

**Wisconsin Public Library Consortium
Technology Collaboration Steering Committee Notes
May 9, 2023, 3:00 pm
via zoom**

ATTENDEES: Kristen Anderson (WRLS), Wyatt Ditzler (PLLS), Jeff Gilderson-Duwe (WLS), Bill Herman (DPI), Steve Hesel (MCFLS), Karol Kennedy (BLS), Sherry Machones (NWLS), Marla Sepnafski (WVLS), Vicki Teal Lovely (SCLS), John Thompson (IFLS)

GUESTS: Ben Miller (DPI), Bruce Smith (DPI), Melissa Aro (DPI), Ada Demlow, Josh Klingbeil (WVLS)

PROJECT MANAGERS: Jennifer Chamberlain (WiLS)

1. Call to order

Chair J. Gilderson-Duwe called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

2. Review Agenda – changes or additions

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

3. Approval of minutes – [February 9, 2023](#)

M. Sepnafski moved approval of the minutes; K. Kennedy seconded. Motion carried.

4. Reports: Committee/Workgroup Updates

a. [WPLC Technology Operations Committee Meeting Notes – April 4, 2023](#)

J. Chamberlain reported that we had increased attendance at this meeting, due to advertising the meeting more widely via system directors and WPLC announcements. Meeting included discussion of a data dashboard specifications sheet, and a demonstration of a WiLS-designed data dashboard housed on Google's Looker Studio.

5. Discussion Items

a. Discussion: Potential Project – Data Dashboard

The group discussed the feasibility/possibility of this collaboration including next steps and the role of the Technology Steering committee.

B. Miller shared DPI's interest in finding ways to collaborate on data needs. He views DPI's role as threefold: as a provider of trusted data sources, to help move projects forward (stand-up), and to support equitable access via trainings or resources. DPI is very interested in supporting equity in data access and use. The recently commissioned Data Landscape report includes a list of actionable items. LSTA may provide funding opportunities to support these efforts. DPI is interested in gathering people together to discuss data needs and infrastructure. This could include exploration of a scalable data dashboard project.

B. Smith from DPI shared a handout with a draft timeline of possible LSTA funded activities. He is interested in what this group is thinking might be likely first steps.

Committee discussion:

J. Thompson asked for more specifics on DPI assistance for product development. B. Smith clarified DPI is not seeing their role as creating the dashboard for the state. They see their role as collecting and releasing reliable, timely data. M. Aro echoed this and added that DPI needs a broad set of input on what data metrics will be most helpful in dashboard. Not all data will be sent up to the state level as that creates additional burden.

J. Thompson asked the committee, do we need to create a team of interested parties who want to move this project forward, with support from DPI? J. Gilderson-Duwe suggested the proposed data summit could be a facilitated joint meeting with steering and operations committee to chart out strategy and break down the project into manageable pieces.

J. Klingbeil echoed that the biggest barrier for a project like this is the sense of scale. He suggests first step is defining the shape of the project.

V. Teal-Lovely reminded the group that SCLS already has a Tableau data dashboard that showcases annual report data for every library in the state. It is possible we consider using this data dashboard as a starting point. <https://www.scls.info/data-statistics>.

M. Aro affirmed the need for a group to provide leadership and direction on where we start. She sees this as a baseline for equity purposes. While some systems may be further down the road in terms of data resources, the concept of a baseline dashboard would allow systems with more resources to expand upon it.

J. Gilderson-Duwe suggested a joint meeting could focus on creating a roadmap for a data dashboard, looking at data we already have. Are there ways of better framing what we already have and make it more useful for our libraries? Next step might be to take a couple of those data points, or a core of most useful data, and then focus on the technical problems of how to gather and present the data. Attack the front-end piece first and then focus efforts on digging into the back-end, multiple ILS harvesting challenge.

