

WiLS Board Meeting

December 12, 2023 – 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm



Board attendees: Michelle Byholm (Chequamegon School District), Jennifer Chamberlain, (WiLS, ex-officio), Jennifer Gurske (Madison Trust for Historic Preservation), Mindy King (University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point), Ashley McHose (Lakeshore Technical College), Sarah Miller (WiscNet), Paula Norman (Rhineland School District), Steve Platteter (Prairie Lakes Library System), Tasha Saecker (Appleton Public Library), Ellen Sayed (Medical College of Wisconsin), Adrienne Thunder (Ho-Chunk Nation Language Division), Micki Uppena (Mineral Point School District), Heather Winter (Milwaukee Art Museum)

Staff attendees: Tom Klement, Rebecca Rosenstiel, Kristen Whitson

Guests: Ben Miller (Recollection Wisconsin chair and Department of Public Instruction),

Absent: Barbara Brattin (Kenosha Public Library)

Notes

1. Call to Order; Changes/additions to the agenda
T. Saecker called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm and asked for any changes to the agenda. No changes were suggested.
2. Recognition of Guests and Comments
T. Saecker reminded the board that our recent review of the WiLS bylaws reminded us that WiLS members are allowed to sit in on board meetings. The WiLS staff has implemented a procedure listing the upcoming board meetings on our website along with a link to a Google form for members to request meeting connection information. The form indicates that while members are not allowed to vote, they are invited to share comments or questions during a designated portion of the meeting. This new standing agenda item provides that opportunity. In upcoming member newsletters, we will share this opportunity more widely. With the exception of Ben Miller who is attending on behalf of Recollection Wisconsin, we did not receive any requests from members to attend this meeting.
3. Approval of [August 24, 2023 minutes](#)
S. Platteter moved to approve the August 2023 minutes, S. Miller seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried unanimously.
4. Reports and Updates
 - a. **Chair's report** – T. Saecker and the Executive Committee are advising on the executive director annual review. J. Chamberlain and the Executive Committee revised an existing staff survey to more closely align with job duties, and staff have until this week to return their feedback on J. Chamberlain's performance. The Executive Committee will review the responses and provide a report and/or follow up with a meeting to go through aggregate responses with J. Chamberlain early in 2024.

b. Financial Report – T. Klement shared the September Balance Sheet and Budget with Actuals, and noted that everything looks to be on track, with some areas looking better than anticipated. The Balance Sheet looks good, and reserves are still, as always, in a functional good way. When comparing this year's Quarter 1 Revenue to last year, we are currently ahead; if these trends stick, WiLS will hit the expected budget. Other items to note are that investments are currently lagging, and Ovid is no longer accepting payment by credit card, which means WiLS is not getting a profit from payments made to this vendor. J. Chamberlain added that Consulting has almost reached their budget income based on confirmed projects through the end of this fiscal year; there are a few potential projects on the horizon, so Consulting could potentially exceed the budget. T. Klement also noted that in Expenses, anything that is currently over 25% of the budget comes down to timing; these are budget areas that typically see a lot of usage by this time of year, then slow down for the rest of the year. There were no additional questions from the Board.

c. Director's Report – J. Chamberlain highlighted from her written report that WiLS really appreciates the Board's feedback and perspectives regarding Consulting projects; after updates to the service have been implemented, projects are still going well and there haven't been any concern or questions from members. K. Kiesewetter recently launched a Data Classroom service area, and it's off to a great start- there are six participants and what they're working on is applicable as they work through the data platform that Kim has put together for this project. WiLS' Strategy Group is working on creating a WiLS Member Survey to go out every two years with the intent to get a sense of how members are engaging with WiLS' work and how satisfied they are with WiLS' services; the next survey sending out in February, after the annual WiLS Membership Meeting. WiLS is also in the middle of a full-Audit (as a reminder, last year was an audit review), and the Auditors should complete their work in time for the results to be shared at the February Board meeting. J. Chamberlain and E. Hughes found out today that the Indigenous Community of Practice group chose a name: *Culture Keepers Digital Stewardship Collective*; their next steps are to start building a proposal and sustainability model. There were no additional questions from the Board.

d. CoopAC report – J. Chamberlain reminded the board of the Cooperative Purchasing Advisory Committee which is a subcommittee of this board. As you can see in the written report, the CoopAC committee will be assisting the WiLS Coop team in reviewing our Ideal License Terms document which serves as a template when we review individual product licenses. E. Sayed asked if WiLS includes in the license agreements the ability to share pricing between libraries, and if not, could that become a part of the process? J. Chamberlain was unsure if that's in consideration, but will propose it to CoopAC and will follow up with the Board via Basecamp.

e. Strategic Plan Implementation Update – J. Chamberlain shared a document providing an overview of the 2023 progress and key takeaways, as well as a preview of the priority activities each team has identified as their focus in 2024. J. Chamberlain continues to be impressed with the WiLS staff in how central the Strategic Plan has become in defining and guiding their individual and team work. The Board voiced their appreciation for WiLS' Strategic Plan and the supporting documents, noting that it's an impressive display of the work WiLS does and how it's a lived document that is well organized.

5. Service Area Presentation: Recollection Wisconsin

K. Whitson, Recollection Wisconsin Project Manager, along with B. Miller, chair of Recollection Wisconsin and the Director of the Library Services Team for the Department of Public Instruction provided an overview (link to the slideshow here) on project funding and current initiatives. Highlights include a reminder of what this project is: Recollection Wisconsin guides Wisconsin organizations through the process of bringing their historical collections online, aggregates them, and shares them with the world through Recollection Wisconsin and the Digital Public Library of America. Recollection Wisconsin doesn't "hold" those resources, but instead shares the resource metadata and points users back to the home organization to view the resource and explore the collection. The collection is an aggregation of historical content from 254 organizations across the state - libraries of all types, archives, historical societies, museums, government agencies, etc. These 254 organizations contribute 411 distinct collections and while most of them are state and local history focuses, some of our content partners like UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee contribute materials from across the country and around the world.

Governance for this project includes: six organizations that make up the Governing Board (Milwaukee Public Library, Marquette University, Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, University of Wisconsin Madison, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, and WiLS); 13 members guide the collection as part of the Steering Committee, and 7 organization help inform our outreach to the K12 community as part of our Education Advisory Committee.

Recollection Wisconsin is 10 years old this year. After many years on LSTA, grant, and private foundation funds, this project has been written into the state budget for this biennium. This was the result of a ton of work and activation on the part of Recollection Wisconsin advocates on the board and steering committee, who worked tirelessly to explain Recollection Wisconsin, its importance in the state's cultural heritage landscape, and kept bringing our request to the top of the pile. The legislature wrote Recollection Wisconsin into the budget for \$150,000 this fiscal year, \$300,000 next fiscal year, and we hope that the \$300,000 a year figure will easily stay in the budget now that it's already in. This will greatly help support not only the project, but the work that WiLS does, which can be broken into two areas: Collections (exhibits, educator resources, DPLA amplification, outreach to publicize collections) and Practitioner support at orgs providing that content (toolkits, digitization kits, workshops, advice).

Next, Recollection Wisconsin has four main initiatives to focus on for this biennium: Targeted outreach to areas of the state not represented in Recollection Wisconsin; Foundational discussions and documents for the consortium; Training stakeholders to be ambassadors for Recollection Wisconsin; and Updating metadata guidelines to meet best practices in equitable, inclusive description.

The Board did not have any questions, but voiced how impressed they are with this project and gave their thanks to everyone on the Recollection Wisconsin team and governance for their work.

6. Introductions and Round Robin

T. Saecker led the group in introductions and a round robin sharing time on what's happening locally in their organizations and communities.

