty-two statements were received, including statements from county boards of commissioners; city councils; regional, county and city library boards; administrators of regional, county and city libraries; and other interested persons. These statements were studied by the Study Advisory Committee and by LDS staff.

G. LDS Advisory Council

At its meeting on November 4, the Advisory Council to the Office of Library Development and Services discussed the regional public library district study and the principles and recommendations developed by the Study Advisory Committee. The Council voted that recommendations developed to date on the formation, organization and financing of districts be reported to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1 as required by statute. Recognizing the complexity of the issues, the Council recommended that the study continue. The Council also recommended that the Minnesota Legislature appropriate \$10,000 to support costs of the study, including reimbursement of expenses for Study Advisory Committee members and possible consultant assistance.

H. Intraregional Public Library Districts

From the beginning, LDS staff recognized the need to study intraregional public library districts in addition to regional public library districts. Comments in hearings reaffirmed this need. The Study Advisory Committee also recognized the need. In 1989, intraregional public library districts and aspects of regional public library districts will be studied.

V. Principles, Recommendations and Rationale

As the study of regional public library districts began, a list of issues to be addressed (Appendix F) was identified in the study plan. During the study process, additional issues were identified. After extensive study and discussion, principles have been stated and recommendations are made that can lead to the development of regional public library districts in Minnesota.

A. General Principles, Recommendations and Rationale

1. Some form of library taxing district is a logical next step in public library development in Minnesota.

Regional public library systems in Minnesota have demonstrated effectiveness in strengthening and improving public library services throughout the state. Systems have extended public library service to people who have not had service before, and have strengthened the services of existing libraries. Use of public library services has reached an all time high. Despite these successes, systems have encountered difficulties in securing necessary funding. Dealing with multiple governmental units for funds, and determining the "fair-share" of a particular unit in funding and services is difficult and time consuming. Amounts of funds provided often are not adequate to meet needs. A regional public library district would have the advantages of the current systems in planning and operating public library services in a regional area, and would also resolve at least some of the current problems of funding disparities and difficulties of dealing with multiple funding units.

2. We are not prepared to say that there is one model for a regional public library district that will work everywhere in the state.

There are two basic organizational structures of current regional public library systems, consolidated and federated, and because state law allows flexibility, each of the 12 systems is different from all others. These differences make possible reorganization of systems into districts very complex. The six consolidated regional public library systems are more ready than the six federated regional public library systems to reorganize as regional public library districts, but no single model can be identified now that would be workable and desirable for all twelve regional areas.

3. Develop alternative scenarios, based on documentation of existing system governance, funding, services, and relationships to local government; that will show effects of reorganizing systems into districts.

The differences among regional public library systems needs to be documented. Comments at hearings re-emphasized the

differences among the systems and showed that there is often a lack of understanding of regional public library systems. For there to be widespread understanding of regional public library districts and their effects, broader understanding of current systems is needed, along with more detailed information on changes that would result if systems were reorganized as districts. The documentation process has begun with a chart of system characteristics (Appendix B).

4. No Legislative action is recommended before 1990.

Any reorganization of regional public library systems into regional public library districts should proceed from careful planning. More time is needed for study, and more time is needed for the district concept to be discussed and fully understood by public library board members, library staff, and local government officials.

5. Intraregional public library districts need to be studied before final recommendations can be made on regional public library districts.

Problems were identified by staff, the Regional Public Library District Study Committee, and participants in the seven hearings that might be addressed by the formation of library districts smaller than a regional public library district. The feasibility and desirability of forming intraregional public library districts, and the relationship of these districts to regional public library districts, needs to be studied. Staff of the Office of Library Development and Services will be studying the issue in 1989.

6. The impact of regional public library districts on multi-county multi-type library systems needs to be studied.

Under provisions of Minnesota Statutes Section 134.351, Subdivision 4, governing board members for the seven multi-county multi-type library systems are drawn from the governing boards of the twelve regional public library systems. Any change in the composition of governing boards for public library service at the regional level would also affect governance of multi-type systems; statutory change would be required.

B. Formation of Regional Public Library Districts - Principles, Recommendations and Rationale

1. The Minnesota Legislature would enact enabling legislation allowing the formation of regional public library districts.

There should be several years experience with regional public library districts before there is any consideration of making them mandatory across the state.

2. A regional public library district would be based on the geographic boundaries of a current regional public library system.

To preserve the improvements in public library service achieved during the past thirty years as regional public library systems were developed, a regional public library district should be based on the boundaries of a current regional public library system. No one currently served by a regional public library system should lose library service in the formation of a regional public library district. Means for changing geographic boundaries, if appropriate, should be available. Merger of districts once established should be possible.

3. There are various ways that a regional public library district might be formed, including: (a) by a majority of the counties and cities funding public service representing a majority of the population to be served; (b) by public referendum in the area to be included in the district; (c) by action of the Minnesota Legislature; and (d) by a combination of some of the methods above.

To determine the most appropriate method or methods for formation of regional public library districts, additional study is needed. The methods listed above have been identified, and the advantages and disadvantages of each method need to be enumerated and evaluated. The relationship of regional public library districts to cities currently taxing separately for public library services also needs more study.