B. Smith pointed out that the new data landscape report tells us what libraries know, think, and want in data. For example, libraries are interested in trend and analysis capabilities – they would like to see the data in a comparative way through cohorts by locale, population, region. They also want to improve data awareness/understanding and then have access to supportive trainings to help them use the data effectively. Also interested in templates for reporting data. J. Gilderson-Duwe sees the WPLC Technology Collaborative committees as the body to focus on the technical, operational aspects, not the training pieces.

S. Hesel agrees with the thought of a forum of both committees. He has significant experience with the IFLS dashboard product. He suggests the conversations includes identifying what purpose a dashboard will serve first, and then talk about components.

He has concern about the shelf-life of a dashboard – how do we keep it going, hosting options, etc.

M. Aro noted the goal here is to give a baseline to everyone, and those who can build upon and go beyond can still do so. S. Hesel likes the idea of having a consultant assist with this project.

J. Klingbeil sees two service levels: a statewide dashboard, the thing that everyone normalizes to, and local dashboards that individual systems create. We should focus on identifying the statewide shape of data. The secondary goal might be to establish a singular resource that can be used for both statewide and local/customized data down the road.

J. Thompson pointed out that SCLS and IFLS are good examples of two very different approaches to a data dashboard. We need to make sure we are talking about the same thing when we are talking about dashboards. One is a visualization of static annual report data, and the other is a dynamic dashboard that displays “real-time” usage data. A long-term vision might be to create a dashboard that can replace the need for the annual report prefill workload. That would bring these two approaches together.

B. Smith reminded the committee that Wisconsin is not the only state trying to tackle data dashboards and we can learn from other examples. RAILS in Illinois, for example.

The consensus of the committee is interest in a data summit or convening. B. Smith reiterated that DPI could set aside some funds to help support this work through LSTA. From that summit, we could look at examples in our state, outside of our state and start building a roadmap. A suggestion is to hire an outside facilitator to make sure we end up with an actionable process.

Some discussion on opening up the summit beyond the two technology collaborative committees. The landscape study provides comprehensive input from heavy data users with over 500 participants through the survey and focus groups.

Project managers and the Steering Committee will begin to plan a gathering. M. Sepnafski volunteered Wisconsin Valley Library Service to serve as the project fiscal agent for LSTA purposes.

b. Efficacy of WPLC system technology collaboration structures

J. Gilderson-Duwe wanted to take a temperature check with the committee to ask the question: is this tech collaborative structure working? He is hearing some concerns from IT folks that this collaborative hasn't yielded a successful project yet. Or is it too young to judge? J. Gilderson-Duwe reminded the group that the WPLC has agency to redesign the structure if necessary.

J. Thompson supports taking a continuous improvement approach, yet he is hopeful that today's discussion on a data dashboard project is moving things in the right

direction. He also noted that a project of this size will require significant effort and focus from both committees.

J. Klingbeil voiced his support of this structure because it allows for open discussion and exploration. In his opinion, success in large scale projects is often attributable to timing. These two committees allow the space and time to find the best opportunities to leverage.

V. Teal Lovely added that the annual summer convening of technology folks (formerly Tech-A-Talka) serves a different purpose, and she doesn't see these bodies as duplicative. It was suggested that this body could bring project ideas to the WPLC Tech Collaborative.

6. Appoint chair for remainder of 2023

With the retirement of J. Gilderson-Duwe, the committee needs to appoint a new chair for the remainder of this year. J. Thompson volunteered to serve as chair for the remainder of the year. It was noted that the next meeting conflicts with SRLAAW. Project managers will send out a new meeting poll.

7. Committee information sharing and questions

J. Thompson thanked J. Gilderson-Duwe for leading this group and for all he has done as a fellow system director. J. Gilderson-Duwe complimented all of the systems and WPLC collaborations – these have been some of his most rewarding projects.

8. Next Meeting Date and Adjournment: August 4, 2023, at 2:00 pm – look for meeting date change.

Meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm.