



Recollection Wisconsin Governing Board Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 11, 2025 | 1 - 2 pm

DPLA Transition Updates

Background and DPLA Network Summit

Recollection Wisconsin staff attended the [DPLA Network Summit](#) held October 28–29 in Philadelphia, the first in-person gathering since 2019. Just prior to the event, DPLA announced that its cultural heritage aggregation program may [transition](#) to the Cleveland Public Library (CPL) by July 2026. This follows an earlier, now-abandoned plan to move the program to the Free Library of Philadelphia.

While DPLA has indicated that its current Board Chair will step down due to potential conflicts of interest, further governance details have not yet been shared. Many aspects of the transition timeline and implementation remain unclear.

Sessions at the Summit focused on broad, facilitated discussions about the future of DPLA and hub priorities. A report-out from recent listening sessions revealed significant concern across the hub network about communication, transparency, and the overall direction of the organization.

National Conversations

Ben Miller shared additional context from recent meetings of COSLA (the Council of State Library Agencies), which also included discussion of the DPLA transition. COSLA is forming a committee to help examine national aggregation needs and potential regional collaborations. Other states are beginning to explore supplemental or alternative models, and many are watching how Wisconsin responds due to Recollection Wisconsin's stable funding and established partnerships.

Proposed Course of Action

The Governing Board reviewed and supported a four-part approach as Recollection Wisconsin monitors the transition and evaluates future options:

- 1) Remain engaged with DPLA during the transition to stay informed and participate in ongoing conversations about the future of national aggregation.
- 2) Continue building regional collaboration with Midwestern hubs to explore shared infrastructure, governance models, and sustainability strategies.
- 3) Investigate alternatives to the DPLA Local platform, including systems used by other state and regional digital libraries.
- 4) Draft a formal letter to DPLA leadership outlining Recollection Wisconsin's expectations related to transparency, governance, technical support, and communication, and offering to participate in transition-related planning or advisory groups.

This approach allows RW to remain constructive and engaged while also preparing for potential changes in national aggregation strategy.

Communications Approach

Recollection Wisconsin will continue to share publicly available information about DPLA's transition while reassuring content partners that RW's program, infrastructure, and funding remain stable and independent of DPLA. RW will also continue emphasizing statewide aggregation and service priorities identified by partners.

Budget Updates

- FY25 year-end reconciliation and the FY26 year-to-date budget were reviewed. A timing-related deficit at year-end reflects the internship semester crossing the July 1 fiscal year boundary. CONTENTdm expenses appear higher for FY25 due to the resolution of a long-standing billing lag; Milwaukee Public Library received one payment for the prior year and one for the current year, bringing the cycle back on schedule.

Grant Updates

- **DPLA Subaward**

Recollection Wisconsin has received confirmation of a \$25,000 DPLA subaward to document API harvesting processes and provide training for other hubs. The project runs January–December 2026.

NEH Grant

- RW will learn in December whether the proposed \$347,000 NEH Preservation Education and Assistance Grant has been awarded. If successful, RW will expand the Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative and add part-time support for onboarding and coordination.

Governance Document Management

- To improve organization and access, RW will transition Governance documentation from Google Drive to Basecamp. Basecamp provides centralized tools for file management, communication, and project coordination, and is already used successfully by several WiLS-managed groups.

2026 Meeting Schedule

Proposed Governing Board meeting dates for 2026:

- Tuesday, February 17, 2026 | 1:00–3:00 pm
- Tuesday, May 12, 2026 | 1:00–3:00 pm
- September 2026 | Joint meeting (date & location TBD)
- Tuesday, November 10, 2026 | 1:00–3:00 pm

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed related to the DPLA transition.