4. There should be a transition period for the reorganization of a regional public library system into a regional public library district.

A regional public library district should build on the strengths of a regional public library system. Abrupt change could cause problems. At the same time, unforeseen problems may arise which will need to be solved. During a transition period, the existing regional public library system contract could remain in effect until the district was finally formed, and the current regional public library system board could continue to serve.

C. Organization of Regional Public Library Districts - Principles, Recommendations and Rationale

1. Electing the district board appears to be most desirable.

There is a long tradition that those who levy taxes should be answerable to the voters through election to office.

2. The size and composition of regional public library district boards needs extensive additional study.

Boards of current regional public library systems range in size from nine members to thirty-four members. During the study, consideration has been given to having nine members on a regional public library district board, with six members elected from election districts and three members elected at-large. As study continues, consideration will be given to such alternatives as continuing the size of current boards, and having boards larger or smaller than nine members.

D. Finance of Regional Public Library Districts - Principles, Recommendations and Rationale

1. State statutes would establish a mandatory minimum tax which a public library district would levy over the geographic area of the district.

Since 1957, when state funds were first appropriated for grants for public library development, cities and counties participating in the statewide library development program and in regional public library systems have been required to provide local funding at least at the minimum levels established in state statutes.

2. The district board could pay to a city or a county operating public library service the dollar amount that the district tax rate yielded on that city or county to be used for the operation of public library service. A district board could contract with a city or county for provision of direct public library service by the district in lieu of funding, or it could contract to provide a combination of services and funding. Any city currently taxing separately from its county for public library service could continue to do so; any county currently taxing for and operating a county library could continue to do so.

As study continues, additional examination is needed of relationships of city and county libraries to districts, including issues relating to delivery of service and funding.

3. Districts meeting requirements established in federal and state laws and rules would be eligible to receive state aid.

Since 1957 when federal and state funds first became available for grants to improve public library service, the regional public library system structure has been the base for public library development and the regional systems have been eligible for aid payments made from state and federal funds. When a regional public library system is reorganized as a regional public library district, the district should become eligible to receive these aid funds.

4. Districts could, without referendum, sell bonds or establish a separate capital levy to create a capital improvement fund.

Regional public library districts will need capital funding for purchase of buildings, vehicles, and equipment.

5. Districts may buy or rent library buildings from cities or counties.

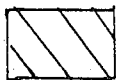
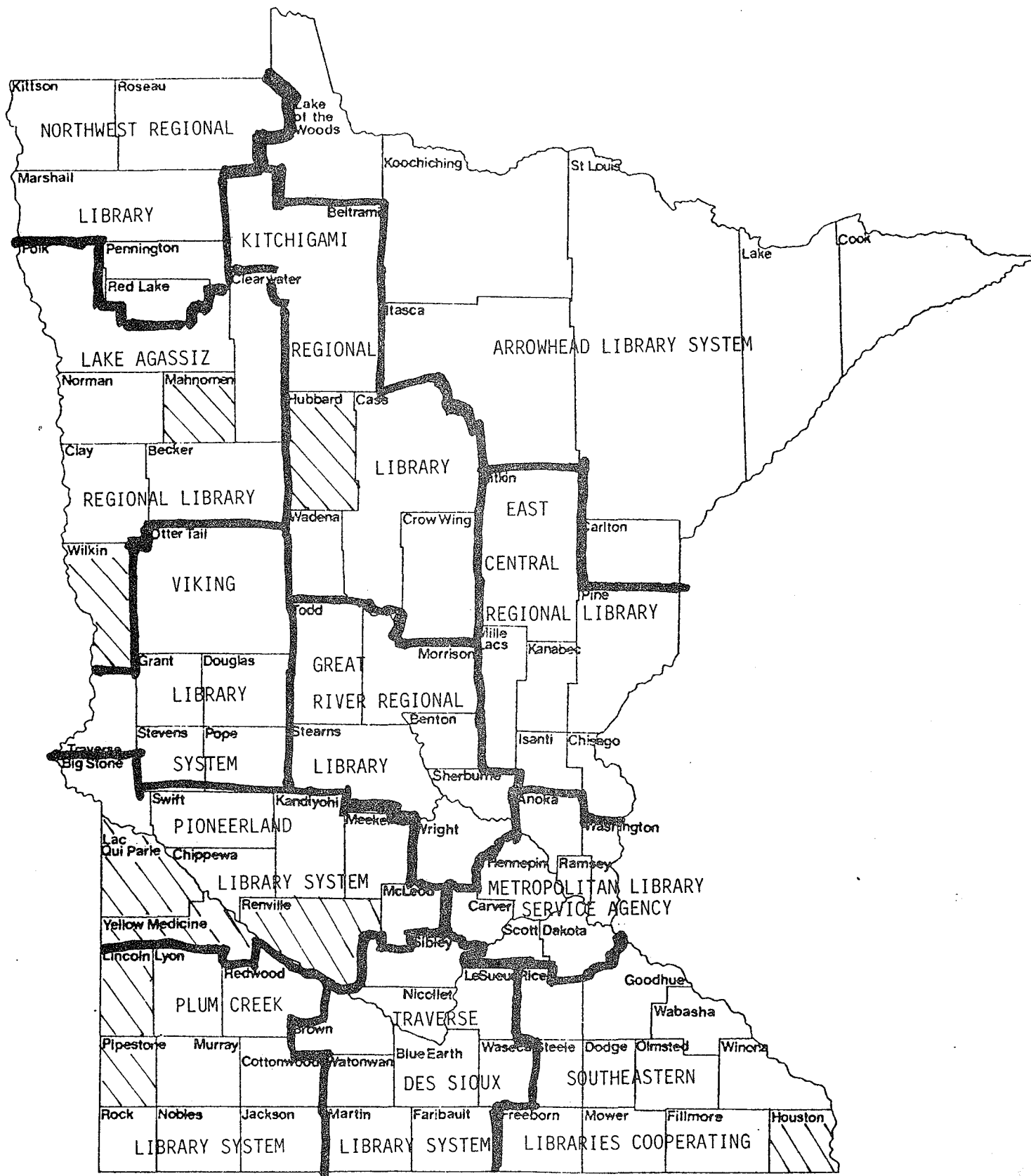
Almost all public library buildings in Minnesota are owned by cities and counties. Provision should be made for a regional public library district board to purchase or rent a library building where this is desirable and agreeable to the parties.

