

OWLS Director report

November 12, 2015 OWLS Board of Trustees Meeting

- October 19, I visited the Clintonville Friends group and gave a talk on the history of OWLS
- October 22, Bradley and I met with the Director and Assistant Director of the Appleton Public Library to discuss the 2016 Resource Library Agreement.
- OWLS and Winnefox held a webinar on Oct 29 to discuss the results of the OWLS/Winnefox joint planning process survey. There were over 20 attendees, and we expect more to view the recorded webinar. We'll put a link to the webinar on the OWLS planning page (www.owlsweb.org/about/plans)
- Nov 2, I met with the Seymour library director to discuss the library's responses to the OWLS/Winnefox planning survey. Later, I attended the library board meeting and reported to the board on this year's activities at OWLS, and in the larger library world.
- Nov 3 through 5, I attended the Wisconsin Library Conference, starting with the SRLAAW meeting on Nov 3.

SRLAAW update

There was a lively discussion at the SRLAAW meeting regarding the lobbying done at the request of WLA. There was consensus that our new contract has been very useful, but some concerns about sustainable funding for this initiative. There is some interest in having library systems contribute more to WLA – or 1/10 of 1% of the amount received from state funding. OWLS is already an organizational member (which many library systems are not) but they would be looking for a larger contribution (\$607 for OWLS vs our membership of \$255.)

Trustee Essentials

A revised version of Trustee Essentials is now available. You can find this online at

http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_handbook

Each chapter is an individual pdf file, or you can find it all in one big pdf file. If you'd like a printout of this (be warned, it's 172 pages), please contact Terri Larkin at the OWLS office.

(tlarkin@mail.owls.lib.wi.us or 920-832-6190)

Wisconsin Library Legislative Day

Wisconsin Legislative Day will be February 9, 2016 at the Madison Concourse Hotel. It's an interesting process, and I know several OWLS board members have attended in the past. I'd like to encourage newer board members to consider attending. It's always an interesting day, and it makes a real impact on legislators to see board members, rather than just staff. If you're at all interested in attending, please contact me.

Wisconsin Library System Redesign Steering Committee

The committee met on November 4th to select a project manager. The committee voted to enter into contract discussions with WILS. The committee received two project management proposals. Copies of the submitted proposals are available at www.iflsweb.org/wlsrsc

WLA Legislation

Update on WLA Sponsored Legislation from the WLA Legislative Newsletter

[SB 265](#) / [AB 369](#) Public Library System Board Membership

These twin proposals change the minimum number of required public library system board members for a federated public library system that has territory in two or more counties from 15 to 11 in s. 43.19(1)(b)1. The change would continue to enable fair representation and encourage future efficiencies, especially among smaller systems where a requirement for 15 members would mean additional expense. But the revision does not require any of Wisconsin's public library system boards to downsize.

The bills garnered broad bipartisan support from 26 co-sponsors thanks to the efforts of WLA members from all over the state who contacted their legislators even though the permissive change would not affect their region. This demonstration of solidarity and WLA endorsement helped both bills advance out of the Senate and Assembly committees to which they were assigned by unanimous vote in both cases, and swiftly to a vote before both houses.

*SB 265 was included in the Senate floor session agenda for discussion on October 20th. The Senate approved the bill on a unanimous voice vote and immediately messaged it to the Assembly. WLA members can watch the discussions lead by Senate author Stephen Nass and the vote by clicking on [here](#). (SB 265 is discussed in "Part 2" beginning at 4:48 p.m.) See also this [statement from Senator Nass after the Senate vote](#). **AB 389 is scheduled for floor action on Tuesday, November 3.** Assuming all is well, it will then go to the Governor to be signed into law.*

[Update from the WLA conference. SB265 and AB369 have both passed their respective legislative bodies. This legislature is now headed for the governor's desk for signature.]

WLA has learned much about the legislative process during this exercise. *The change to this particular law may be small, but the process is no less detailed and the rewards of building increased relationships and political capital for libraries are huge! Thanks to all the member contacts, legislators with little previous working knowledge of the importance of public library system support to local libraries came away with a new appreciation of how library services are managed in their districts. Hearing public library systems praised by Senator Nass, Senator Wirch and others in committee was a joy!*

Thank you to Connie Meyer (Director, Waukesha Co. Federated/Bridges Library System) and Steve Ohs (Director, Lakeshores Library System) who represented the WLA membership at the Senate and Assembly hearings and testified along with assistance from Waukesha Co. Legislative Policy Advisor Sarah Spaeth and Jefferson Co. Administrator Ben Wehmeier. Connie and Sarah

visited more than a dozen legislative offices and worked with WLA Government Relations Advisor Steve Conway to enlist the support of legislative leaders.

RETURN OF MATERIALS

The second WLA endorsed legislation relates to the permissible release of patron data to collection agencies and local law enforcement officials to assist public libraries in the recovery of and/or collecting reimbursement for unreturned materials under [s. 43.30](#). This proposal is at last on the verge of being released by the legislative authors for co-sponsors.

This legislative effort initially involved many hours of survey work and discussions by the members of the LD&L sub-committee chaired by Shannon Schultz. The preparation work was followed by special attentiveness from LD&L member Heather Johnson of the River Falls Public Library and WLA Government Relations Advisor Steven Conway to secure the support of co-authors Senator Harsdorf and Representative VanderMeer and ensure that the final version accomplishes the goal of assisting libraries with retrieval and collection while avoiding unintended consequences. The exchange of information about library policies and procedures has underlined how librarians are frugal and attentive guardians of the public's assets.

It appears that Senator Harsdorf and Representative VanderMeer have agreed on the final concepts and will be releasing a draft bill within the next two weeks. All WLA members will be alerted and asked to contact their personal representatives to support this important legislation. The deliberative progress on this bill illustrates the care with which the co-authors have approached WLA's request.