Expanding Library Access

"LIBRARY DESERTS 2.0"

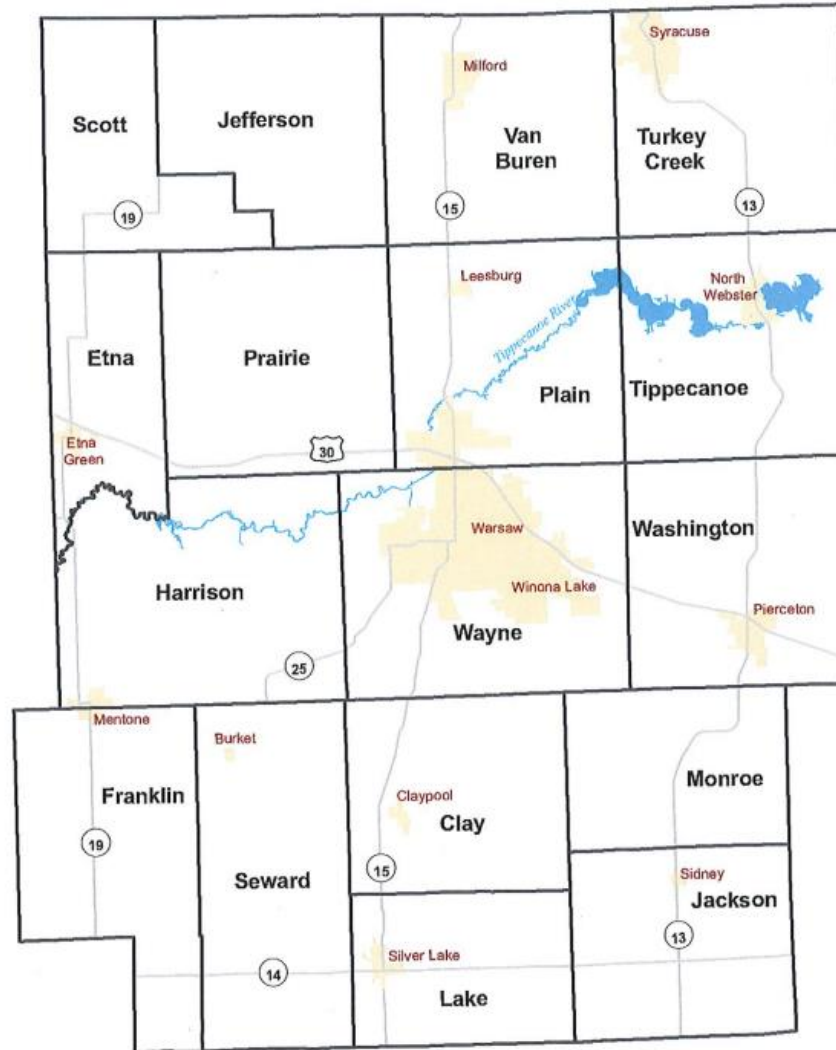KOSCIUSKO COUNTY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, 2023-2024

Different systems

(1) **County-based systems**: One county library "system." Taxes/cost to every county resident with various county-library based branches, that any resident can use.