6. Districts could issue tax anticipation certificates and borrow money.

Regional public library districts will need mechanisms to adjust cash flow for operating expense, similar to provisions already in place for school boards.

7. Regional public library system assets and liabilities would become assets and liabilities of the regional public library district.

Regional public library systems have acquired assets, using local, state and federal funds, for providing public library service. When a system is reorganized as a district, the district is responsible for providing public library service and should have the assets of the system on which to build. Districts should also bear the liabilities of the regional public library system from which it was formed. Regional public library system assets do not include the assets of county and city libraries.



Counties not taxing for public library service nor participating in regional public library systems in FY 89

Appendix B
Characteristics and Services of Regional Public Library Systems

REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM:	Consolidated						Federated					
	East Central	Great River	Kitchi- gami	Lake Agassiz	North west	Pioneer- land	Arrow- head	MELSA	Plum Creek	SELCO	Traverse des Sioux	Viking
TOTAL POPULATION IN REGION	112,560	267,767	104,347	127,019	53,002	130,036	333,704	1,985,860	106,138	388,678	213,522	115,468
Pop. served directly by P.L. System	112,560	267,767	104,347	127,019	53,002	130,036	133,318	0	19,135	152,560	0	52,792
Pop. served by Other Public Libraries	0	0	0	0	0	0	200,386	1,985,860	87,002	239,792	213,522	62,676
FUNDING SOURCES FOR SYSTEM OPERATIONS:												
From Cities:												
Number		2	8	4	3	14						
% of Budget		(29%)	(15%)	(38%)	(15%)	(30%)						
From Counties												
Number	6	6	4	5	5	6	7		6	8		6
% of Budget	(52%)	(57%)	(41%)	(30%)	(36%)	(41%)	(26%)		(30%)	(15%)		(58%)
From State/Federal-%	(39%)	(20%)	(38%)	(21%)	(42%)	(23%)	(70%)	(85%)	(67%)	(61%)	(73%)	(42%)
Number of Board Members	18	25	16	21	15	34	24	9	9	30	9	13
City Appointees												
Number	0	6+	8+	8+	3+	18+	15*	1+ 1*	7*	30*	0	10*
Total Population Represented		49,816	30,832	49,641	9,105	53,256	200,386	640,191	71,583	388,678		80,290
Pop. per Member		8,302	3,854	6,205	3,035	2,958	13,359	320,095	10,226	12,955		8,029
Range of Pop. Represented		(7,250- 8,513)	(191- 11,489)	(3,909- 29,998)	3,035	(761- 15,895)	(400- 92,811)	(269,240- 370,460)	(761- 21,259)	(586- 57,890)		(1,358- 17,312)
County Appointees												
Number	18+	19+	8+	13+	12+	16+	9+	7+	2*	0	2+ 7*	3*
Total Population Represented	112,560	217,951	73,515	79,378	43,897	76,780	133,318	1,345,777	35,530		213,522	35,178
Pop. per Member	6,253	11,471	9,189	5,952	3,658	4,798	14,813	192,253	17,765		23,724	11,726
Range of Pop. Represented	(12,161- 25,094)	(20,542- 58,681)	(9,229- 29,696)	(8,761- 22,230)	(5,471- 13,027)	(4,388- 20,868)	(2,594- 63,470)	(37,046- 570,460)	(13,690- 21,840)		(12,361- 52,314)	(5,813- 20,231)

