

Melanie Webber Lightbody  
County Librarian



105 North Main Street  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
(707) 467-2590 - Library Administration  
(707) 463-5472 – Fax  
[www.co.mendocino.ca.us/library](http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/library)

DATE: May 17, 2010

TO: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, Carmel Angelo, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Melanie Lightbody, County Librarian

RE: Museum Library Consolidation -- Update of discussions

---

The Museum director and the County Librarian have met twice to discuss consolidation efforts. **I am not recommending consolidation at this time for the reasons outlined below.** The Library is continuing to meet in order to work more closely with the Museum, and is forming an active partnership with Mendocino College and the Museum.

In discussion regarding consolidation with the museum, I saw these following issues:

- Congruence of purpose
- Funding and Revenue
- Operational Issues
- Potential cost savings through consolidation
- Political considerations

I reached the following conclusions:

1. **Congruence of purpose.** The library and the museum have a great congruence of purpose, in terms of education and public service. I certainly believe that the two organizations could work more closely together, share collections and encourage use and support for each other.
2. **Funding and Revenue.** Much of the money for the two departments should not be inter-mixed, having been designated for their respective departments. This would mean museum money could not be spent for libraries and vice-versa, without some significant funding changes. However, a consolidation could make outside funding sources more likely to fund.
3. **Operational Issues.** I believe the Museum would be best served by a dedicated staff, in particular a department head, to enhance its revenues and capacity and focus fully on its future. I have proposed that the museum and the library might share staff and a volunteer base but this would require staff time and cost to retool both staffs and would likely dissipate each department's effectiveness and response to the public.
4. **Potential Cost Savings through Consolidation.** In a report submitted to the CEO in November of 2008, the County Librarian's survey and review found there would be little potential outright savings. Instead, funding gaps would be filled through revenue enhancement if the two departments consolidated. The two Willits professional positions, curator and librarian would need to be retained in order for both departments to function and both the library and the museum need fund development assistance.
5. **Political Considerations.** In the past, neither the museum constituency nor the Library Advisory Board and the Library's constituency would support a consolidation. I do not believe that has changed and both organizations stand to lose vital public support and key stakeholders during a consolidation process.