

**Wisconsin Public Library Consortium**  
**Board Meeting Notes**  
**August 9, 2021 at 1:00 pm**

**PRESENT:** Kristen Anderson (WRLS), Jeff Gilderson-Duwe (WLS), David Kranz (SWLS), Mellanie Mercier (BLS), Steve Hesel (MCFLS), Rachel Metzler (WVLS), Steve Ohs (LLS), Steve Platteter (ALS), Gina Rae (NWLS), Rebecca Schadrie (MCLS), Bradley Shipp (OWLS), Tracy Vreeke (NFLS), Jean Anderson, proxy for Martha Van Pelt (SWLS), Maureen Welch (IFLS)

**ABSENT:** Rob Nunez (KLS), Monarch

**GUESTS:** David Dowling (LLS), Ben Miller (DPI)

**PROJECT MANAGERS:** Jennifer Chamberlain (WiLS), Melody Clark (WiLS), Sara Gold (WiLS)

**1. Call to order/Welcome & Introductions**

Chair K. Anderson called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

**2. Consent Agenda**

- a. Review agenda
- b. Approval of minutes from [June 10, 2021](#)
- c. Decisions made between June 10, 2021 and current meeting: None
- d. [YTD Budget](#)

S. Ohs moved approval of the consent agenda, S. Platteter seconded. The consent agenda was approved by consensus.

**3. Updates from Previous Meetings/Projects**

**a. [Historical and Local Collections Committee Update](#)**

M. Clark noted that a written update was provided and asked if there were any questions. K. Anderson stated that WRLS has been getting more questions about newspaper digitization, and asked if the WPLC project managers were receiving more questions as well. M. Clark responded that there hasn't necessarily been more, but since new projects aren't being taking on, project managers are keeping a list of interested libraries. It was noted there are about a dozen interested libraries/projects on the waitlist right now. T. Vreeke also noted that NFLS has been seeing more interest in newspaper digitization.

**4. New Business**

**a. Informational: SimplyE and the Palace Project**

The SimplyE project, an open-source e-reader app developed by the New York Public Library, has recently undergone some changes regarding its partners and development, including a new app being developed in partnership with Lyris and DPLA, called the Palace Project. Project managers provided a [brief background and update](#) on this new project and asked if there were any questions.

S. Ohs asked if this new app is more like an open-source alternative to Libby? M. Clark answered that it does seem to be moving towards becoming a contender to OverDrive. J. Chamberlain added

that the app is geared towards patrons as a one-stop shop for content from multiple origination points, but it's also a middleware aggregator that libraries have control over what content is being ingested.

WiLS has been keeping an eye on SimplyE since around 2013, and DPI has been for the last 3 or 4 years. B. Miller shared that in terms of funding, DPI sees value in a research and development phase for SimplyE and the Palace Project, to help determine which platform is better for Wisconsin patrons.

J. Gilderson-Duwe shared that while he'd be comfortable trying this out as a pilot, he'd be cautious about pursuing a new ebook platform until it can stand apart from OverDrive/Libby, citing the amount of time and effort that has gone in to establishing Libby in their libraries. WLS has also added API's that allow their ILS to work as an aggregator.

Moving forward, WPLC project managers will continue to watch the development of SimplyE and the Palace Project, and will share updates with the board. This conversation will continue, and when everyone feels ready and the time is right, WPLC can move in to the R&D phase or implement a pilot project. S. Gold also asked that if any libraries are approached by anyone from Lyris or the Palace Project, to let the project managers know by email at [wplc-info@wils.org](mailto:wplc-info@wils.org). B. Miller also noted that DPI's contact, Micah May, is willing to talk to the WPLC board about this project at a future Board meeting.

**b. Discussion and action: Form Board Nominations Committee**

M. Clark shared that it is time to form the Nominations Committee that will solicit candidates to be the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, and Liaison to the Digital Library Steering Committee and Liaison to the Technology Steering Committee. The positions will serve the 2022 calendar year. It was asked if there were any volunteers for the Nominations Committee? The group was informed that at least three people would be needed for the committee. It was also noted that if anyone was interested in filling any of the positions to let the project managers know.

Volunteers for the Nominations Committee are: M. Welch, G. Rae, and K. Anderson.

M. Welch noted that she will be retiring next year and will no longer be able to serve as the Digital Library Steering Committee Liaison. J. Gilderson-Duwe said that he is willing to serve as the Liaison to the Technology Steering Committee again.

S. Ohs moved to approve the nominations committee. T. Vreeke seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**c. Discussion and action: Digital Library Steering Committee seat apportionment**

It was shared that each year, the Board validates the Digital Library Steering Committee seat apportionment by agreeing upon the percentage of Buying Pool contribution that represents a seat, and determining if the seats are allocated by the percentage. It was noted however, that the past few years there have been some discussion about including System Advantage amounts into the formula. Project managers have prepared [two versions](#), one with the buying pool spend, as has been in the past, and one that includes previous years Advantage spend.