+Appointed by City Councils or County Commissioners

*Appointed by local library boards

Regional Public Library System	Consolidated						Federated					
	East Central	Great River	Kitchi- gami	Lake Agassiz	North- west	Pioneer- land	Arrow- head	MELSA	Plum Creek	SELCO	Traverse des Sioux	Viking
System Staff-Admin./Technical	11.1	21.6	10.2	8.8	4.5	5.85	18.9	4.5	2.0	9.7	10.4	5.4
System Staff-Public Services	16.5	51.1	20.7	32.3	10.0	39.3	6.2			4.0		5.1
System Services direct to Public:												
•Libraries-Number	13	24	8	12	7	28						
•Bookmobiles-Number	1		1	2	1	1	2		C	2		2
•Mail-A-Book							X			X		X
Services to Branch/Member Libraries:												
•Reader's Advisory Staff in Libraries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Reference Staff in Libraries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Circulation Staff in Libraries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Acquisitions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Cataloging	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Processing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Provide Regionwide Catalog	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Automated Circulation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Back-up Reference	0	0	0	0	0	0	C	0	C	0	0	C
•Provide Children's Story Hours	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Coordinate Children's Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Rotating Collections of Special Materials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Delivery Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	C-0	C	C	C	0
•Consulting Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Continuing Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
•Public Relations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

0 = for all Libraries 0 = for some libraries 0 = Does not provide C = by contract

Appendix C

Funding Levels of Local Units of Government Participating in Regional Public Library Systems: 1988

System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
<u>Arrowhead Library System</u>			
Carlton Co.	\$ 36,034	\$ 2.18	0.48
Carlton	9,709	11.26	3.88
Cloquet	209,910	18.84	4.18
Moose Lake	18,608	13.22	4.38
Cook Co.	35,474	12.66	0.79
Grand Marais	35,910	27.86	5.47
Itasca Co.	51,683	2.67	0.51
Bovey	33,975	41.79	25.94
Calumet	14,179	30.23	21.24
Coleraine	39,500	35.39	11.80
Grand Rapids	168,353	21.22	3.47
Keewatin	20,519	14.19	11.43
Marble	12,625	16.68	11.33
Koochiching Co.	27,902	2.33	0.79
International Falls	170,104	30.32	5.96
Lake Co.	37,035	6.08	1.11
Silver Bay	70,501	24.17	12.28
Two Harbors	61,800	15.30	5.61
Lake of the Woods Co.	8,803	3.39	0.52
Baudette	20,354	17.40	5.12
St. Louis Co.	185,400	2.92	0.62
Aurora	34,100	12.77	7.81
Babbitt	44,900	18.44	11.19
Buhl	48,467	37.75	29.56
Chisholm	117,081	19.74	9.25
Cook	6,200	7.75	3.27
Duluth	2,073,500	22.34	7.38
Ely	82,909	17.20	9.67
Eveleth	50,748	10.07	4.52
Gilbert	56,200	20.65	12.25
Hibbing	413,247	19.50	6.99

System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
Hoyt Lakes	55,257	17.34	4.79
Kinney	9,552	20.03	12.86
Mc Kinley	3,797	16.51	14.04
Mountain Iron	52,239	12.64	3.67
Virginia	364,953	33.01	10.82

East Central Regional Library

Aitkin Co.	58,000	4.33	0.56
Chisago Co.	86,666	3.45	0.55
Branch *	275		
Lindstrom *	302		
North Branch *	275		
Rush City *	1,016		
Isanti Co.	73,949	3.13	0.65
Kanabec Co.	38,372	3.16	0.74
Mille Lacs Co.	59,176	3.21	0.74
Pine Co.	69,495	3.50	0.64
Hinckley *	4,253		
Pine City *	5,500		
Sandstone *	2,622		

Great River Regional Library

Benton Co.	139,836	6.81	1.23
Morrison Co.	155,594	7.05	1.09
Little Falls	86,204	11.89	3.18
Sherburne Co.	195,027	7.65	0.55
Stearns Co.	440,695	6.40	1.27
St. Cloud	495,500	11.64	1.80
Todd Co.	121,136	5.42	1.47
Wright Co.	412,123	7.02	0.93

Kitchigami Regional Library

Beltrami Co.	70,000	3.61	0.82
Bemidji	71,180	6.50	1.48
Blackduck	4,016	6.15	1.84
Cass Co.	78,486	4.36	0.47
Cass Lake	4,900	4.90	2.54
Longville	6,600	34.55	3.36
Pine River	6,822	7.74	1.71

System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
Walker	10,793	11.13	1.76
Crow Wing Co.	130,000	4.83	0.45
Brainerd	65,074	5.66	1.21
Wadena Co.	20,281	2.20	0.66
Wadena	27,153	5.78	1.68

Lake Agassiz Regional Library

Becker Co.	80,709	3.63	0.67
Detroit Lakes	75,777	10.66	2.07
Clay Co.	114,729	5.94	0.97
Moorhead	334,668	11.16	2.83
Clearwater Co.	23,499	2.68	0.62
Norman Co.	59,000	6.29	0.90
Polk Co.	147,125	8.32	1.02
Crookston	97,196	11.27	3.31
Wilkin Co.	0		
Breckenridge	40,713	10.42	3.73

Metropolitan Library Service Agency

Anoka Co.	2,658,780	16.58	2.04
Anoka	243,100	15.55	2.13
Columbia Heights	344,375	17.19	2.60
Carver Co.	360,305	9.73	1.20
Dakota Co.	2,769,406	16.01	1.33
South St. Paul	274,801	12.94	1.93
Hennepin Co.	15,786,695	27.67	2.18
Minneapolis	11,322,346	30.52	3.31
Ramsey Co.	3,186,812	16.81	1.62
St. Paul	5,560,481	20.58	2.82
Scott Co.	518,572	11.84	1.26
Washington Co.	1,760,900	19.47	1.91
Bayport	59,000	20.12	2.06
Forest Lake	91,518	19.91	2.18
Newport	51,500	15.50	1.56
Stillwater	340,686	27.72	3.21

