Historical Newspapers Project
Historical and Local Digital Collections Committee
Pre-proposal to WPLC Board – June 15, 2020

Background

In 2015, WPLC initiated a partnership with the Wisconsin Newspaper Association and the Wisconsin Historical Society to add digitized historical newspapers to the Archive of Wisconsin Newspapers database available through BadgerLink. Since then, WPLC project managers have worked with 23 individual libraries to coordinate the digitization of more than 600,000 pages of historical newspapers on master microfilm negatives held by WHS and ingestion of content into the Archive by WNA's access platform vendor, Tecnavia.

In late 2018, the WPLC Historical and Local Digital Collections Committee began to investigate alternative platforms for providing improved centralized access to digitized historical newspapers. WPLC Project Managers also began conversations with the Wisconsin Historical Society regarding potential collaboration around a shared platform (details of this process are outlined in the update provided to the WPLC Board at its February 2020 meeting).

The Historical and Local Digital Collections Committee recommends Veridian as the preferred platform due to ease of use, a modern and responsive interface, support for METS/ALTO (the best-practice technical specifications for digital newspaper reproductions and metadata), and adoption by numerous statewide digital newspaper initiatives including California, Colorado, Illinois, and Michigan.

The Committee is not making a request for funding at this time, but encourages the WPLC Board to consider using future R&D funds to support the initial launch of the Veridian platform ($36,220). The Committee also recommends that WPLC continue to coordinate with WHS to adopt the new platform, as this will significantly expand the amount of historical newspaper content centrally available to patrons (at least 1.1 million pages -- 600,000 pages from BadgerLink and 500,000 from WHS's work with the National Digital Newspaper Program).

Tentative implementation budget and timeline

Activity	Partners/Roles	Timeframe	Funding source	Cost
Process existing content (generate NDNP-compliant METS/ALTO XML)	Digital Divide Data	Summer-Fall 2020	DPI – LSTA (committed)	$111,000
Launch Veridian platform	Veridian	TBD	TBD	$36,220
Migrate existing content to platform	Veridian	TBD	N/A	No cost
Annual Veridian licensing and hosting	Veridian	Ongoing	TBD	$36,300
Coordinate new content additions to platform	WHS	Ongoing	WHS	TBD
Preserve digital master files and associated metadata	WHS	Ongoing	WHS	N/A