

INTERVIEW ANSWERS FROM LSSI

QUESTIONS PROVIDED IN WRITING BEFORE ORAL PRESENTATION ON JULY 9, 2010:

- *Section 1.8 (Pages 25-28) describe options of how the automation needs could be addressed should the LSSI proposal be accepted. The described options are described at a high level and do not provide specific details that would allow the County to determine the viability and “cost accuracy” of the proposals. Could LSSI provide the County the specific assumptions they used to determine the costs associated with these automation options? Assumptions would include but not be limited to the number of desktop computers that would be purchased, cost of software, any implementation costs, etc.*

Our assumptions included approximately \$300,000 in automation costs: 320 PCs (approximately \$200,000), \$43,000 in software licenses, and \$50,000 in data conversion, start-up training, etc.

- *How do the wages and benefits of LSSI employees compare to current employees?*

LSSI pays competitive wages and, if possible, attempts to match the wages of incumbent staff members. Occasionally, when incumbent staff members are at or past the top of the range for their position, this is not possible. Sometimes staff members are paid more under the LSSI staffing structure than they made as incumbents. We have reviewed the salary ranges for specific positions provided by San Joaquin County and the City of Stockton. In the case of the Library Support Staff position — what we would call a Page — the salary is identical. Other positions can roughly translate to library positions within LSSI. New hires entering the system — that is, non-incumbent library staff — would be either clerical hires initially making approximately \$10 per hour to more than \$15 per hour for more specialized work. Even higher salaries are paid to staff with particularly needed skills. Professional level hires would typically start around \$40,000 increasing to \$55,000 or higher depending on education, experience and level of responsibility.

- *How do the positions proposed translate to current in terms of job descriptions / duties / responsibilities: equal to, greater than, or less than current?*

LSSI typically hires library staff at several levels depending on local needs. The following are the basic LSSI hiring levels:

Page - Shelves materials, assists in basic library duties. This position roughly corresponds to Stockton-San Joaquin’s Library Support Staff position.

Library Assistant – Entry level clerical position, typically works circulation desk or other basic customer interactions in all departments in the library. Duties do not include significant supervision responsibilities. This position roughly corresponds to Stockton-San Joaquin’s Library Aide I and II positions.

Library Technician – Intermediate level of responsibility, typically works in positions that require specialized knowledge of library functions such as youth services, reference or circulation. Duties may include supervision. This position roughly corresponds to Stockton-San Joaquin’s Circulation Assistant I and II and Library Driver positions.

Library Associate – Paraprofessional library staff members that function in many ways comparable to professional librarians. Usually includes supervisory duties, and in smaller facilities can be library managers. This position roughly corresponds to Stockton-San Joaquin’s Library Assistant I and II and Bookmobile Driver positions.

Librarian – Professional librarian used in both supervisory and non-supervisory roles, most often as reference librarians, youth services librarians, and branch managers. This position roughly corresponds to Stockton-San Joaquin’s Librarian I and II positions.

LSSI also hires a variety of other library personnel with technical skills such as literacy coordinators, literacy tutors, automation managers, automation technicians, and project coordinators, as well as high level library administrative staff members. These positions roughly correspond to Stockton-San Joaquin’s Supervising Librarian position.

- ***What are the benefits and costs associated with joining the Inland Library System and use of that networks Integrated Library System?***

In our proposal, LSSI suggested that if San Joaquin County separates from the Stockton-San Joaquin County Library System, San Joaquin County could join the Inland Library Network as a third option. Our preferred solution would be for the County to negotiate a continued relationship with the City of Stockton, specifically to share the City of Stockton’s integrated library system (ILS). The second option was the acquisition and implementation of an ASP-model ILS by LSSI. On further reflection, we believe membership in the Inland Library Network would not be geographically advantageous. However, we are open to considering other regional solutions that provide cost-efficient functionality for the Stockton-San Joaquin County Library System.

- ***Do you provide branch-specific accounting data now in Riverside? Please provide examples.***

Yes, LSSI provides a quarterly Allocation of Compensation Report to Riverside County, which gives branch-specific accounting data. We provided a copy of one such report to the Evaluation Committee at the interview on July 9, 2010.

