

Notes from the Pathfinder Federation Meeting

October 2022 – Fort Benton

1. What is the greatest benefit of the federation to you and your library? To your library patrons?
 - a. Networking with colleagues, camaraderie, bonding, and collaboration – mentioned several times
 - b. Training/education
 - c. Power of a combined voice with advocacy and building support for libraries
 - d. We get money
 - e. Facilitates communication
 - f. Connect with state people
 - g. For our patrons – access to information and library resources, improved services with a human touch, help from other libraries when we run into a problem, get new ideas for serving patrons
2. What is missing for your patrons and/or your library when it comes to the structure of the federation or the services it provides?
 - a. Nothing was mentioned
3. What would you change about the current structure or funding of the federation?
 - a. More funding
 - b. Most people were happy with the current structure of the federation and liked having board members be a part of the federation
 - c. Like to keep the availability of Zoom meetings that came about with COVID
 - d. Like to have more funding to include tribal college libraries and would like to invite them to meetings
4. The legislative intent listed in the Montana Code Annotated is “It is the policy of the legislature to encourage the most efficient delivery of library services to the people of Montana. To that end the state should be divided into regions within which libraries desiring to participate in the distribution of such state funding to libraries as may be available from time to time shall organize into library federations to pool resources and information and avoid duplication of effort.”
 - a. Is this still relevant? Why or why not?
 - i. Pooling resources is still relevant; not sure about duplication of effort as it would be difficult to completely avoid duplication
 - ii. Federations also operate as a laboratory of new ideas
 - iii. Should the intent also include recognition of the needs of individual libraries
 - b. Does the current structure/funding of federations support this intent? Why or why not?
 - i. Are there other ways to pool our funding to buy things most or all of us need? Or should it be used to support individual library needs?
 - ii. Are there other resources we can pool to compromise and meet individual library needs and meet the intent?
 - iii. We could use more money to meet the intent