

WiLS Board Meeting (with Finance Committee)

June 14, 2019

Board/Finance Committee Members, in attendance:

Ryan Ackerman, Finance Committee member
Mark Arend, Winnefox Library System,
Treasurer
Martha Berninger, DPI
Peg Billing, Tomahawk School District
Nathan Dowd, Edgewood College, Chair-Elect
Lesleigh Luttrell, Finance Committee member
Stef Morrill, WiLS (ex officio)

Sharon Nellis, Finance Committee member
Steve Platteter, Arrowhead Library System,
Chair
Jane Roisum, Fox Valley Technical College
Tasha Saecker, Appleton Public Library
Kristin Vogel, St Norbert College
Paul Waelchli, UW-Whitewater
Heather Winter, Milwaukee Art Museum

Board/Finance Committee Members, absent:

Kris McCoy, Mineral Point School District
Dan Reed, Finance Committee Member
Teresa Voss, Verona Area School District

WiLS Staff, in attendance:

Sarah Birkholz, Jeff Brunner, Melody Clark, Sara Gold, Tom Klement, Emily Pfothenauer, Bruce Smith

Call to order; Changes/additions to the agenda

The meeting was called to order by Chair S. Platteter at 10:04 am. No additions were made to the agenda.

S. Morrill requested that the order of the "Presentation and discussion" section be changed to have the Recollection Wisconsin presentation go before the branding one. All agreed.

Introductions

The group introduced themselves.

Presentation and discussion: Cooperative purchasing: sharing baseline information and revamp changes implemented.

J. Brunner presented information to the Board. Early in the year, we sent out a survey to gauge members' satisfaction with the cooperative purchasing service and we will use this data as a baseline to determine the effectiveness of the revamp activities we're undertaking. The results were generally positive. In general, responses from UW members were less positive than those from other members. They highlighted some areas we're already working on and we're actively discussing what else we can do to better serve them. We'll solicit more feedback over time to ensure that we're on the right track.

Over the last six months, we've begun implementing the changes outlined in our Cooperative Purchasing Revamp Report. These changes have come in four priority areas.

Narrowing the Base of Day-to-day Management & Improving Response Time

- We've been working to improve processes, streamlining tasks, and document things as they change. We've adopted Coda as a tool to bring together all of the work of coop, including documentation, to ensure that team members are able to keep abreast of what everyone is doing.
- We've also made strides in improving response time to members by using Front as our primary email client and by encouraging members to email coop@wils.org with questions. These two changes help us assign messages to the right person for an efficient response.

Negotiation

There are two areas of negotiation that we're working on:

- **Licenses:** We've implemented a process to review and update vendor partner licenses annually. The first step has been to obtain license documents that we've been missing.
- **Pricing:** We're obtaining prices earlier to allow for more time for negotiation and for member feedback. We are collecting information from members about their usage, their willingness to consider alternatives and their capacity for price increases. We're seeing benefits already with lower increases from many vendor partners.

Expansion

We're expanding available resources in thoughtful ways to increase the value for members without a significant impact on our workload. We've refined our process to ensure that new partnerships will result in an immediate value to members by defining member interest thresholds to be met before we bring on a new vendor-partner. This is a departure from our previous "the more the merrier" thinking.

Awareness

TACO Tuesdays are well underway. These provide 10-minute demo/pitches from vendor partners so members can learn about a new resource without having to sit through a full hour webinar. Vendors are eager to participate and we've had good attendance. We're also recording the sessions and sharing them for those who can't attend. We have also started TACO Tuesday Potlucks, which include member-led discussions around topics of interest such as ebooks/audiobooks for K12 libraries, Interlibrary Loan platforms and an upcoming session about SkyRiver experiences.

The cooperative purchasing email discussion lists, including lists for each library types and specific interest lists, are also live. We're using these lists as our main channel for sharing cooperative purchasing information.

We are also investigating Consortia Manager to replace the current MyWiLS platform. Because of issues with the current vendor, we will switch vendors even if we do not go with Consortia Manager.