- ***Please elaborate on volunteer hours shown on pg. 75 of the State Report. Riverside County volunteer hours look small compared to other counties.***

The table on page 75 of the state report relates to volunteer hours in the literacy activity. RCLS uses relatively few volunteers in its literacy program because of local resident needs. While the literacy program does use some one-on-one tutor-student instruction, the majority of activity in our program is classroom-based English as a Second Language activity provided by paid staff.

If the question is about volunteers in the library, LSSI in Riverside County and elsewhere uses volunteers very similarly to other libraries. Volunteers are used for tasks such as shelving and cleaning materials, as greeters, and in support of library programs. Volunteers are not used to check out materials or in other ways that would create a breach of library patron confidentiality.

LSSI also works closely with Friends of the Library groups in each of the 63 public libraries we now operate, and has established wonderful working relationships with the members of these groups.

- ***Please explain the hours-per-branch differences between Riverside and San Joaquin counties, as shown on page 61 of the State Report.***

In 2007-08, the total branch hours for the Riverside County Library System were 64,926 versus 26,623 for the Stockton-San Joaquin County Library System. For the 35 public service outlets of the Riverside County Library System the hours per branch were 1,855 compared to 2,048 for the 13 outlets in the City of Stockton and San Joaquin County. In the 2008-09 fiscal year (data available on the State Library website), public service hours for Riverside County increased to 66,978 while Stockton-San Joaquin’s fell to 24,873, producing a nearly identical average weekly hour count for the two systems: 1,914 for

Riverside County and 1,913 for Stockton-San Joaquin. Scheduled weekly hours for Riverside County are actually significantly higher than for Stockton-San Joaquin at 39.6 vs. 27.4.

The Riverside County Library System's actual hours for 07-08 and for 08-09 lagged behind scheduled hours because of a reduction of hours in the Cathedral City Branch which experienced a devastating fire on February 1, 2008. The branch was closed entirely from February to May 2008 when a temporary facility was opened. That facility operated at reduced hours, 11 to 14 hours less per week than the regularly scheduled hours, until the permanent branch was reopened at the end of June 2009.

The LSSI proposal for expanded hours would increase overall public service hours in the Stockton-San Joaquin system from 366 to 524 hours per week, or an average of 40.3 hours per week per location – an increase of 47% in hours open per week.

It should also be noted that in some cases the hours stated in the RFP for branch libraries in the County included additional hours paid for by local communities; LSSI's proposed hours did not include any additional hours provided by funding from those local communities. Those communities could continue to fund additional hours of operation.

- *Please provide us with a reference who is a Professional Librarian and is not an employee of LSSI.*

Susan Hildreth
Former State Librarian of California, currently Director of the Seattle Public Library
Phone: 206-386-4102
Susan.Hildreth@spl.org

- *Provide a list of prior customers who are not customers today.*

[LSSI provided the following list at the interview with San Joaquin County on July 9, 2010]

List of prior LSSI customers for public library operations, who are not customers today

- Fargo, ND
Virginia Dambach, former President
Library Board of Trustees
Phone: (701) 293-7281
Email: vdambach@qwestoffice.net
- Jersey City, NJ
Greg Corrado, Business Mgr.
Phone: (201) 320-7080
Email: greg@jcnj.org
- Linden, NJ
John T. Gregorio, Former Mayor
Phone: (908) 474-8493
Email: unknown
- Calabasas, CA
Tony Coroalles, City Manager
Phone: (818) 224-1600
Email: tcoroalles@ci.calabasas.ca.us
- Bee Cave, TX
Barbara Hathaway, City Librarian and former LSSI employee
Phone: (512) 767-6624
Email: BHathaway@beecavetexas.com
- Lancaster, TX
Opel Robertson, Ass't. City Manager
Phone: (972) 227-1304
Email: ORobertson@lancaster-tx.com

**QUESTIONS PROVIDED BY SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY ORALLY AT
INTERVIEW WITH LSSI ON JULY 9, 2010:**

- ***Section 1.8. Option #2 – Who would be responsible for support of automation in this option? How would the service be delivered?***

LSSI will be responsible for providing support for Option #2. The on-site automation technician will provide assistance with computers, local networks, etc. This option involves the implementation of an ASP ILS model, which will be located and supported at a central LSSI site. LSSI's additional automation staff will also be available for backup as needed, as it is in all LSSI locations.

