

Historical Local Digital Collections Committee | Wisconsin Public Library Consortium

Fall Committee Meeting

November 7, 2023 @ 9:00 am

Attendees:

Alison Hoffman (Monarch Library System)

Robert Jaeger (Milwaukee Public Library)

Tamara Ramski (South Central Library System)

Jen Chamberlain, WPLC Project Manager

Notes:

1. Welcome
2. Update on newspaper digitization projects - (Jen)
 - a. The final batch looks to be up and available on Badgerlink's Wisconsin Newspaper Archive. WiLS is still undergoing a QA check and work still needs to be done to update various content lists and distributing final invoices.
 - b. National Digital Newspaper Program - Jen sat in on the advisory committee to select a theme for digitizing newspapers for the next round of NDNP funding. The theme selected is Wisconsin Tapestries and will focus on broadening representation in the newspaper collection. The grant application is due in mid-January, and they will know in August 2024 if the application is accepted. If yes, then work on this new project round would start in Sept 2024.
 - i. Also, Chronicling America is transitioning to a new website in 2024: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/about-this-collection/>
The old website will be up for a while yet, but it's worth familiarizing yourself with the new one.
 - c. WHS and DAMS - Their final demo is next week and they will hopefully have a selection/recommendation on a Digital Asset Management System. Contracting will likely go through the end of the year. They hope to have a solution in place in early 2024. There is potential for historical newspaper content to be stored in a DAMS platform.

Tamara noted that she is seeing more libraries going with Newspapers.com in lieu of another statewide solution.

3. Update on WPLC Visioning Session (Jen)

Jen shared a summary document that project managers drafted after the mini-SOAR conversation in October at the WPLC Visioning Session. The information presented on the

handout came from a pre-session survey distributed to board and committee members of the WPLC, as well as additional items shared during the SOAR conversation in the meeting. Several outcomes overlap with this committee's work, highlighted in yellow on the handout. Digitization project support was identified as an opportunity to continue pursuing. Alison noted that it is heartening to see this work reflected in the conversation at the WPLC board level.

4. [Project Update: Consultation Support](#) (Laura & all)

The Consultation Support Working Group met in August to start talking about directions this project might take based on library needs and committee member/volunteer capacity. The core of this idea is to find a way to offer consultation help for libraries who are pursuing a digitization project when it's most effective in their project timeline. A couple of concrete action items were decided upon, which were:

1) Explore the expansion of the resources listed on the committee's webpage about newspaper digitization to include (limited/select) broader resources about local history digitization (e.g., Recollection Wisconsin's Digital Readiness toolkit). Can we make this page more robust?

This was posed to the committee for feedback in Basecamp but since timing worked out, we can discuss today: does it seem appropriate to expand the list of resources to include some select tools/resources about digitization projects beyond just newspaper digitization?

The group agrees it is a good idea to broaden the [Historical Newspaper project site](#) to include resources related to starting any local digitization project. Committee members can send additional digitization resources to Laura or on the Basecamp discussion thread. Links to the Recollection Wisconsin Digital Readiness Toolkit and OCLC's Webjunction Digital Stewardship course will be added as well.

Jen suggested that she and Laura can put together an outline of a revised webpage to share with the committee.

2) Follow up with Kristen Whitson from RW to get her take on how to dovetail with and support what RW is communicating and advising, and to see if she can meet with the committee to brainstorm further / next steps. Laura met with Kristen and she's endorsed the idea to help create more avenues for communication and awareness building. She agrees that there is a good opportunity to collaborate on informal consultation support for local history digitization projects. She sees the RW project worksheet, which each library is encouraged to fill out ahead of starting actual work, as a critical moment when consultation from an outside perspective to ask follow-up questions and to flesh out any

steps or activities in the worksheet. Kristen is available and happy to meet with the project working group, which we'll aim to get on the books next month.

Comments from the committee:

- Tamara has noticed an increase in digitization activity from her member libraries. She is processing a lot of new materials for the upcoming Recollection Wisconsin December harvest. Back up to pre-pandemic project levels.
- Jen asked the committee for their thoughts on how this committee's work overlaps or compliments Recollection Wisconsin.
 - Tamara mentioned that she is so focused on Recollection Wisconsin that she sometimes loses sight of the fact that some public libraries might not be aware of or participating in Recollection Wisconsin so having a more comprehensive resource guide for public libraries looking to begin digitization work could be helpful in raising awareness and bridging a gap.

5. Upcoming tasks/action items/meetings

- a. Project managers will start an outline for an expanded resource page.
- b. Committee members will share links to additional resources to add to the page.
- c. Laura will send out a meeting invite for the consultation working group with Recollection Wisconsin project managers.
- d. Next committee meeting will be in Spring 2024 - more details to come.

6. Adjourned meeting at 9:31 am.