- T. Saecker shared that Appleton Public Library is in the process of moving in to their second temporary location, and their building project is still on track and the new location is set to open in 2025.
- J. Chamberlain is prepping for the annual staff reviews, to begin in January/February; this is always an exciting time of year where she gets an opportunity to speak with staff one-on-one about their successes and goals.
- Prairie Lakes Library System is almost one-year-old, and S. Platteter is part of a team that is currently in the process of working out a Strategic Plan for PLLS.
- A. Thunder is in the middle of a long-term project, digitizing all of their audio, video, and materials, with the goal to have all of these items uploaded to the CMS Mukurtu. In addition to this digitization project, they have grown their curriculum and offer Ho-Chunk language instruction online, in person, and wherever they are wanted; and they are revamping their website.
- A. McHose is in the midst of finals season, and so things are busy with students; but they are also working on finalizing their first ingestion of materials in to Recollection Wisconsin; they've just received funding from WTCS (Wisconsin Technical College System) to begin a large OER (Open Educational Resources) project- Lakeshores Technical College will be project managing about 20 adaptations for OER; they are within their second year of their WiLS Ideas to Action grant for programming around multilingual libraries, which has allowed them to focus a lot of programming this fall around bilingual resources, hosting bilingual in-person and virtual story times, and providing meal kits to families.
- This is E. Sayed's final WiLS Board meeting, as she is retiring in February 2024, and is very thankful for the opportunity to sit on this board- it has been a rewarding and enlightening experience. Current projects at the Medical College of Wisconsin include building a search committee to hire a new Library Director; undergoing a planning process for a space renovation- the library will be losing physical space to add additional classrooms, so they are also going through a major weeding project; the campus is also building a new Cancer Research Institute, which will include a skywalk that leads directly to the library, as well as a new Forensic Science Building, and updates to the Children's Research Medical School—lots of construction on the library's side of the building! This past September the Medical College of Wisconsin hosted an event that was hosted by a staff member from Smithsonian Institute—the library completed a large “clean up” project to prepare for this- hanging and displaying donated paintings and pictures that aren't normally displayed, dusting off the exhibits, etc—and the host from the Smithsonian was impressed and excited about many of the unique materials MCW's collections hold- for example an item explaining artificial limbs from the 1500s.
- H. Winter is excited that the Milwaukee Art Museum's staff has grown from a department of two to a department of six this year: a new Library Archivist, Institutional Archivist, Right and Reproduction Specialist, and a Collection Photographer have been hired. The most exciting thing that has happened this year, though, is that the light over her desk, which has been out for 12 years, was replaced this week!

- J. Gurske shared that the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation is turning 50 in 2024, which is thrilling and exciting on its own, but especially since this is a nonprofit that was run solely by volunteers until 2011. Each of their regular events in 2024 will have a celebratory aspect to them next year, and they are planning another three-four events. They will also be releasing a new logo in January; their first logo change!
- M. King is wrapping up for the year- Finals Week on her campus is next week- so there has been a lot of helping students with their final projects. University of Wisconsin- Steven's Point library is also in the middle of relocation to a temporary location, with their new space opening in the Summer of 2025. They are also recipients of a WiLS Ideas to Action grant, and they are working on hard on their *Poem in Your Pocket Day* project: the call for submissions has recently gone out, and they have already received a good number of responses. Their campus is also looking to move away from ILLiad for Interlibrary Loan, so an exploration process is happening there.
- M. Uppena shared that she was at SLATE last week, and is excited to incorporate what she and her colleagues discovered about AI into her school.
- At the start of this school year, P. Norman began working in a new school district, going from a K-12 library to K-5 library; it's been exciting, but a challenge to learn the names of students and colleagues, and adjusting to new processes and protocols.
- S. Miller will be taking on the WiLS Board Chair role next year, and is excited to take that on. The big news at WiscNet is that the Executive Director of 25 years is retiring; a search is out for this position, and S. Miller is optimistic that the next Executive Director will further grow the organization, and is excited for what's next.
- Lots of new stuff is happening at DPI, and B. Miller noted that one of the big things they are focusing on right now is book challenges around the state- how it presents to school and public libraries- and focusing on the state's legislation surrounding this. Also the Board of Commissions of Public Lands recently announced a 25% increase in Common School Funds for this year, plus an \$2million for Public Libraries.
- K. Whitson shared a Recollection Wisconsin training video that was narrated by WiLS staffer R. Rosenstiel.
- R. Rosenstiel shared her narrator voice with the Board, and is excited to complete the WiLS Staff Review in January.

7. Meeting was adjourned at 5:12 pm.