- ***Appendix E – Page 3, Section 6.b – Can LSSI please define “adequate space”? Can LSSI also describe what they have done in other locations in regards to “Revenue Generating Opportunities”?***

Appendix E contains a sample LSSI contract, which included a clause that could be used in the event that the County/City/LSSI agreed to open some revenue generating opportunity within the library space, i.e., a coffee shop. The text was part of the sample contract, not a proposal to San Joaquin County or the City of Stockton that this option be pursued.

- ***Does LSSI intend to improve the speeds of the internet connectivity to each Library or keep at status quo? If so, how will this project be funded?***

LSSI will assess the current speed and performance of the internet connectivity to each Library to determine whether or not improvements are needed. This assessment will be part of LSSI's overall assessment of the Library system and its technology plan, and will result in a prioritized list of possible improvements. It would be LSSI's goal to fund any improvements needed out of the Library's existing budget.

- ***Is the number of professional staff (i.e. Librarians/Reference Librarians) being proposed less than current and, if so, explain how this will result in equal or greater professional services and oversight being provided at each branch and overall.***

We understand that the Library currently has a total of 21 MLS-degreed professional librarians on staff. LSSI is proposing to hire 19 professional librarians. Based on our experience in the operation of 63 libraries across the US, as well as experience on numerous large projects for federal government libraries, we believe that the level of professional staffing we have proposed will meet all requirements to ensure a well-run and managed library system operation.

- ***What training and professional development opportunities are there for the employees?***

In addition to providing a creative team work environment, LSSI places a high priority on staff training and professional development. We maintain a full-time trainer on staff who has developed a set of training programs focusing on customer service and library management topics. These programs are presented to all appropriate staff in LSSI-operated libraries. In addition, LSSI has a Senior Staff group, which consists of the top managers in the company, including at least one representative from each library or system operated by LSSI. This group of about fifty employees meets once a year for a full day of in-service training at the annual American Library Association (ALA) convention. LSSI provides ALA membership for all employees in this group, and covers all expenses for them to participate in the annual

ALA meeting. LSSI also sponsors annual full-day on-site in-service training sessions for the staff of most LSSI-operated facilities. These highly-structured training days include keynote speakers; this year's speaker in Riverside County will be Camila Alire, past president of ALA, while last year's speaker was Joan Frye Williams, a leading library futurist. The mandatory training days include one morning session and two afternoon sessions, with 22 different topics to choose from for each session this year, including youth services, storytime, literacy, IT topics, reference, and personal growth topics. In addition to these training opportunities, LSSI also provides a tuition reimbursement program for employees pursuing a job-related degree. We currently have six staff members progressing toward their MLS degrees in Riverside County, and three working toward the degree in Tennessee.

- ***What benchmarks will you be using for planning and performance monitoring?***

LSSI will use the benchmarks that are required by the State, professionally recognized library benchmarks, and unique, locally appropriate benchmarks. Also, we will facilitate the development of performance-measurable objectives.

- ***Describe your E-Rate experience and what is eligible for E-Rate.***

LSSI handles E-Rate applications and submissions for all of the libraries that we currently operate. These submissions are coordinated by LSSI's West Coast IT Manager, through a national third-party firm which specializes in preparing and tracking these submissions for libraries. This process includes helping each jurisdiction create a technology plan which is CIPA compliant. All LSSI-operated libraries participate in E-Rate and receive the maximum allowable E-Rate discounts.

- ***How is your profit calculated – and is it capped?***

LSSI's profit is calculated as a percentage of total revenues. It is not capped. LSSI operates three basic divisions – federal, commercial and public. The federal and commercial profit percentages are considerably higher than that generated by the public division. Overall company profits are less than five percent.

- ***The LSSI proposal appears to provide services at a cost that is very competitive with what is spent for the Library services in our County today. Based upon LSSI's experience in other government settings, what factors allow you to provide such a competitive cost model?***

LSSI introduces operational efficiencies whenever possible, including the centralization of many administrative functions such as HR and accounting, which are handled from LSSI's corporate offices. In addition, LSSI provides staff with more efficient tools to accomplish the necessary work. For example, LSSI invests more than \$100,000 per year in the OSA acquisitions tracking software from The Library Corp., which provides running fund balances, and automates the receipt process for our staff members in LSSI-operated libraries nationwide. Furthermore, the structure of LSSI's overhead and benefits is more efficient than that typically found in a governmental setting.

- ***Does money saved through expanded volunteer services translate into increased profits for LSSI, or budget dollars returned for re-allocation as the client deems fit?***

LSSI does not use volunteer services to replace paid library staff positions, so there are no direct savings to either LSSI or the customer.

- ***What is the Plural Funding Project? What is the primary goal? Explain profit portion of funding projects.***

The Plural Funding Project was a joint venture among LSSI, the North Suburban Library System, and the Bay Area Library System, who jointly funded a study by an independent consulting group to analyze the viability of using the same techniques used by public radio and TV to acquire alternate forms of funding for libraries. The study resulted in a report titled “Saving America’s Libraries: Changing the Model for Public Library Funds Development.” At this point, the study results are still under consideration for possible future implementation.

- ***The number of MLS professionals in your proposal appears to be low in comparison to the number of libraries. Please explain.***

LSSI has approximately 550 staff members working in our public libraries division, and about 90 professional MLS librarians in the company. We feel that the family of libraries we operate are adequately staffed with professional librarians to satisfy our customers’ requirements.

- ***Regarding the staffing of all positions (Librarians, Clerical, and other support staff) please explain how many will be full-time and/or part-time employees?***

It is impossible at this time to anticipate the breakdown of full-time versus part-time employees. All page positions are 20 hours or less per week. For most other positions, LSSI favors hiring full-time rather than part-time staff except in circumstances where part-time employees provide an operational benefit to the library.

- ***Clarify the hours you are proposing. How does language in 1.3 (page 20) regarding “6-months status quo” factor into hours shown in Vol. 2 pages 8 & 9? What happens after 6 months?***

As instructed by the City/County RFP, LSSI provided six different costing scenarios, first by the possible contract participants: joint city/county library operations, city only library operations, county only library operations; and second, by the numbers of hours per week for each participant option: current numbers of library hours, and enhanced numbers of library hours. If the City and/or County decides to contract with LSSI at the enhanced level of library hours, these hours will be in force as soon as the contract begins. LSSI’s phrase “6-months status quo” related to the schedule for each library’s hours open rather than to the actual number of hours being contracted for. If the City and/or County chooses to contract with LSSI for the current number of hours open, LSSI proposed leaving the hours each library was open the same for some period of time while we evaluate the usage patterns to determine if a different schedule might increase library use by the community.

- ***Who will be conducting the initial training of Library staff?***

LSSI will provide a transition team to assist with the transition from City/County operations to LSSI operations. This team includes top level LSSI management staff, HR staff, training staff, and administrative staff. The transition team provides LSSI orientation for all new employees, including a corporate overview, customer service training, and training in other essentials such as time sheet preparation, payroll, and benefits. The transition team is phased out over about 90 days, with activities being most intensive in the first 30 days. After 90 days, the library staff should be able to function fairly independently with oversight by LSSI’s West Coast operations staff.

- ***What is Mark Smith’s role as liaison to the Friends groups? How will he be able to act as a liaison from Los Angeles?***

As liaison to the Friends groups, Mark Smith will meet with the Friends organizations and other Library stakeholders shortly after contract start. These meetings will also include the System Director and the relevant Branch Manager. This effort will be intensive at the front end of the contract, in order to introduce LSSI to the Friends and better explain our goals and objectives for the library system while soliciting input about the unique focus for their branches. Over time, Mr. Smith will expect that the System Director and the Branch Managers will assume a larger role in regular meetings and interface with the Friends groups. In his role as LSSI’s Vice President for West Coast Operations, Mr. Smith will continue to communicate with the library staff on a regular basis, and will visit the County periodically to meet with Library stakeholders and staff.

- ***Explain omissions in the State Report for Riverside County:***
 - ***Materials expense per capita (pg. 68)***
 - ***Materials expense/children per capita (pg. 96)***
 - ***Salary & Benefits information (pg.61)***
 - ***Materials expense per capita (p.68):*** Materials expenditures are shown on page 40 and do include Riverside County’s expenditure figure of \$3,544,763. The per capita derivation of this expenditure is shown on page 10 of the report as \$3.27. Page 68 shows expenditures for children’s materials. We do not track children’s materials purchases separately for the Riverside County Library System, and are, therefore, unable to report those to the State Library for their report.
 - ***Materials expense/children’s per capita (p. 96):*** Again, we do not track expenditures for children’s materials separately for the Riverside County Library System.
 - ***Salary & Benefits information (p. 61):*** We believe this question refers to the table on p. 40. Beginning in 1997, it was the preference of Riverside County that we not report salary and benefits expenditures. The County’s reasoning was that they did not pay salary and benefits for library operations (with the exception of the salary of the County Librarian). Because library operations were handled by a management company, those costs were reported in the category of Other Operating Expenditures. This is not LSSI’s practice in other jurisdictions such as Moorpark and Shasta County where we do report salaries and benefits.
- ***Elaborate on section 6.b in Appendix E, specifically addressing “benefit” distributions to community, Customer, and LSSI.***