The group was asked which formula would you like to use for the Digital Library Steering Committee seat apportionment?

The group was asked do you think we need to change the percent ranges per seat?

There was consensus that the committee should be kept smaller and more manageable. M. Welch suggested that it seemed to make the most sense for systems to have one or two seats, and that any more than that could become excessive. J. Gilderson-Duwe agreed. T. Vreeke added that currently, NFLS has two seats that each bring in very different backgrounds and thoughts; the updated formula would drop them to one, which would mean more internal discussions before the one seat comes in for a vote.

S. Hesper asked if there were any contentious topics that would possibly be affected by some systems losing or gaining seats. M. Clark answered that in the past, the only things that could be considered contentious is anything budget related; these always take a lot of time and discussion.

S. Hesper asked for clarification on if this formula will be looked at and updated each year to determine systems' number of seats; could it be that any systems that have three seats may average back down to two seats? M. Clark confirmed that yes, this is recalculated each year, and that the board has the opportunity each year to tweak or change the formula as needs change. Overall, the board was content with the idea of this updated formula. There was consensus that systems with three seats have earned those seats, and that following years may see those seats removed down to two or one.

T. Vreeke moved to propose adopting the formula in Column J (the proposed apportionment that includes System Advantage spend), and S. Hesper seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**d. Discussion and action: Digital Library and Technology Steering Committees job descriptions**

Each year, the Board affirms the Steering Committees' job descriptions for the following year. The position descriptions were shared and it was asked if there were any questions or concerns about the Steering Committees' job descriptions.

There was no discussion.

G. Rae moved to approve the Steering Committees' job descriptions for 2022. B. Shipps seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**e. Discussion: Potential 2022 R&D projects & Topics for the Collection Development Committee to Consider**

It was noted that this is an item that we consider each year around this time. The Board will consider potential projects that might be good R&D projects for WPLC for next year as well as recommend any activities that the Collection Development Committee should consider for their recommendations next year.

*Questions for discussion:*

- Do you have ideas or know of potential projects that might be good R&D projects for WPLC for next year?
- What pain points/challenges are you having with your own physical collections that the digital library could potential solve?
- Given the landscape in your library/community, what issues/topics might channel through the platform/digital library?
- Regarding the 2023 budget - Do you want to look at the current buying pool formula?
  - Will your system/libraries be prepared to do a 5% increase for 2023?
- Thinking about the current landscape and potential changes to the upcoming DPI allocation funding model (state aid), at what point does the WPLC/systems need to rethink or reaffirm their commitment to the buying pool? Should the WPLC be monitoring this?

S. Hesser asked if, with OverDrive's acquisition of Kanopy, if WPLC is thinking of piloting a Kanopy subscription? M. Clark said that Libby doesn't currently support videos, so it may not be likely right away, but this is something that the Collection Development Committee could start to look into.

G. Rae mentioned that a painpoint for NWLS is the physical newspaper collection: physical newspapers are expensive and underused, and they don't expect that to change, so they are looking at subscription to NewBank.

M. Clark asked about the 5% increase for 2023, and asked for everyone's thoughts and feelings on this. The consensus is that the 5% increase is important, and that meeting this will be a priority for many systems. K. Anderson asked if it were possible to get a preliminary dollar amount for what the cost for 2023 may look like. M. Clark replied that cost is based in part on the previous year's circulation, so the actual numbers aren't available yet, however she might be able to come up with some estimates based on 2020 circulation.

M. Clark clarified that the current buying pool formula is the 75% of the previous year's circulation and 25% of the population and asked if the group wanted to look at the buying pool formula for the upcoming year. J. Gilderson-Duwe proposed some things to think about regarding updating the current formula: Would the group like to introduce a new variable into the buying pool formula, and if so, what would that be? He also noted that the original formula was 50% circulation and 50% population, then was updated to the current 75%/25%. There could be something to be learned by looking at the statutory distribution of state aid, and apply that to the formula for the sake of equity.

K. Anderson suggested that at the next board meeting, project managers give a history and review of the buying pool formula and budget, so that it's fresh in everyone's minds when potential changes start happening. M. Clark will add this to the October board meeting agenda, and added that her concern is that if the board does want to create a new formula for 2023, it's going to be a quick turnaround for the Collection Development Committee to have a recommendation ready for the Spring (but it is doable).

## **5. Information Sharing from Partners**

B. Miller shared that DPI's new Grants Coordinator has started and will be getting to work soon on

making the \$350,000 contribution to the digital library a reality. DPI is working with SCLS as a fiscal agent and no action is needed by other systems to get this money into the collection.

**6. Adjourn**

Next meeting: Board Meeting on October 25, 2021 at 1:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.