

WiLS Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 7

10:00-3:00

Milton Public Library

Board Members, in attendance:

Martha Berninger, DPI RL&LL

Peg Billing, Tomahawk School District, Chair-Elect

Melissa Matz, Elmbrook School District

Stef Morrill, WiLS (ex officio)

Steve Platteter, Arrowhead Library System

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, Chair

Teresa Voss, Verona School District

Scott Vrieze, UW-Stou

Board Members, absent:

Mark Arend, Winnefox Library System

Sylvia Contreras, Edgewood College

WiLS Staff, in attendance:

Jeff Brunner, Melody Clark, David Hafner, Emily Pfothenauer

Call to Order: Changes/Additions to the Agenda

Because J. Roisum was present at the meeting, the item to replace the technical college seat was moved to the top of the agenda so that she could be appointed to the Board earlier in the agenda.

Action on replacement for board member

Matt Coan, newly elected representative for the technical colleges, has resigned his seat. J. Roisum has agreed to fill the seat. P. Waelchli moved to approve J. Roisum to fill the technical college seat. T. Saecker seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of May 2017 meeting minutes

S. Platteter moved approval of the May meeting minutes. S. Vrieze seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Advisory Committee/workgroup updates

Cooperative Purchasing (CooPAC)

The committee has not met since our last board meeting. All members are staying on the committee (except one person has stepped down).

Treasurer's report/Financial report for FY16/17

Preliminary June financials were available to the Board prior to the meeting. T. Klement did not attend the meeting, so S. Morrill provided a brief report.

Annual review of organizational documents & information

S. Morrill provided some general information about the services provided by WiLS and how we make and spend money.

Services that WiLS provides includes:

- Consortium management (WPLC, WSDLC, Recollection Wisconsin)
- Cooperative purchasing
- Project management and consulting
- Events

WiLS is funded by contracted or hourly rates for services provided, a cooperative purchasing membership fee, which is \$199 per member, cooperative purchasing service fees, some direct order commissions, grants, and the 1% back we receive on our American Express card. Almost all of our expenditures (with the exception of cooperative purchasing pass-through) are on people and software/platforms.

The group discussed the concept of “WiLS-iness” and how it relates to the Board. WiLS-iness is the spirit that the WiLS staff tries to maintain: an earnestness, along with trying very hard, but also keeping humor and a certain “lightness” about the work. The Board is encouraged to let S. Morrill know if they feel the staff is not meeting that mark.

The group reviewed the conflict of interest policy and did not have any changes. Those in attendance signed the agreements. S. Morrill will follow up with the others.

The group reviewed the service standards, which are internal standards used to measure the performance of WiLS staff. The group discussed whether these standards are truly attainable. Those staff in attendance shared that standards can be difficult to meet when things are busy, but that these are something to strive to meet.

The group reviewed the organizational chart. The Board was supportive of the change from the previous chart, and recognized that the flexibility and overlap illustrated in the new version is what allows WiLS to be successful.

The group reviewed the board member expectations. There were no questions or concerns.

There were some other resources that were shared, but not covered in detail, including the bylaws, the current budget, and the monthly financials available to the Board in Basecamp.

Director’s report: Discussion of values

S. Morrill shared the following prior to the meeting as a Director’s Report:

A few weeks ago, the WiLS staff gathered for our annual retreat. This year, we focused on a discussion of our values.

We talked about our existing values (which you can find in your Basecamp folder or here -- <http://www.wils.org/about-wils/mission-and-organizational-values/>). We discussed if each value was still important to meeting our mission and how well we were living it. We learned that there were no values we wanted to eliminate, though the group had some thoughts about tweaking some, so we’ll have some new language to share with you at our October meeting.

We also talked about what is missing from our values. The group identified that we have no values about how we work as a staff, and felt that having some in that area would be helpful.

There was another important area that is missing, and that's what I'd like us to discuss at our meeting on August 7th.

Prior to the retreat, staff completed a brief survey about the values. One of the comments read:

Libraries are not neutral, and we can't be neutral either. The current political climate has a huge impact on our members (not only major budget cuts, but library values like information literacy). I would like to see us take more of a stand and be more proactive about advocating for libraries and library values. Something that incorporates the importance of diversity and inclusion. Unfortunately we are not a very diverse organization, and neither is the overall profession, but we can at least acknowledge that we value and strive for inclusive hiring practices, representations etc.