No alternative funding initiative will be undertaken until LSSI has developed a plan which includes anticipated expenses and potential earnings. This plan will be presented to the library’s governing body for review and comment. Distributions to the community, customer, and LSSI from alternative funding initiatives will be subject to negotiations before any initiative is implemented. Distributions usually depend primarily on who has invested in the initiative. For example, in one of the library coffee shops operated by LSSI, the customer purchased all the equipment and supplies, and LSSI’s staff simply ran the coffee shop. In that situation, the customer negotiated to receive a flat percentage of the coffee shop’s gross receipts.

- ***What was LSSI's role in the Library expansions in Riverside County?***

LSSI has provided the staff required for all phases of library expansions and renovations in Riverside County. LSSI's Riverside County Library staff members worked with the planning committees to produce a variety of planning documents from conceptual bubble diagrams to building programs in LIBRIS design; selected and purchased the opening day collections of new library materials for each location; participated in the selection of furnishings for new and renovated libraries; planned the move of each library's collection, and the integration with the opening day collection materials; selected and/or designed library signage; deployed the interior furnishings in accordance with the interior design plans; and planned and implemented all IT infrastructure for each library. Projects completed include those funded by the County's Economic Development Agency, those funded by the County Supervisors using discretionary funding, projects funded directly by the cities, and joint use facilities on six school campuses.

- ***Will collection development policy and collection purchasing be done from headquarters? What are you basing your local branch needs on? Are you researching local needs, or is it a "one size fits all" approach?***

The Library's Service Plan will set the service priorities for the Library, and drive collection development. LSSI will assess the existing collections in each location, as well as any existing Collection Development Policies or Plans, for relevancy. Using statistics generated by the Library's ILS, we will review circulation patterns for collection use. LSSI has never used a "one size fits all" approach because every community's reading and information needs are different, and both collections and services need to be tailored to fit those unique needs.

- ***Will you be hiring people who are now in the County branches that have knowledge of the communities? If so, how will those employees have input into the decisions being made regarding library operations?***

LSSI plans to interview all incumbent library employees who are interested in continuing their employment with LSSI and are in good standing with the City/County. We will give incumbent employees hiring preference over new hires. We respect the institutional memory of existing employees, and work hard to attract incumbent staff. All staff members hired, whether they are new staff or incumbent staff, will be invited to become active participants in determining the direction of the library system. LSSI has hired predominantly incumbent staff in most LSSI-operated library locations, and the incumbent staff has responded very positively to LSSI's speed to solution and style of management. Many have expressed the sentiment that under LSSI's management, for the first time they felt that their ideas were heard and considered.

- ***How will back-up services, such as reference, for the branches be handled and staffed?***

In other locations, LSSI has handled back-up services through a tiered organization of management and supervision. For example, in Redding the reference desk is usually staffed by an MLS-degreed reference librarian, sometimes by a paraprofessional staff member, and occasionally by other staff members. The assistance of the professional librarian is always available. In addition, the reference staff members have the option to use NorthNet, their second-tier reference provider. In Riverside, three of the largest libraries have been designated as principal reference centers, and take second-tier reference questions from the other library branches. However, with the current decline in reference questions being seen, LSSI has found that the in-library staff generally can answer all the questions they receive.

- *How will supervision be handled and staffed?*

LSSI is proposing the positions listed below. Administrative and management oversight is explained below the list.

- System Director
- Library Managers
- Branch Managers
- Literacy Coordinator
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Outreach Coordinator
- Automation Manager
- Administrative Assistant
- Floaters

Front-line library staff members will be managed by a Branch or Library Manager, who will be supervised by the System Director. This management structure, which LSSI also uses in Jackson County, Oregon, has been sufficient to ensure smooth daily branch operations and a high level of customer satisfaction.