Hopperizing emails has been going well. It has helped with our response time. Once we are again at full staff in the Admin team area, this will improve even more. Our hope is that having a strong team approach to Administration will allow J. Brunner and S. Gold to maintain their commitments to cooperative purchasing and other projects.

The group discussed the expansion of products. The process that has been designed is primarily aimed at cold call vendors. Libraries are surveyed to determine interest. If three or more are interested, the

process moves forward. We are also investigating relationships with other consortia to get additional vendors without as much work.

The Business Model Workgroup had some insights that may result in narrowing the list of vendors in order to focus energy, do more in negotiation/marketing/use/etc. The group felt that it made sense conceptually, but had concerns about the loss of value to members if fewer resources are available to them. The hope is that the value would increase with larger discounts rather than decrease. The group also discussed the need for a careful transition plan to minimize concerns about members. It will be important to frame this appropriately. The transition may also involve educating members so that they can get discounts themselves. While there isn't yet a rubric to determine what vendors or products may not be included, this will need to be developed as part of this process and there will likely be different rubrics for different library types.

Presentation and Discussion: Newly implemented and potential service directions for consulting

B. Smith presented information about the consulting service. Currently, we mostly do projects for individual libraries and organizations, and primarily in strategic planning. We have also done some workflow or process management and website design, and we have just begun archive consulting.

From this work, we have gained expertise and reputation, we have learned the challenges and opportunities that libraries face through on-the-ground work, and we have been able to help the libraries we work with.

However, there are some challenges with the current model. To make the revenue needed to support the staff allocated, we need to do many projects concurrently, which takes a lot of time, including travel time. Also, any of the time we use internally to coordinate and develop the service isn't covered.

We believe that we could have a bigger impact by doing things at a collective level rather than working as much at the individual library level. We would also be able to dedicate more time to a unique collaborative role rather than being just another consultant option for libraries.

The new service framework we are moving toward includes more cohorts, more research projects, annual service partnerships, and workshops, along with the individual consulting and projects we have been doing. In this framework, we see achievable revenue goals to support this work while addressing the challenges we have with the current model.

The group discussed and felt that this new service framework sounded very positive. Cohorts provide the ability for libraries to build relationships with others of a similar size and type that can last beyond the length of the planning project.

Presentation and Discussion: Recollection Wisconsin/WiLS relationship and digital project grants

E. Pfothenauer presented information about Recollection Wisconsin. This consortium has been primarily grant-funded for many years. It's currently funded by LSTA grants and fees for service. WLA and the LD&L Committee did some advocacy work to try to get a library service contract in the state budget for the consortium. While it was not successful, it was exciting to see so much support for the consortium from the community. For 2019/20, DPI will be allocating WISE funds.

She shared some updates on current projects. There was a grant awarded from the NHPRC to WiLS as the fiscal agent. Recollection Wisconsin will work with the Wisconsin Historical Society Field Services to do a survey and focus groups with local historical societies to develop "digital readiness" community

of practice. Other current projects are the Curating Community Digital Collections (CCDC) project on digital preservation, a National Endowment for the Humanities grant on preserving wartime recordings, an Association of Moving Image Archivists project for training on film preservation, and the Mukurtu project.

Because there are many opportunities for projects outside of the current scope of Recollection Wisconsin (aggregating metadata and getting content into DPLA), the governing board of the consortium is considering broadening their scope to allow for this natural growth. If the scope is widened, that raises additional questions about who should be part of the governance: should other stakeholders and communities be represented, such as library organizations, tribal communities, local historical societies, etc.? At the same time, WiLS has proposed stepping off of the board and acting only as the project manager for the consortium. Acting as both the project manager and a board member introduces the potential for conflicts of interest, and WiLS is not a consumer/creator of digital libraries in the same way the other governing partners are. To think about these changes, the Recollection Wisconsin governance groups will have a strategic planning meeting in the Fall.

Starting in August, WiLS will have the opportunity to work with IMLS on an exciting new project that has not yet been publicly announced. More information will be coming soon, including a revised budget to accommodate the project.

Branding of WiLS: update on marketing initiative, tagline, naming thought

S. Morrill shared thoughts about many conversations that are happening that seem to be converging. Over the last five years, we have been evolving. We do this naturally and on a regular basis: added/changed services, moved to a more team structure, changed roles and duties, etc. Then last year, we had a major change in our internal organizational structure. Now it's starting to feel like conversations are converging around another major change, which would be focused on how we organize and talk about our services and, more broadly, about our value in the community.

We have a branding initiative this year. We are working with Andy Stilp to think about how we present our value – not the value of our services but our value as an organization – to the community. Andy has come up with some potential “dossiers” and the staff will learn about them and discuss them at upcoming staff meetings. The Board will be involved somehow, most likely at the August meeting.

We have a Business Model Workgroup, which met yesterday for the first time. This group is primarily looking at how we charge for services, but the conversation yesterday talked a lot about how we think about our services and organize our services.

We have service changes happening and some of those changes are starting to chafe against the 4 service area model (consulting, consortia management, events and education, and cooperative purchasing).

We are also working with more non-library audiences through things like the Recollection Wisconsin grant projects that Emily spoke about.

Collectively, this all seems to be pointing to change. What that change will be is yet to be determined. However, we want to start thinking and talking about it now.

The staff in the room were asked how they felt about this change. The staff is really driving the change, as they are the ones driving the services we provide. The change wouldn't be about what we do. It would be about making others see us as we truly are and having a structure to accommodate the services we provide. We created this organizational model with the four service areas, but the intent was that the organization would be flexible and change as needed. Now will be the time to test that. For staff, it's exciting and scary at the same time.

The group felt that a name change wouldn't be beneficial to WiLS. We may be able to use the words behind the acronym to better reflect what we are. It may also be more beneficial to leave the words and change the tagline. The organization is still fundamentally about library-related services.

Reports: Treasurer's report/Finance Report

T. Klement provided the finance report. The cash flow is excellent, and the assets are nearly double liabilities.

He did a review of accounts receivable refunds and found credits on vendor accounts. The credits were previously absorbed in coop variance. The refunds will be accounts for at year-end and any unused will be cooperative purchasing revenue.

Fund balances are strong. The board designated funds include Ideas to Action, which has been successful, and transition funds. Given the increase in the number of staff and associated payroll, it may be a good idea to raise the transition reserve. S. Morrill and T. Klement will explore this.

Ten months into the 18/19 fiscal year, revenues exceed the budget expectations. There are some revenue lines where it is currently lower than expected, but it's expected that these will catch up before the end of the year. The amount we will be getting from the American Express rebate program will be a little lower, partially because a major vendor will no longer accept American Express. We will be moving from this program to a new one from Capital One, which will be giving us a higher percentage in cash-back. It is also a Visa, which more vendors will accept.

Cooperative purchasing revenues (and associated expenses) are above budget.

Other than cooperative purchasing, there are two expense categories that are higher than expected:

- Consulting: Because of a specific project, there have been more expenses for travel/events. We are receiving associated revenue for the expense, so it will not impact the bottom line.
- Ideas to Action: The Board approved using reserve funds for this project.

The net income at the end of April is lower than 17/18 because:

- Timing of consortium management revenue: some revenue was received earlier in the year last year.
- American Express is down about \$6,000.

- Investments are down about \$20,000.
- Payroll is up due to new staff hires in grants (and associated revenues have not been received)
- Consulting is off because of the PLSR project.
- Ideas to Action, as mentioned above, is not generating revenue and will come from reserves if needed.

Discussion and action: 2019/20 budget

S. Morrill walked through the budget with the group. Some key points that were made:

- Revenue from Education and Events has gone down and the expenses have been set to equal the income, as we haven't been making money on these events.
- The digital project grants income is down because some grants are winding down. However, a new grant has come in since the budget was created.
- The "Board Allocated Reserve Funds" covers the allocation of the 2017/18 carryover to projects by the Board: WiLSWorld, Ideas to Action, and staff "office upgrades"
- The salary line includes a 2% increase for staff. The amount is lower because of the winding down of some digital project grants.
- There is a significant increase in the audit line because it's our audit year (instead of a review year).
- Because of changes in our accounts payable/accounts receivable processes, we are using significantly less ink and paper, which means a significant drop in the amount of the general office supplies line. The Board asked if this change was acceptable to the auditors. It should actually help the audit go more smoothly since there will no longer be the need to pull paper invoices.
- There is a small increase in meeting supplies to allow for some staff bonding/lunches.
- The increase in Events/Education expenses is because of the amount allocated from the 17/18 reserves for WiLSWorld 2019.

There was a question about the "Cooperative projects" income because the line is blank. We actually do have a cooperative project that is not included here: MoneySmart. S. Morrill will add this to the budget when she makes the change for the new digital collections project.

T. Saecker moved acceptance of the 2019/20 budget; M. Arend seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

The group then broke for lunch. Only the Board reconvened; the citizen Finance Committee members left.

Approval of meeting minutes: June 2018, December 2018, January 2019

P. Billing moved approval of the meeting minutes; P. Waelchli seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Reports

Director's report: discussion of more frequent and informal reports

S. Morrill has been sending briefer, more informal, and more frequent reports to the Board. The group was generally positive about it, as long as "frequent" didn't become too frequent. S. Morrill felt that it wouldn't be more than weekly unless there was something specific that needed to be shared.

CooPAC

K. Aldrich, CooPAC chair, provided a 2018-19 report for the committee. The full report is included at the end of the notes.

There were no questions or clarifications.

Ideas to Action

M. Clark reported that the Ideas to Action Committee met in March and reviewed the 2019 timeline. The application period was originally from April 1st through May 31st. After receiving only eight applications by the 31st, it was decided to extend the period until June 14th. Awards will be announced hopefully in July and funds can be distributed anytime between Sept 2019 and August 2020. The committee also reviewed and updated the proposal application, making a few modifications. It was decided to remove the question for applicants to indicate the number of hours that they would want for WiLS staff time. In 2018, applicants couldn't easily estimate the WiLS staff time needed to complete tasks. For 2019, we are asking for the specific tasks they would like WiLS to do and WiLS staff will determine the number of hours needed. Some examples of WiLS activities were added to the application. The committee will meet soon to review and evaluate proposals and make recommendations for funding.

There were no questions or clarifications.

Peer Council

From Andi Coffin: "We had a great [Peer Council](#) on June 3rd at the Madison Public Library! The slides are on the website if you'd like to see the content we covered with speakers from Mankato, UW-Madison, and from WiLS. The last hour of the meeting was spent in some very lively small group round-robin conversations about staffing and skills for tech services, cataloging alternate formats, authority control, tools and workflows for efficiency, and the future of cataloging."

WiLSWorld

From Andi Coffin: "Details are finalized and registration is open for WiLSWorld on July 23 and 24 at the Pyle Center in Madison. We hope you can join us and maybe even [provide an introduction to a program!](#) Thanks to the work of the Board, we are excited to provide members both the Library's Role in Racial Equity workshop and eight scholarships to the conference. The WiLSWorld small team - Andi, Jeff, Melissa, Sarah, and Shawn - continues work on promotion and would love your support on that to share the good news to your networks. Please let Andi or Melissa know if you would like some custom

language for that; otherwise, please feel free to share the [Facebook event](#) (or hit the “interested” or “going” button) or use the [announcement from the WiLS blog](#).

Business model workgroup

The Business Model Workgroup met on June 13th for their first meeting. During the meeting, WiLS staff shared information about the current state of various pieces of our business model and the perceived challenges/strengths of these pieces. The workgroup added their own challenges/strengths for the various pieces and then started brainstorming ways to maximize the strengths while minimizing the challenges. The next step is for the WiLS staff to take this information and develop a proposal for a new model for the group to review in September. S. Morrill will share the documentation and notes from the June 13th meeting with the Board by the end of the month.

