

To: Chilmark Board of Selectmen
From: Ebba Hierta, Library Director
Date: December 6, 2011
Re: CLAMS membership proposal

Dear Selectmen,

The library Board of Trustees has asked me to brief you on our proposal to become members of the CLAMS library consortium in FY2013. We have several issues that need to be addressed in the coming year and believe that joining the CLAMS network is the most cost-effective way of doing this.

Problem 1: A critical part of our technology plan has reached the end of its useful lifespan. Ownership of our leased circulation software program – Athena – changed in 2006. The new owners announced in 2007 that Athena would be phased out. There would be no updates to accommodate new computer operating programs and other new and existing technology and eventually all tech support would end. We have been running Athena on Windows XP machines and Microsoft has announced that there will be no XP operating system licenses sold after 2013. We need to plan now for conversion to a new automated circulation and online cataloging program.

Problem 2: Digital media such as downloadable audiobooks, ebooks and movies have become commonplace in our community and are now a standard part of a contemporary library's offerings. In September, the American Library Association estimated that 67 percent of libraries nationally offer access to e-books, up 12 percent from two years ago. Increasingly, our patrons are requesting these services.

Proposed solution: Becoming a member of the CLAMS library network, a consortium of libraries on the Cape and Islands, represents the most cost effective solution to both problems and offers additional key benefits in several other areas.

CLAMS costs:

One-time conversion costs, approximately \$22,000 - \$25,000. The Friends of the Chilmark Public Library have formally agreed to pay up to \$25,000 of these one-time conversion costs.

Annual CLAMS dues	\$15,700
State grant for small libraries in networks	(2,500)
Existing budget for software licensing	(700)
Added mandated materials expense	2,500
Total new annual costs	\$15,000

CLAMS benefits:

Includes up-to-date circulation software
Access to downloadable digital media

Access to the holdings of all 32 member libraries – 1.5 million items and nearly 500,000 separate titles

Access to technical staff to assist in staying current with technology

Access to state and federal funds used to maintain library networks

Cataloguing of new materials

Staff training

Enhanced catalog content with book covers, reviews, summaries, tables of contents

Separate kids catalog

Other options considered:

Join another network such as SAILS or Old Colony – costs and benefits approximately the same as CLAMS without the benefit of geographic proximity.

Lease a new stand-alone circulation software system at an annual cost of \$5,000-\$10,000.

Lease a digital download system such as Overdrive at an annual cost of \$12,000 plus staff time to manage it.