Northwest Regional Library

Kittson Co.	29,886	4.48	0.50
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System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
Hallock *	2,000		
Marshall Co.	41,947	3.22	0.52
Pennington Co.	20,095	3.27	0.85
Thief River Falls	56,400	6.19	1.96
Red Lake Co.	26,783	4.90	1.34
Roseau Co.	36,682	2.92	0.52
Greenbush *	2,156		

Pioneerland Library System

Big Stone Co.	22,089	5.03	0.79
Graceville	7,459	9.56	5.25
Ortonville	23,925	9.39	4.01
Chippewa Co.	147,454	10.42	2.22
Montevideo *	10,010		
Kandiyohi Co.	110,168	5.28	0.91
Willmar	83,888	5.28	1.07
Lac Qui Parle Co.			
Dawson	30,793	16.20	5.14
Madison	21,724	9.82	3.71
Mc Leod Co.	66,489	4.15	0.89
Glencoe	30,757	7.00	1.50
Hutchinson	59,835	6.47	1.02
Meeker Co.	63,024	4.29	0.80
Litchfield	47,788	8.09	1.75
Renville Co.	0		
Bird Island	9,704	7.07	3.10
Hector	12,364	9.88	3.17
Renville	9,526	6.38	2.43
Swift Co.	34,560	5.19	0.88
Appleton	11,217	6.09	2.62
Benson	27,869	7.62	3.18
Kerkhoven	3,988	5.24	2.05

Plum Creek Library System

Cottonwood Co.	0		
Mountain Lake	40,685	17.87	7.44
Westbrook	7,360	7.53	2.88
Windom	51,305	11.00	3.19
Jackson Co.	80,273	8.11	1.11
Jackson	38,719	10.20	3.46

System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
Lincoln Co.	0		
Ivanhoe	4,300	5.65	2.15
Lyon Co.	112,827	11.17	1.51
Marshall	202,283	18.12	3.48
Murray Co.	27,849	3.58	0.56
Fulda	19,000	14.53	6.30
Slayton	33,271	13.75	4.95
Nobles Co.	230,000	10.53	2.23
Pipestone Co.	0		
Edgerton	4,950	4.41	1.66
Redwood Co.	37,302	3.28	0.47
Morgan	8,696	8.92	3.47
Redwood Falls	70,122	13.46	3.34
Wabasso	8,600	11.54	4.38
Rock Co.	51,730	8.43	1.46
Luverne	52,448	11.48	3.80
<u>Southeastern Libraries Cooperating</u>			
Dodge Co.	32,600	3.48	0.68
Dodge Center	15,263	8.40	2.25
Kasson	28,306	10.01	2.63
West Concord	9,312	12.22	4.49
Fillmore Co.	23,950	1.95	0.46
Chatfield	5,589	2.72	0.65
Harmony	14,000	12.36	4.60
Lanesboro	5,000	5.42	2.15
Mabel	5,143	5.97	2.57
Preston	19,075	12.91	4.22
Rushford	23,070	15.61	3.72
Spring Valley	32,000	12.23	4.22
Freeborn Co.	68,600	4.00	0.83
Albert Lea	307,725	16.04	3.89
Goodhue Co.	93,486	5.75	0.94
Cannon Falls	48,478	18.27	2.66
Kenyon	23,451	15.34	3.81
Pine Island	42,500	21.40	5.06
Red Wing	407,776	29.69	1.84
Zumbrota	54,616	25.65	4.70
Houston Co.	0		
Caledonia	10,500	3.90	1.29
Hokah	3,914	5.71	2.47
La Crescent	6,225	1.69	0.40

System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
Mower Co.	130,176	9.31	1.94
Adams	2,424	3.04	1.06
Austin	298,240	12.96	2.86
Brownsdale	3,289	4.76	1.62
Grand Meadow	7,000	7.25	2.86
Le Roy	5,615	6.04	1.92
Olmsted Co.	386,604	13.20	2.61
Rochester	1,230,884	21.26	2.50
Stewartville	58,752	14.97	3.84
Rice Co.	140,185	8.10	1.46
Faribault	183,276	11.28	2.55
Northfield	245,474	19.54	4.25
Steele Co.	70,467	7.24	1.36
Blooming Prairie	25,000	12.70	3.17
Owatonna	378,856	20.33	4.14
Wabasha Co.	39,000	3.71	0.76
Lake City	27,662	6.14	1.27
Plainview	23,966	9.92	2.28
Wabasha	37,856	15.96	3.69
Winona Co.	81,026	4.27	0.97
St. Charles	31,806	14.56	3.26
Winona	460,511	18.37	3.88
<u>Traverse des Sioux Library System</u>			
Blue Earth Co.	231,212	9.77	1.67
Mankato	287,597	10.04	1.71
Brown Co.	0		
Comfrey	2,252	4.11	1.82
Hanska	2,342	5.46	2.03
New Ulm	310,173	22.55	5.25
Sleepy Eye	40,525	11.32	3.11
Springfield	24,000	10.42	3.00
Faribault Co.	120,560	6.12	1.10
Blue Earth *	49,829		
Elmore *	4,130		
Wells *	14,400		
Winnebago *	28,525		
Le Sueur Co.	167,748	7.16	1.45
Martin Co.	301,300	12.20	1.89
Fairmont *	44,781		
Nicollet Co.	75,057	8.61	1.44
North Mankato	79,154	8.66	1.56

