NOTES
Recollection Wisconsin DPLA Service Hub
Governing Board Quarterly Meeting
October 31, 2023
12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

ACCESS INFORMATION
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86106132856?pwd=T0VUbkZYTzVDa1I1bzhXb2k3UEt6QT09
Phone: 1 312 626 6799
Meeting ID: 861 0613 2856
Passcode: 460806

Welcome
We shared some amazing Halloween / autumn photos from the collections! We welcomed Emily Vierya to the committee; she will become the Milwaukee Public Library representative on the Governing Board while Karli Pederson is out on leave, and likely beyond.

Updates
1. Governing board signing policy
   The proposed signing policy would document the authority of the RW board as a whole to "sign" agreements by approving them as an entire board. This would remove any individual names or institution names from agreements that RW "signs." The approval line on any MOU or document would be "Approved by the Recollection Wisconsin Governing Board on xx/xx/20xx." This policy is proposed primarily so that Recollection Wisconsin can sign a project management MOU with WiLS.

   UW-Madison needs to run this proposed policy by their legal counsel; UWM did send it to legal but has no reply yet; DPI indicated that because RW isn't a legal entity, this signing policy is meaningless. That would mean that anything the board "signs" in this manner is not a binding contract and WiLS would assume the risk. DPI's legal counsel recommends that RW be incorporated as an LLC, then the MOU would be between the Board institutions and RW. This is not totally off the table and will come up when we discuss RW mission and vision. For now the conversation is tabled until we hear from UW-Madison and UWM legal counsel.

2. October conference report
   a. Ohio Digital Network fest - ODN asked RW to come present on our efforts at community engagement and collecting feedback over the years from work on the Digital Readiness Community of Practice, stakeholder survey, gap analysis, etc. ODN paid travel expenses. It was a very good opportunity for building relationships with other DPLA folks. The other topic of conversation that day was on prison labor in digitization, and the other speaker was really interested in RW's work in our statement on prison labor and will be using it in her work going forward.

b. WHS conference - RW led a workshop, sponsored by WHRAB, on Getting Started with Digitization Projects. It was co-hosted with Scott Brouwer of La Crosse Public Library, longtime Steering Committee member and friend of RW. It went really well and the room capacity was maxed out. It was a great opportunity to talk with lots of small local historical societies about what they need from RW.

c. WLA - RW had an exhibit booth and it was a great time to connect with public library folks about partnerships, content partner work, and outreach.

3. New [Digital Readiness Toolkit](#)
We're pleased to share the updated Digital Readiness Toolkit in new eBook format! Thanks to the contributions of the Community Archiving Workshop, this new Toolkit has a ton of resources for audiovisual digitization and work. Along with the new format, especially check out the self-assessment tool for an organization to assess their own digitization project priorities and other cool appendices, like a guide to A/V digitization equipment, working with an A/V digitization vendor, and tons of additional resources and guidance throughout the Toolkit. Please share it widely! We will be contributing to a poster presentation with the Community Archiving Workshop at the AMIA (Association of Moving Image Archivists) conference, and information about the updated Toolkit was already shared at the ATALM (Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums) conference last week.

4. DPLA updates
As you may know, DPLA is currently undertaking a strategic visioning process. They've hired a consultant, Sarah Lutman, who interviewed about 50 people associated with state hubs. Andi, Kristen, Ann, Ben and Steven Rice met with her. She also interviewed Emily Pfotenhauer to get a more historical perspective from Recollection Wisconsin. Sarah shared the summary results of those conversations last week at an Open Board + Community Meeting.

In summary, it seemed that hubs expressed disappointment with DPLA's performance in recent years. Staff turnover, lack of clarity about direction of the DPLA and hub network, an impression that the cultural heritage side of DPLA is less important than the ebook side, and lack of stable funding have all contributed to this impression. Hubs seemed to be asking for more leadership and stability and direction from DPLA.

DPLA's response to that was to explain that funders who were really excited about DPLA's lofty goals in the early years haven't been interested in further operational funding. The funding situation isn't stable and this is a major challenge for them. DPLA noted disengagement from the hubs as a contributing factor. Several hubs pushed back on that, saying that they wanted more leadership and guidance from DPLA, but there wasn't much dialogue given the setting of the meeting, unfortunately.

DPLA is planning to discuss this more and set a direction forward at their Board of Directors retreat in January 2024, and said they'll share more then about what comes next.

This, along with the departure of Hub and Community Engagement Manager Shaneé Willis, is concerning. We will keep you posted about what comes next.

It was asked how disengagement is evident to and affecting DPLA, including finding volunteers for working groups, contributors to collections, etc. The answer wasn't clear but Kristen Whitson will seek more information to share with the board.
Follow up: the recording of the open board + community meeting can be found here and the slides are here. DPLA's responses to the feedback begin around the 39 minute mark. In answer to the RW board's question about where the disengagement is occurring: Joseph Lucia, Dean of Temple University, said that reduced engagement from funders has led to burnout, frustration, emotional exhaustion, and disengagement in the Pennsylvania hub. He said that he's heard similar feedback from other hubs and observed a loss of morale and engagement. No specifics were given about the measures of disengagement; upon further review, it sounds like the evidence is mostly anecdotal.

Nominations for Steering Committee
Elizabeth shared that there are two vacant positions on the Steering Committee and the call for nominations will be open in the next week or two. It will be sent to the Board and Steering Committee to share or nominate people they think would be a good fit.

We took a break and met Stompy the cat.

Follow up from September Joint Meeting of Board and Steering Committee
Ben shared the four priorities and how to distribute the work: two driven by the project managers, one led by the board, and one that the steering committee should lead.

Priority 1: Undertake targeted outreach to organizations in the 11 non-participating counties (see page 2) and other counties with low participation. Led by Project Managers.
- Project managers can drive the response to this priority and consult with Board and Steering as needed
- We'll research each of the 11 counties + cultural heritage orgs, including our own notes about what we already know about barriers for those orgs and in those areas of the state. We already know that several local historical societies are using content management systems we can't harvest from, like PastPerfect, and we're working on a technical solution to that - it would be a big barrier to participation to be able to remove.
- We will develop conversation guidelines to find out more about what the barriers to participation are; maybe develop a brief survey.
- We'll schedule consultations with orgs in each of the 11 counties

It was noted that we should consider and measure how much time it takes from point of contact to getting new partners on board to help us plan for future growth. This will help validate the budget spend and costs of the partnership development work.

Priority 2: Need to develop core documentation and communication pieces (develop strategic plan with SMART goals). Led by a workgroup of the Board.
- Documentation: There is already most of a strategic plan in place, even if not called that - there are strategic goals, core functions, and the prioritization activity we just did. We're only missing a few pieces: mission/vision statement, values, purpose/scope.
- It would be good to define scope more clearly, particularly in terms of widening the scope of RW beyond DPLA. Can RW take the lead on projects that may not result in new content for the service hub? Why or why not; what are the associated concerns?
- Discussion item: roles, charges, and communication with and between Board and Steering Committees .
- Communication: We have several communications pieces already from the advocacy process, we can build on these to put together a brand kit like [WiLS example](#)
- This can also work towards the "advocacy training for RW stakeholders" priority, which we'll rephrase as "give stakeholders tools to be ambassadors for Recollection Wisconsin." This branding and awareness of Recollection Wisconsin will be a project-manager-led piece.
- Ben volunteered to lead a joint workgroup to draft the key pieces, which the workgroup will run past the board and steering committee and then finalize. Board should lead the thinking in this area (with project manager input).

It was asked if we envisioned the metadata updates being led by a workgroup of Steering, we might want to clarify that there are two opportunities available so members can volunteer for the best fit for them without burdening capacity. It might be best if they are recruited at the same time.

Priority 3: Advocacy training for RW stakeholders. Led by Project Managers
- This priority will tie into results from the vision and mission development priority, resulting in shared communications assets and guidance.