Discussion and action: Director’s Review

The Director’s review did not happen in February 2019. It was proposed to move the review to October to align with other staff and to give more time before the budget process.

The chair and chair-elect will discuss the possibility of modifying the review format to more closely align with the annual check-ins for WiLS staff. These meetings focus more on the development of the staff member as a person and in their role in WILS.

P. Waelchli moved to move the director review to Fall; T. Saecker seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Presentation and discussion

Getting out in the community: the regional meeting experiment, visits

One of the WiLS values is being of the community, and one of the ways we think we can reflect this is by being out in the community in different ways. However, this has been a nut that has been difficult to crack. Here is the current state of our getting out in the community.

1. In past years, we’ve done regional meetings. These meetings were a way to bring people together in different geographic areas to share information. They really were not designed or intended as a way to get the word out about WiLS services. The attendance at these meetings was not very high, especially for the time invested. So, we decided to try some different models for working with people regionally. The first model was supporting an existing regional conference. We did that this year by providing support for the Southwest Wisconsin Association of Libraries (SWAL conference). We organized the program, found speakers, worked with a committee on content development, and provided logistics support. We were paid for this work. Another regional experiment we are working on is bringing together cultural institutions from the Milwaukee area to talk about the potential for collaboration.
2. We try to get out and do visits regularly. We’ve now set “visit days” in the hopes that people who may not already be out doing the work (like our consulting team) would take the opportunity to go visit one of our members and learn more about what they are doing.

The group had a lively discussion about how WiLS can best be out in the community. The Board suggested the following course of action:

- WiLS staff should try to attend existing regional conferences and events as much as possible.
- Be thoughtful and intentional about the WiLS presence at WLA.
- Eliminate scheduled library visits when the purpose is just visiting: these feel like “vendor visits.”
- Visit libraries when it’s appropriate to learn about a cool thing or see something in action or if there is an organizational value (board member visits, etc.)
- Consider hosting additional regional conference/workshops

Organizational realignment progress report

Last July, WiLS underwent an organizational realignment. We created a Strategy Group to help with guiding and planning for the organization and we also created a Staff Development Group to help support staff.

While we haven’t done a formal review of the process, the overall consensus seems to be that it is working well. Some highlights:

- The strategy group has been able to work together to identify opportunities we should pursue and things we should not pursue. This decision-making is not all on the director. The strategy group has also been able to see angles, challenges, and benefits in work that one individual could not see on their own.
- The staff development group has been regularly checking in with staff and has identified concerns and challenges to work on. For example, the need for health insurance has come up many times. S. Morrill is now investigating this for the organization. The group has also worked on training and social activities.
- When S. Morrill was out in February, the two groups worked together to keep things running smoothly. The staff development group offered check-ins to staff who would normally meet with S. Morrill. The strategy group accepted a resignation from a staff member and started on a transition plan. What this trial run showed was that the new model is doing what it was put in place to do: allows the organization to not rely on any single individual for its day-to-day management.
- There was a concern about the amount of time this new structure would take with the additional meetings. It is actually taking less time for most staff members because staff meetings have gotten shorter. So, the overall cost of meetings has gone down

Other WiLS staff shared their thoughts about the new structure. Overall, the staff is very happy with the changes. There were no concerns about missing information or the opportunity to provide input into decision-making. Both E. Pfotenhauer and B. Smith, who are team leads, expressed appreciation

about having that formal role so they could feel comfortable making decisions and moving the team forward. Overall, the new structure provides some stability that has been very beneficial to the organization and does so in a way that isn't a traditional hierarchy and allows for more leadership among the staff. Sharing the success of this model with libraries through a workshop or presentation could be helpful. Libraries struggle with leadership models and organizational structure.

Bylaws review

The bylaws are due for a review this year. S. Morrill walked through questions about the bylaws and the group discussed.