System County City	Dollar Amount Budgeted 1988	Per Capita (1980 Census)	Equivalent Mill Rate on 1987, Payable 1988 Adjusted Assessed Valuation
St. Peter	78,602	8.68	2.87
Sibley Co.	131,661	8.52	1.75
Waseca Co.	120,667	11.80	2.03
Waseca	104,175	12.67	2.76
Watsonwan Co.	242,089	19.58	3.30
<u>Viking Library System</u>			
Douglas Co.	103,525	5.12	0.84
Alexandria	83,725	11.00	1.64
Grant Co.	22,000	3.78	0.51
Elbow Lake	9,314	6.86	2.17
Otter Tail Co.	116,342	3.37	0.54
Fergus Falls	235,800	18.84	3.83
New York Mills	10,410	10.71	3.31
Perham	21,000	10.07	2.01
Pope Co.	33,202	3.63	0.63
Glenwood	40,597	16.09	4.34
Stevens Co.	21,123	4.16	0.59
Hancock	8,182	9.33	5.09
Morris	107,000	19.94	7.06
Traverse Co.	9,616	3.58	0.31
Browns Valley	11,605	13.08	7.29
Wheaton	14,034	7.13	2.61

* Also included in county levy



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BACKGROUND PAPER ON REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT STUDY

What is a Regional Public Library District?

A regional public library district would be a new way to organize public library service at the regional level in Minnesota. Various models for library districts exist in a few other states and in other countries. Districts can generally best be described as independent, limited purpose governmental units which exist as separate entities and have substantial fiscal and administrative independence from general purpose units of local government. The governing board is generally elected and has the power to set the tax levy. Examples of other types of districts in Minnesota include: school districts, education districts, soil and water conservation districts, sanitary districts, regional development commissions, etc.

Why is there a study of regional public library districts at this time?

The 1988 Omnibus Education Law called for a study of regional public library districts as follows: "By December 1, 1988, the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Revenue, shall make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature about the organization, financing, and formation of regional public library districts."

What prompted the Legislature to call for a study?

The idea of regional public library districts with the power to tax has been discussed periodically by Minnesota public library trustees and library personnel for many years. Currently, Minnesota's regional public library systems are based on contracts among counties and cities. Interest in regional public library districts as an alternative organizational structure has grown recently due to at least three developments:

1. In 1987, The Minnesota Legislature passed legislation requiring all 87 Minnesota counties to provide funding for public library services and to participate in regional public library systems by 1990;
2. Local levies for public library service in 1988 were, for the first time, not considered special levies and were subject to overall county and city levy limits. Although this situation was reversed for 1989 and subsequent years, issues of local support for public library service remain; and,

9/28/88

3. Funding for regional public library systems in Minnesota is complex, time-consuming and requires action by many local governmental units. The process of securing equitable local funding consumes a great amount of time for regional public library system board members, administrators, and staff.

What would be the responsibilities of Regional Public Library Districts?

Responsibilities of regional public library districts could include:

- management or provision of technical assistance for all public library service outlets which provide circulation of library materials, reference and information services, reader's advisory, and public programs;
- centralized selection, acquisition, cataloging, processing and delivery of library materials;
- union catalog of library materials;
- automation of library processes;
- promotion of public library service;
- establishment and maintenance of public library facilities and mobile libraries;
- delivery of library materials; and,
- employment of qualified staff to carry out all of the above.

How can one stay informed about any proposed legislation relating to regional public library districts?

Your regional public library system office will usually have the latest information, or you may contact the Office of Library Development and Services, 440 Capitol Square Bldg., 550 Cedar St., St. Paul, Mn. 55101. (612) 296-2821

What happens next?

Recommendations on regional public library districts will be reported to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1, 1988. The Legislature may hold hearings on the report in 1989. The Minnesota Department of Education Office of Library Development and Services will begin a study of intraregional library districts in 1989. Intraregional districts would include a city and surrounding townships or portions of a county. The Public Library Newsletter in 1989 will contain reports on the intraregional library district study.

White Model Regional Public Library District

A. Formation

1. The Minnesota Legislature would enact enabling legislation allowing the formation of regional public library districts. A district would be created by action of a majority of the boards of county commissioners in the geographic area that is to be the district. Voters may petition a county board of commissioners to hold a referendum on the formation of a regional public library district. The district would be a political subdivision of the state.
2. A regional public library district would conform to the geographic boundaries of a current regional public library system.
3. The merger of districts would be possible by action of the district boards affected.
4. Cities currently taxing for and operating public library service could be included in the district through the action of their county, or they could participate through action of the city council.
5. Existing regional public library system contracts, agreements and/or articles of incorporation could be continued by newly created regional public library districts.
6. The legislative act would transfer all assets, fund balances and liabilities of each existing regional public library system, including benefits accrued by regional public library system staff, to its successor regional public library district. Bonded indebtedness of counties and cities for public library facilities would remain with the county or city.
7. Boards of existing regional public library systems would serve as the board for the district until successors are determined.

