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## Towns of Holland, Onalaska asked to help buy St. Elizabeth's Church for Holmen area library

By JOE ORSO / La Crosse Tribune

TOWN OF HOLLAND, Wis. — A Holmen church would become a library for three communities under a proposal offered by the Friends of the Holmen Library group.

The plan, which group member Charles Olson presented Aug. 9 to the Holland Town Board, would have the village of Holmen join with the towns of Holland and Onalaska to establish a library in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton church building at 515 N. Main St. in Holmen.

“Here’s an opportunity for all three communities to fulfill a need in the county and show the outside world we all work together,” Olson said. “Libraries are a very functioning part and a very vibrant part of a community.”

Olson said the Rev. Robert Schaller, parochial administrator at the church, and Bishop Jerome ListECKI support the plan.

The three municipalities would share the costs to purchase — a firm \$2 million, Olson said — and operate the new library. Fundraisers would be held for remodeling the church, he said.

Holland board member Jim Lakey questioned how the costs would be balanced between the municipalities. “It’s no doubt that it’s a good project,” Lakey said, “but it needs to be divided up fairly, instead of just flat fees.”

Holland voters would have to approve the plan in a referendum vote; the soonest it could on the ballot is November, according to board members. The board and Olson talked about holding information sessions at Holland’s town hall.

Olson said the group will make the same proposal in Onalaska and Holmen.

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