(2) **Township/Tax System**:
◦ By township/taxing district
  ◦ → Either of which can be expanded (by agreement)
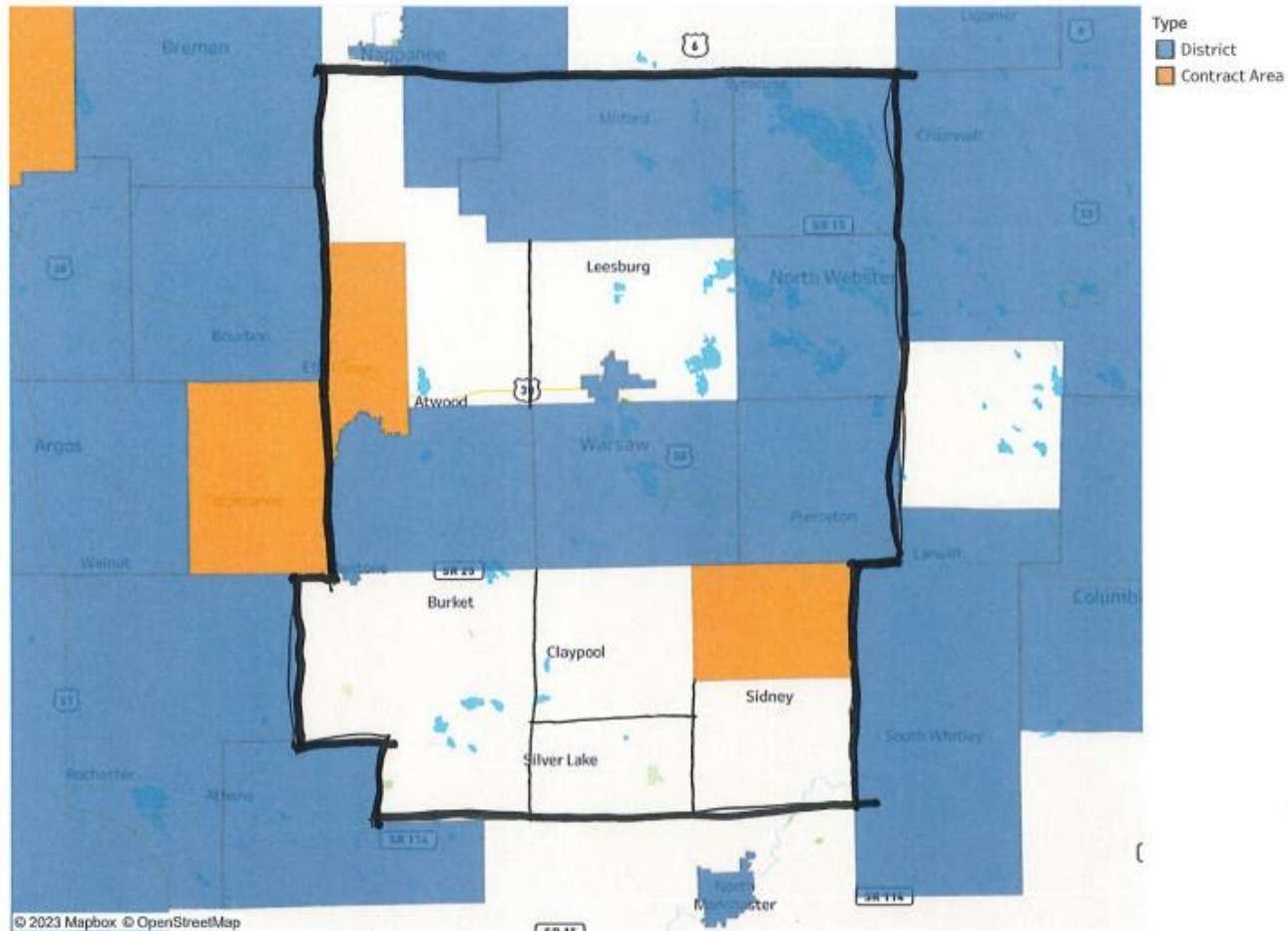 ◦ → Contracting for services

Township Map

Kosciusko County, Indiana Townships

2020-2021 Library District Interactive Map

Zoom in and select a district or contract area below. This map is based on library district boundaries produced in conjunction with the Indiana State Library. To access data for these public libraries (in spreadsheet format), visit the Indiana State Library website.

Indiana Library Districts, 2020 to 2021

Source: IBRC, using Indiana State Library data. Last updated June 2023.

Strategies

County-wide system?
◦ - Pros/Cons

Expanding Library/Township Districts?
- Pros/Cons

Contracts
- Pros/cons

- → Where we focused our efforts

Examples?