B. Organization

1. Regional public library districts would be governed by a board of nine members elected or appointed from nine subdistricts that are as equal in population as practicable, and composed of compact, contiguous territory.
2. Board members would be elected or appointed for four year terms, and terms of board members would be staggered.
3. Regional public library district boards would have the general powers and duties of city, county and regional public library system boards assigned in Minnesota Statutes Section 134.11, and also would have the power to tax.

C. Finance

1. The district board would levy a tax at least at the minimum rate established in state statute. The tax would go over the entire geographic area of the district. The district board would pay to a city or county operating public library service the dollar amount that the tax rate yielded on that city or county to be used for the operation of public library service. The district board would retain and expend the tax yielded by those geographic areas in which the district operates public library services.

2. Any city currently taxing separately from its county for public library service could continue to do so, and any county currently taxing for and operating a county library could continue to do so.
3. Districts could, without referendum, sell bonds or establish a separate capital levy to create a capital improvement fund.
4. Districts could issue tax anticipation certificates and borrow money.
5. Districts would be eligible to receive state aid funds.

Green Model Regional Public Library District

A. Formation

1. Regional public library districts would be created by an act of the Minnesota Legislature as political subdivisions of the state.
2. There would be twelve regional public library districts created, conforming to the geographic boundaries of the twelve regional public library systems that receive state funds.
3. Every Minnesota city and county is included in a regional public library district.
4. The merger of districts would be possible by action of the district boards affected.
5. The legislative act would nullify all existing regional public library system contracts, agreements and/or articles of incorporation that created the systems.
6. The legislative act would transfer all assets, fund balances and liabilities of each existing regional public library system, including benefits accrued by regional public library system staff, to its successor regional public library district. Bonded indebtedness of counties and cities for public library facilities would remain with the county or city.
7. Boards of existing regional public library systems would serve as the board for the district until successors are elected.

B. Organization

1. Regional public library districts would be governed by elected boards of nine members.
2. Board members will be elected for four year terms, with staggered terms.
3. Six regional public library district board members will be elected from election districts, and three will be elected at large. The six election districts will be as equal in population as practicable, and composed of compact, contiguous territory.
4. Regional public library district boards would have the general powers and duties of city, county and regional public library system boards assigned in Minnesota Statutes Section 134.11, and also would have the power to tax.

C. Finance

1. State statutes would establish a mandatory minimum tax which regional public library districts must levy based on a percentage of the tax capacity. The minimum tax would be reviewed biennially by the Minnesota Legislature for possible revision.
2. The tax will go over the entire geographic area of the district.
3. In addition, any city currently taxing separately from its county for public library service could continue to do so, and any county currently taxing for and operating a county library could continue to do so.

4. Within each district, the district board would determine whether or not any district funds would be paid to counties or cities currently supporting public libraries.
5. Districts could, without referendum, sell bonds or establish a separate capital levy to create a capital improvement fund.
6. Districts could issue tax anticipation certificates and borrow money.
7. Districts would be eligible to receive state aid funds.

Blue Model Regional Public Library District

A. Formation

1. The Minnesota Legislature would enact enabling legislation allowing the formation of regional public library districts. A district would be created by action of boards of county commissioners in the geographic area that is to be in the district, and by action of city councils of cities providing operating funds, separate from county funds, for public library service. The district would be a political subdivision of the state.
2. A regional public library district would conform to the geographic boundaries of a current regional public library system.
3. The merger of districts would be possible by action of the district boards affected.
4. Existing regional public library system contracts, agreements and/or articles of incorporation could be continued by newly created regional public library districts.
5. The legislative act would transfer all assets, fund balances and liabilities of each existing regional public library system, including benefits accrued by regional public library system staff, to its successor regional public library district. Bonded indebtedness of counties and cities for public library facilities would remain with the county or city.
6. Boards of existing regional public library systems would serve as the board for the district until successors are determined.

B. Organization

1. Regional public library districts would be governed by a board composed as specified in the document creating the district that has been adopted by the counties and cities involved.
2. Board members would serve four year terms, and terms of board members would be staggered.
3. Regional public library district boards would have the general powers and duties of city, county and regional public library system boards assigned in Minnesota Statutes Section 134.11, and also would have the power to tax.

C. Finance

1. State statutes would establish a mandatory minimum level of financial support. District boards would adopt a districtwide tax rate. Cities and counties currently operating public library services would have to tax at least at the rate established by the district board. If they fall short, the district would levy on the cities and counties up to the districtwide tax rate. The district would levy directly on those cities and counties in which the district itself operates public library services.
2. Any city currently taxing separately from its county for public library service could continue to do so, and any county currently taxing for and operating a county library could continue to do so.

3. A district board could pay funds to a city or county operating a public library.
4. Districts could, without referendum, sell bonds or establish a separate capital levy to create a capital improvement fund.
5. Districts could issue tax anticipation certificates and borrow money.
6. Districts would be eligible to receive state aid funds.