- The purpose was written in 2013 and needs to be updated. The Board was in support of this change. The group also felt that the word "consortium" may not be the best word in this definition.
- The current practice is not to ask general members to re-up each year. The Board was in support of changing the bylaws to reflect current practice. It's important that general members are reminded of their membership each year, but there is no need for them to complete the form again. The focus should be on renewing the relationship, and completing a form gets in the way of that. There was a question about membership through public library systems. Some systems purchase MyWiLS subscriptions for cooperative purchasing membership for all of their member libraries. However, general membership has never gone through the system level. WiLS staff will discuss how this might work.
- The current practice for member representatives doesn't match what is written: there are no meetings of WiLS limited to representatives and changing is less formal than described. The Board supported changing the bylaws to match current practice.
- The group discussed the current Board membership. It is currently a mix of appointed and elected members. The group discussed other groups, like WEMTA and WAICU, that could potentially have appointed seats. There was interest in changing one of the K12 seats to a WEMTA representative. The group also discussed what partners might be missing from the table: historical societies is an example. It could be valuable to have more discussion about who we are missing and who we need. WiLS staff will discuss and bring back a proposal.

As part of this discussion, the question was raised if consortia participants should be required to be WiLS members. This could help when working with non-library institutions, as it would clarify the role of WiLS and make everything seem more cohesive. WiLS staff will discuss and bring back a proposal.

- The group discussed the section about the Treasurer. The procedure has never been reviewed by the Finance Committee. The group felt that the director and CFO could develop this procedure without review of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer is also not reviewing or reporting on investments. The group felt that there should be a yearly report to the Finance Committee and Board about the investments. The investment policy could be reviewed at the same time. We will shoot for the February meeting.
- M. Arend had some wording suggestions that he will share with S. Morrill.

- There was a question about proxy voting. The group discussed and felt that proxies were not needed and could be undesirable.

Discussion and action: Data collection policy

As we start to undertake more data projects and respond to associated RFPs, we need to have a data collection policy. Because of a recent project we were awarded, we need to have a policy in place as soon as possible. The intent would be to pass something now and then take time to refine the policy. S. Morrill shared a draft proposal with the group and they discussed and had the following suggestions for future development:

- Add the word "secure" to the data storage in the cloud-based services section.
- Add destruction to the retention policy under development and then reference that.
- Work on the language related to the use of the information collected. We want to protect the data, but we also want to be able to use the data to help plan projects for members.
- Avoid the term "personally identifiable information" and perhaps only talk about using information in aggregate.
- Consider policies and statute as the policy is developed.

M. Arend moved to adopt the data collection policy; N. Dowd seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Update and discussion: Accepting Scott Vrieze resignation and how to fill his seat.

Scott Vrieze has accepted a position in Minnesota and has resigned from the WiLS Board. He was currently in an at-large seat, and we need to fill his seat for 1 year until his term is up. There are some options for filling the seat:

- a. Find a UW person to replace Scott.
- b. Take the highest vote-getter who does not win a seat from the nominees that are currently up for election.
- c. Some other methodology.

The group felt that it would make the most sense to fill the seat with someone already running for election and that it was acceptable for the seat to be filled by a public or K12 representative (as there are only public and K12 representatives with competitive elections this year)

M. Arend moved to accept S. Vrieze's resignation and fill the seat with the highest vote-getter from the nominees that are currently up for election. P. Billing seconded. Unanimously passed.

Discussion and action: Formation of the nominations committee

According to the bylaws, the Nomination Committee consists of the Chairperson Elect and two other Board members. The Chairperson-Elect serves as chair of the Nominating Committee and shall appoint

the other two members of the committee.

There are three officers:

1. Chair: This position is filled by the chair-elect. Nathan Dowd is our current chair-elect and will be the chair for 2018/19.
2. Chair-elect: The committee will bring forth a nomination for this position.
3. Treasurer: The committee will bring forth a nomination for this position.

M. Berninger and P. Waelchli volunteered to be part of the Nominations Committee.

Before the group adjourned, M. Arend mentioned his position is currently being posted and that people should encourage others to apply. It's a great job!

Adjournment

P. Billing moved adjournment; P. Waelchli seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:44 pm.