MONROE TOWNSHIP, KOSCIUSKO COUNTY CONTRACT
With Pierceton & Washington Township Library
P.O. Box 328
Pierceton, IN 46562

This contract made and entered into in duplicate this first day of January, 2023, by and between Jon Engelhaupt, the duly appointed and acting Trustee of Monroe Township, First Party and Pierceton and Washington Township Library Board, Pierceton, Kosciusko County, State of Indiana, Second Party, Witnesseth:

In consideration of the payment of the sum of $700.00 per year from the First Party to the Second Party, the Second Party agrees and promises to grant library privileges to citizens and inhabitants of Monroe Township, Kosciusko County, State of Indiana, subject to rules and regulations upon the use of said library, set and made by the Second Party.

The sum of Seven Hundred dollars shall be paid in semi annual payments of Three Hundred fifty dollars each. The first payment shall become due and payable in the month of June, 2023 and the second payment shall become due and payable in the month of December, 2023.

This contract shall extend for a period of one (1) year expiring on December 31, 2023.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the above named parties have hereunto set their hand the day of January 31, 2024.

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

FOR RESIDENTS OF NORTH TOWNSHIP,
MARSHALL COUNTY, INDIANA

This agreement made and entered into the ___ day of _____, 2023, by and between the Plymouth Public Library Board of Trustees in Marshall County, IN and the North Township Trustee and North Township Advisory Board to provide library service to residents of North Township, Marshall County, IN.

It is agreed that North Township residents shall have the use of the Plymouth Public Library and all its services for the period from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, upon the terms and conditions as follows:

All 2024 North Township non-resident cards will be effective through December 31, 2024, subject to all rules and regulations according to approved circulation policies. Based upon a descending monthly charge, as each individual applies for or renews a library card, the shared monthly charge for the 2024 non-resident fee will be deducted from the fee deposited at the beginning of the year. North Township shall pay 50% of the cost of a non-resident card for one individual per household. Other household members shall be responsible for the full cost of the non-resident card. Other household members are not permitted to use the non-resident card.

North Township agrees to pay Plymouth Public Library a non-resident fee for library services for North Township residents for 2024 to be paid by the 15th of January, 2024 or before. The amount that North Township will pay toward non-resident cards for 2024 will be $_____.

If the entire contract amount is used, the North Township Trustee will be notified and have the opportunity to provide funding, if available, for additional cards for that current year.

Contract Options

(1) "Per card": Count & Invoice

Pros: Townships know precisely how many. No money "wasted." Everyone gets a card.

Cons: Somewhat labor intensive (library to count; periodic invoices paid from township). No limit to how many cards could be issued.

(2) "Cap" (Plymouth): Set number paid

Pros: Cost certainty for townships

Cons: Demand could exceed supply.

(3) Whatever townships and libraries can agree on! If it's workable it can be done.

- (Polk Township, Marshall County; 50/50 split prorated for rest-of-year cost)

- Hybrid systems? (age/income/location verification)

Timeline

Fall→ December 2023: Information gathering/strategizing/initial outreach to library directors/township leadership

January 11, 2024: Meeting with county library directors

February 21, 2024: 2nd meeting with library directors/strategizing

March 25, 2024: Presentation at Kosciusko Township Trustee Meeting

March 28, 2024: 3rd meeting with library directors/meeting with advocates.

April 24, 2024: Meeting between township trustee members and library directors.

Where we are right now

→ Unfortunately, no contract agreements in place

Pros

Sincere interest from multiple actors

Cons

Perception gap in value & need from townships

Cost

Process moves SLOWLY

Review

Call to action: Libraries and un-served townships work together to facilitate library services to underserved populations

County-wide impact? Yes! Even where townships have affiliated libraries, those libraries would benefit from increased patrons.

Sustainable? It can be! The hope is that once contracts get going, re-new/expand. Dream scenario is tax-district expansion and/or County-Wide system.

Feasible? Yes! And it's already happening (Monroe township)

Northenor Award

- If our group was selected, we would request the funds be used to directly fund library cards for families standing to benefit.
  ◦ - Jump start a township contract? Donation to certain library to use for cards?