Appendix E

Summary of Reactions and Comments from Regional Hearings

A. General

1. Regional public library districts are a new concept to us. We need more time to fully study them.
2. We need to understand better what the relationship would be between a city and a county library and its regional public library district.
 - a. Even if a city or county library could levy above the district levy, its city or county may not provide adequate funds or even the amount provided now because they would be receiving district funds.
 - b. There is value in local responsibility, and in local control, grass roots involvement.
3. Until we have talked about intraregional districts and understand how they relate to regional districts, we shouldn't make any final recommendations on regional districts.
4. Consolidated systems are "more ready" to become library districts than are federated systems.
5. There comes a time when a public function becomes so important that it must be handled separately from other government functions. Such is now the case with public library service, which has moved beyond being an appropriate responsibility of counties.
6. The green model is the most efficient way of bringing about regional public library districts. It places responsibility where it belongs - in the Legislature. There is no need to have county commissioners involved.
7. Having intraregional districts of cities and townships undercuts the broad equity of funding possible with a regional public library district.
8. Everything is happening so fast. We still haven't implemented Extension of Access, and now the state is imposing this on top of it.
9. Those operating local libraries in the green model can have much freedom to act. The people in charge, not the structure, determine how things are run.
10. Districts would eliminate diversity in libraries. Diversity is desirable. Uniformity in library service will encourage mediocrity. Local autonomy is better.
11. How would public library districts affect multitype library systems?

12. Districts may be seen as one more layer of government, but districts may also be seen as simply replacing a layer of government we already have - the regional library system.
13. Some units of local government do not want to be involved in public service at all.
14. There is a serious lack of understanding of how the existing regional public library systems are organized, operated and funded.
15. No need to impose the same model all over the state. None of the models are viable for the metropolitan area.

B. Formation

1. If county commissioners view special districts as competitive with county government, how realistic is it to expect that they would act to establish a library district?
2. District approach should be optional, not mandatory. The problems around the state are different. There should be some flexibility within districts so a district can best respond to area circumstances, conditions and needs.
3. Avoid referendums for formation or finance of districts.
4. A time frame for implementing districts, with a transition period, should be developed.

C. Organization

1. Even with election districts, there will be a concern that sparsely populated areas aren't adequately represented.
2. Growth of special districts has led to charges of unresponsiveness even when boards are elected.
3. Should the State (i.e., Governor, Legislature, SBE) appoint a member to each district board?
4. Multitype library system boards should continue to be appointed.

D. Funding

1. Special districts may be seen as competing with counties for the same tax base, and as a levy authority "farther from the people" than the counties are.
2. Low levels of county financial support and higher levels of city financial support is a major issue in many library systems in greater Minnesota. In some areas, county support is 1/8 or 1/10 of city support. More equity is needed.
3. Regional public library systems need more money from federal, state and local sources.

4. Maybe current minimum levels of local support should be raised instead of forming library districts.
5. Any minimum tax level for a district should be sufficient not only to allow a district to maintain services, it also should allow the district to expand services.
6. The current problem systems have securing funding from so many governmental units must be solved.
7. If districts get bonding authority to build libraries, they should buy existing library buildings from cities. Concern that not all residents of a district would be willing to support funding a building in one part of the region. Concern that there would need to be referenda on bonding for buildings. Concern that there would be political jockeying for location of new libraries.
8. Concern that changes now underway in the property tax structure will affect funding for libraries, and we don't know what all of the effects will be.

Appendix F

Regional Public Library District Issues

A. Formation

1. Should regional public library districts be formed by public referendum? By action of the Minnesota Legislature? By action of another governmental body or bodies?
2. Should the regional public library district structure be optional or mandatory? Should present law for formation of regional public library systems by contract be retained or repealed?
3. Transition from current structure to a new structure, including ownership of assets, indebtedness, fund balances, governance, etc.

B. Governance

1. How large should regional public library district boards be?
2. Should regional public library districts be governed by elected boards of trustees? From election districts? At large? Length of terms? What about redistricting with each census?
3. Should regional public library districts be governed by appointed boards of trustees? What governmental body or bodies makes the appointments?

C. Finance

1. Is there a maximum tax levy for regional public library districts? Is it set in statute? By public referendum? In some other way?
2. How does a regional public library district finance capital improvement? By a separate levy to create a fund? By sale of bonds? In some other way?
3. Is the levy uniform across a regional public library district?
4. Does the district levy go on top of any levies of counties for operation of county libraries that are members of a district and cities for city libraries that are members of a district? Does it only go onto those portions of a regional service area that previously directly funded regional public library system operations?
5. What are implications of having a regional library district structure for the amount and method of state funding of public library services?

D. Other

1. How would a regional public library district relate to other regional districts such as the Metropolitan Council, regional development commissions, and education cooperative service units?
2. Would it be possible for a governmental unit (such as a township, city or county) to withdraw from a district once it is established? How?

Appendix G

Regional Public Library District Study Advisory Committee

Staff of the Office of Library Development and Services extend deep appreciation to members of the Regional Public Library District Study Advisory Committee.

David Barton, Director
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Jean Gronquist
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William Woods, Past President
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