

To: Winnefox Library System Board
From: Jeff Gilderson-Duwe
Re: Public Library Annual Report compliance
Date: 15 July 2019

In the letter to Winnefox Board president Jerry Letcher confirming payment of the second installment dated 14 May 2019 Winnefox was asked to submit a plan to the DLT “addressing how the Markesan Public Library, the Neshkoro Public Library, and the Oshkosh Public Library will correct the libraries’ noncompliance with §43.58(6)” and submit their Public Library Annual Report by the statutory deadline.

It should be noted that in two of these cases the delay was caused by unusual circumstances which probably will not occur again. The director at the Markesan Public Library had retired and there was some confusion. The new director was a successful director at another library and so should have no trouble getting the report submitted on time next year. In Oshkosh there was a retirement in the office and at the same time a problem was discovered with the accounting software files. Either of these alone would not have caused a problem but having both occur together did so. We do not know why Neshkoro Public Library’s report was not submitted on time.

We are submitting this library compliance plan for your approval and submission to the DPI:

Winnefox is committed to helping all our libraries submit accurate annual reports on time. In the future we will continue to:

- Provide the Division with statistical information to be preloaded into the report form.
- Meet with new directors in January to review the report form.
- Answer directors’ questions and interpret the report instructions.
- Review completed reports for commonly-made mistakes.
- Track each library’s progress in the report, noting when reports are completed, submitted, and signed reports received.

As the report deadline approaches we will check with directors on a continuing basis, asking what is preventing them from finishing the report on time and asking what we can do to help.

We are asked to address “hurdles to achieve compliance that are identified by the member libraries.” One common “hurdle” is that municipalities are often slow in generating final financial reports. We encourage directors to keep financial records independently and will continue to do so. We are also revising our new director orientation and training and will consider adding financial recordkeeping to the training.

Beyond this, there is little we can do to “ensure” libraries’ compliance with this statute. There is a point at which repeated system reminders become counterproductive and only serves to sour the relationship between the library and the system.