

WiLS Board Meeting

December 9, 2021 – 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Via Zoom

BOARD ATTENDEES: Hans Baierl (Moraine Park Technical College), Martha Berninger (Department of Public Instruction), Peg Billing (Lakeland Union High School), Jennifer Chamberlain, (WiLS, ex-officio), Joe Davies (Burlington Public Library), Jennifer Gurske (Madison Trust for Historic Preservation), Paula Norman (Tomahawk School District), Steve Platteter (Arrowhead Library System), Todd Roll (University of Wisconsin-Platteville), Tasha Saecker (Appleton Public Library), Ellen Sayed (Medical College of Wisconsin), Teresa Voss (Verona Area School District), Heather Winter (Milwaukee Art Museum)

ABSENT: Barbara Brattin (Kenosha Public Library)

WILS STAFF: Jeff Brunner, Andi Coffin, Kim Kiesewetter, Tom Klement, Nick Smith

Meeting prep - Please review these documents prior to the meeting available in the [meeting folder](#) in Basecamp: [August 2021 minutes](#), Director's report, 2021 Strategic Initiatives Update

Agenda

1. Call to order; Changes/additions to the agenda

Chair J. Davies called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. There were no suggested changes or additions to the agenda.

2. Round robin question – How are you addressing staff morale & pandemic fatigue? (20 min)

Various board members shared what their individual libraries are doing to bolster staff morale and improve internal culture amidst pandemic fatigue. This included being flexible when staff come into the office vs. work from home based on their needs, bringing humor into meetings, creating transitional spaces for folks who are working partly at home and partly onsite, and making active efforts to show appreciation for volunteers that keep things running.

3. Approval of meeting minutes

T. Saeker moved to approve the August 2021 meeting minutes. Seconded by T. Voss. Motion carried.

4. Reports and updates (30 min)

a. Questions on Director's report

J. Chamberlain answered board questions on her written report.

b. Financial Report for October 2021 & quick year-end update

T. Klement provided a quick review of the FY21 year end. WiLS ended the year with a small surplus, many thanks to Coop and Digital Projects for exceeding expectations. October 2021 financials look strong.

c. Finance committee update

B. Brattin had a meeting conflict today, so P. Billing, treasurer, gave a brief update on the November finance committee meeting. The finance committee recently welcomed new committee members, and will be calling for two additional new members at the conclusion of this fiscal year. Board members are encouraged to send any suggestions for committee members to Jennifer or Barb Brattin, the finance committee chair.

Finance Committee discussed implementing fiscal sponsorship to arrangements where WiLS takes donations for projects. This currently includes WPLC and Recollection Wisconsin. Since these consortia are not legal entities, they need to use WiLS' 501(c)(3) status to allow donations to be tax deductible. The WiLS auditors agree that this should be implemented, and J. Chamberlain will be working with an attorney to ensure the agreement is reasonable and can address any concerns either consortium has regarding property ownership. Codifying this fiscal relationship should not change any day-to-day interactions WiLS has with the consortia as the managing entity.

Finance Committee also requested an investment presentation at the next joint Board/Finance Committee meeting in January.

d. Ideas to Action update

K. Kiesewetter shared the work she and E. Pfothner are doing in assessing the success of Ideas to Action as a grant program over the past several years. Over the past four years, over \$120,000 has been distributed to 30 member libraries to support innovative and collaborative projects.

In 2020, 7 projects were funded with \$30,200 awarded. 33% of recipients received additional funding from other entities. Estimated over 1500 people were reached, 67% of projects did not exist prior to the grant, and 100% are expected to continue after Ideas to Action. Strengths in the projects supported included collaboration across organizations, alleviating unexpected impacts of COVID, and supporting diversity and inclusion.

At the January Board Meeting, the Board will be asked to consider funding for the next cycle of Ideas to Action awards. Board members were also asked to volunteer to act as reviewers for 2022 applications, with four commitments.

e. Annual member meeting & examples of communities of practice

A. Coffin invited all board members to attend the annual WiLS member meeting on February 25 at 10am. Following last year's template, we have selected a theme and this year we are asking members to share their stories of working with collaborative, coalitions, or other communities of practice. The board was asked if they had any specific suggestions for collaborations to highlight—T. Saeker suggested the Wisconsin Libraries Transforming Communities mentor/mentee project and other board members will share ideas as they think of them.

5. Presentation: Service spotlight: Cooperative Purchasing

J. Brunner and N. Smith shared a presentation with the board on the history of the cooperative purchasing program, how the past year has gone, and what new initiatives the coop team is working on for the coming year.

J. Brunner outlined the history of the program, from its inception in the 80s and early 90s in selling CD-ROMs to read LinkCat into a solidified program with a membership fee, into the 2000s selling reference databases and partnering with DPI on BadgerLink, OCLC, and other long-term vendors, and finally to what it is today.

The last years have been characterized by changing spending patterns in our members due to the pandemic and by the reorganization of the academic business model, which lessened the financial burdens our large academic members were bearing as a result of the previous payment structure—the total bottom line impact to WiLS was estimated at \$27,413. Overall 19-20 revenue was down 4.5% from the previous year, primarily due to the business model change, and down 1% in 20-21 due to the continued decrease from academic members as all move onto the new model combined with an increase in spending from K12 members. Overall subscription counts are up 2% in 20-21 after being down 1% in 19-20.

The K12 and public library areas have been very busy with the normal summer rush for schools, SCLS database renewals, Jan 1 renewals for libraries, and exciting new vendors like Kanopy.

S. Gold has been moving more into a New Business Development focus, with Jeff taking on more involvement with K12 and public libraries. This is something the Coop Team has been working towards for a long time, as new business focuses have traditionally been more reactive than proactive.

MyWiLS, the member-facing subscription management portal, also received a major update this past spring, with a new interface and lots of new front-end and back-end features that make it much easier to use for both members and WiLS staff.

6. Next meeting preview: January 13, 2022

J. Chamberlain shared a preview of the January meeting. We should be hearing presentations on our FY2021 audit results as well as an update from our investment firm. Additionally, we will be sharing the latest information on the WiLS 50th anniversary celebrations in the works and our strategic planning initiative.

Adjournment

Having exhausted the agenda, J. Davies requested to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 am. S. Platteter moved to adjourn. Seconded by T. Voss. Motion Carried.