We've been seeing this theme of "beyond neutral" a lot lately. The Lake Superior Library Symposium invited this year's attendees to, "Challenge the traditional stance of libraries as neutral spaces. In the current political climate, how do we navigate our institutional restrictions while upholding our professional values?" The American Library Association conference had many sessions dedicated to this theme, too. And at our own WiLSWorld conference, our keynote speaker, Dr. Safiya Noble, shared information about how Google and other tools that could be considered "neutral" are far from it. (If you have 12 minutes, and didn't get the chance to see Dr. Noble at the conference, please consider watching this video that summarizes her research: <http://bit.ly/2tWo3nm>).

It feels like the right time to have a discussion about what this means for WiLS and what we can do to help our members move beyond neutral.

At the staff retreat, we decided that we would like to add two values:

- 1. One related to advocacy: While we haven't written the exact words yet, this value would represent that we advocate for our members and that we stand for the values that are founding principles of libraries and that we are champions for the well-being of our members.*
- 2. One related to inclusion: Again, we haven't written exact words, but this value would represent that we try to facilitate understanding of diverse perspectives and that we help members with equity of service and access.*

The Board discussed the Director's report. The group felt that the new proposed values would be beneficial. Serving diversity in our communities is important, and advocacy is very important right now. WiLS can assist the entire ecosystem of libraries with advocacy, and could model what's important and why it's important. WiLS has the bird's eye view needed to connect different types of libraries who are dealing with similar issues. WiLS can help libraries push themselves to discover true advocacy and inclusion and not to be complacent with what we are doing related to hiring and other things that could lead to more inclusion. DPI released information on inclusion that could be helpful. The WiLS "Ideas to Action" fund could be utilized to help support these values. Preference could be given to applicants that are working in these areas. WiLS will draft the values and send back to the Board for feedback. The members should also be asked for feedback.

Presentation of and action on the FY18/19 cooperative purchasing membership fees

The Finance Committee has recommended keeping the same cooperative purchasing membership fees (\$199 per institution) for the FY18/19 membership year. S. Platteter moved to accept the recommendation. T. Voss seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Discussion and possible action: The WiLS Ideas to Action Fund

S. Morrill shared the proposal for the “WiLS Ideas to Action Fund” prior to the meeting. The group discussed the proposal and were enthusiastic about moving forward with it. It was recommended that an evaluation component be added to the proposal requirements. The committee should also have selection criteria to promote certain values and should maintain a history of what has been funded. T. Voss and P. Waelchli agreed to serve on the committee as the Board representatives.

Calendar for 2018 strategic initiatives

As discussed at our February meeting, S. Morrill is proposing that we focus our energy on two strategic initiatives for 2018:

1. Review the internal structure of WiLS
2. Do a thorough assessment of cooperative purchasing

The group discussed both potential initiatives. For the cooperative purchasing initiative, we want to be sure to obtain data from institutions that do not participate in cooperative purchasing and also collect information about other potential models. We may want to get members of the Finance Committee involved in the cooperative purchasing process sooner rather than later, too.

The group discussed the new values as initiatives. It would seem appropriate for us to get more involvement and feedback on the new values from members.

WiLSWorld update & discussion

The group discussed the WiLSWorld conference. The following points were made:

- The keynote was amazing!
- Attendance was up a little from last year. Despite the early bird registration cost, we received a lot of registrations in the last week.
- WiLSWorld has changed to benefit general librarians as well as technology people. It would be good to find ways to promote that it is for everyone.
- It might be nice to facilitate ride sharing.
- It might be nice to have a team rate to encourage institutions to bring a larger group.
- The theme is more innovation than technology.
- We need to find ways to differentiate from WEMTA, SLATE, WLA, etc.
- Consider a group read that would be open to the larger membership on Dr. Noble’s book that comes out next year.

Election of officers for 2017/18

The chair-elect position is up for election. S. Platteter has volunteered to be considered for the chair-elect position. T. Voss moved that S. Platteter be the chair-elect. T. Saecker seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

2017/18 meeting dates: Discussion of in-person and virtual meetings

For the past couple of years, the October and May meetings were virtual and the August and February meetings were scheduled to be in person. The group discussed how well this has been working and when in-person meetings are most beneficial to meet the goals of the organization. The August meeting is beneficial to have in person because there are new board members, the K12 members have more flexibility, and travel is easier. The February and May meetings are fairly standard because they include the budget and the audit and could probably be virtual. October could be in person or not, depending on the business need.

Adjourn

T. Voss moved adjournment. S. Platteter seconded. Motion approved unanimously.