



MEMO

To: Federation Task Force Members
From: Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting & Learning Librarian
Subject: Possible changes to the budgeting and reporting process
Date: March 1, 2023

Here are some possible options for simplifying the budgeting and reporting process. This is based on the recommendation that we find ways to make the accounting and paperwork process easier for coordinators and libraries.

Option A: Keep current process

- Plan of service created by coordinators and voted on during the spring federation meeting. Commission votes on the plans of service at the June Commission meeting.
- Checks are sent to libraries.
- Libraries report on how funds were spent.
- Only difference – attempt to find a more user-friendly software option – ideally using the same software libraries use to complete the public library statistics.

Option B: No plan of service and minimal annual reporting

- Commission approves total amount going to each federation.
- At the spring meetings federations decide how much money is going to each library, for annual retreats, other collaborative projects, and any administrative costs.
- Coordinators submit a document that tells MSL staff how much money each library in the federation will receive.
- Checks are sent to the libraries.
- Libraries complete a simple agreement stating the money was used for at least one of the purposes outlined in administrative rules. No report from the coordinators is required.
- Note – Commission would need to update administrative rules to be clear about how funds could be used. This may require a legislative change. [MCA 22-1-413](#) requires that the Commission receive an accounting of all state funds received.



Option C: Keep plan of service and minimal annual reporting

- Coordinators would create a plan of service using the simple template that outlines how much goes to federation administrative expenses, annual retreats, collaborative efforts, and individual grants. Federation members approve at spring meetings. Commission approves at June meeting.
- Checks are sent to the libraries.
- Libraries complete a simple report where they verify expenditure of all their federation funds, check a box beside the areas where they spent their funds, and in 1-2 sentences describe the benefits of the funding to either the library or patrons.
- Coordinators attend October commission meeting to report on what opportunities and challenges they see in their federation.
- Note – Commission would need to update administrative rules to be clear about how funds could be used. We may need an attorney’s opinion on how granular the reporting of state funds must be to comply with MCA 22-1-413.