

STLS Memo No. 09 - 027
November 3, 2009

To: Member Library Directors, Board Presidents
From: Ristiina Wigg, Executive Director

RE: Proposed Cost Share Increase 2011 - 2013

On Monday, November 16, 10 am, at the Dormann Library, Bath, the attached modified cost-share proposal will be reviewed. Your opinion is important. Please come join the discussion.

STLS has been balancing its budget with the same state aid since 1998. Due to the 20-30% loss in buying power, STLS trustees are conducting a series of discussion with members on the need for members to contribute more of the costs of providing the services that patrons want and need. In August System trustees held county meetings and background information was sent to each member trustee. A Member Contributions committee has met three times this fall to review (1) the county discussions, (2) information about funding in other library systems, (3) member library concerns about increasing costs, and (4) how STLS has reduced costs. The committee reviewed various formulas and funding options, including some from other systems in the state, and suggested that the attached modified cost-share proposal made the most sense. This proposal would revise the existing (see attached) cost-share formula and increase 2011, 2012, and 2013 cost-share to members by up to 19% each year. Information from these meetings has been sent to library directors, mailed to board presidents and board members, and posted on the STLS website at <http://www.stls.org/about/planofservice.htm>

Why is STLS asking you for more money? What have we done to keep costs low?

Has STLS reduced costs?

Yes, this year we reduced costs by \$91,000 including reduced staff training and Sirsi/Dynix annual maintenance, replaced a full-time cataloger with ½ time cataloger, reduced professional materials, purchased a used delivery truck with a negotiated contribution from Simmons-Rockwell Ford, and eliminated the 2009 contribution to the replacement reserve fund for STLS building maintenance. STLS absorbs the ebb and flow of costs. For example, in past years when gasoline prices jumped, STLS absorbed the increased costs. When large computer servers had to be replaced, STLS has found grants to cover those costs. Libraries are not charged a surcharge to cover unexpected fees.

Has STLS applied for grants?

Yes, with a NYS construction grant we obtained \$84,000 – 50% of cost needed to cool computer servers and to purchase 2 new computers and the software needed to keep STARCat up-to-date. STLS is working with members to speed up telecommunications through a Gates Broadband Grant application and is participating in a State Education Department application for Federal broadband economic stimulus funds. STLS Trustees are investigating additional grants.

Is STLS aware of member library funding situations?

Yes, STLS works to keep costs low. For example, when state aid was available in 2008, STLS did not increase the cost-share; also STLS has held book processing fees at \$.50/item.

Is STLS committed to providing quality service?

Yes, STLS is committed to providing the cost-effective, excellent service that produces long-term growth, builds for the future, and enables your library to provide outstanding service to your community.

Next steps – The Member Contributions committee will have its final meeting on November 16th. STLS trustees who have attended these meetings will make a report to the entire Board on November 17th. At its next meeting on December 15th, the Board will act on a proposal to increase member contributions 2011 – 2013.

Please call, 607/962-3141, ext 207, or e-mail me at wiggr@stls.org if you have questions.
Looking forward to seeing you at the Dormann Library, Bath on November 16th, 10am.