Priority 4: Update our metadata guidelines to reflect best practices in cataloging for equity, diversity, and inclusion. Led by Steering Committee.
- Next step is doing some research about what those best practices are - can we ask the Steering Committee to form a workgroup (or joint workgroup) or volunteer to do some of this research?
- develop what a charge would be - clearly defined outcome - then start recruiting
- Plan should include consulting with and compensating community members to advise
- Ben will suggest that this is a steering committee-led initiative and that someone from steering form a joint working group to address this (with project manager input).

It was noted that Steering would want to charter or sponsor a workgroup that might pull from stakeholders who are not on the Steering Committee.

It was noted that these four priorities will set us up for a promising future, an initial step on a longer journey.

Discussion: Recollection Wisconsin onboarding and annual fee structure

After the last few discussions with this Board about changing or increasing fee structure, project managers understand that asking content partners to pay more towards RW's services is not the direction we should go. This makes sense, given our state funding. Project managers proposed actually going in the opposite direction and waiving **all** onboarding and hosting/harvesting fees as long as we have state funding.

This is especially true after many conversations with current and potential content partners in the last month. Removing the fees entirely removes that barrier, however small, to participation. Being able to say in conversation "this is a service the state provides" is compelling and accurate. We should be able to thank the state for funding this service!

RW doesn't raise a lot of revenue from fees. In the last several years, we've brought in - in reverse order - $900, $200, $200, $1400, and $14,500 - but that last one was the year that SCLS joined RW and that represents $11,000 of setup fees from them. In other words, this is a pretty minimal amount of money in setup fees.

Annual hosting and harvesting fees have been the same amounts since 2016, and since 2018, have been paid by various grants or organizations. Content partners haven't been charged those fees. If they were, it would amount to about $5200. The WPLC has already committed $3750 towards those fees and the remaining $1450 is negligible in this budget situation.

A better use of time would be to generate a "right-sized" fee structure that outlines the true cost of the services, and use those numbers to demonstrate what content partners WOULD have to pay if state support went away. This could be used for advocacy in 2025 with legislators - "here's what organizations would have to pay if state support were not available."

It was noted that the state legislature might reduce funding by the amount of money raised by fees. The Board noted that this felt like the right change and there were no objections to implementing it. The Steering Committee will be asked to weigh in as well.

Budget update
The DPLA annual fee is $8,000 and invoices for one-sixth the cost will go out after this meeting ($1333 each). The RW grant proposal is with DPI. RW and MPL have reached an agreement on payment for CONTENTdm ($10,700). We are starting to spend a little bit on conferences as October was a conference-heavy month. Our budget is generally healthy. There will likely be expenses this year to accomplish goals:

- Travel to counties targeted for outreach
- Tech support to help figure out PastPerfect migration / harvesting
- Honoraria to pay community members for time to share feedback on the metadata working group
- Paid practicum students for digitization work pilot projects (there will be a formal proposal for this at February board meeting)
    - It was noted that DPI might take a special interest in this work given their own emphasis on diversifying and growing the future library workforce. It was noted that this work should cast a wide net - hitting all the library programs in the state, including the iSchool masters and undergraduate programs, SOIS, Chippewa Valley Technical College, etc. We also want to clearly define the scope and geographical reach of students. We can also investigate the community ambassador model from the DPLA Digital Equity Project and the CCDC model as pathways. This might also dovetail with and support the longer range vision of employing paid interns This project could be a pilot for that work. We want to also be aware of the pay scale we offer so as to coordinate with what library assistants are paid.

Attendees were thanked for their flexibility with the date of this meeting.

2024 Meeting Schedule: approved dates, all Fridays, 10 am - 12 pm

- February 2, 2024 - 10 am - 12 pm (virtual)
- May 3, 2024 - 10 am - 12 pm (virtual)
- September/October - joint meeting of the Board and Steering Committee (in person, date/location TBD)
- November 1, 2024, 10 am - 12 pm (virtual)

Project managers will send out calendar invitations.