WiLS Board Meeting
November 4, 2025 | 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Zoom*

Board Members (□ indicates absent)

☑ Renee Anhalt (Madison College)
□ Michelle Byholm (Chequamegon School District)
☑ Jennifer Chamberlain (WiLS, ex-officio)
☑ Jennifer Follett (Madison Metropolitan School District)
☑ Frank Foss (Milwaukee Art Museum)
☑ Jennifer Gurske (Madison Trust for Historic Preservation)
☑ Kristina Gómez (Milwaukee Public Library)
☑ Mindy King (UW - Stevens Point)

☑ Sarah Miller (WiscNet)
☑ Kim Olson-Kopp (Viterbo University)
☑ Margaret Ottenad (Kettle Moraine School District)
☑ Tasha Saecker (Appleton Public Library)
☑ Andrew Prellwitz (Ripon College)
☑ Jill Roth (Demmer Public Library)
☑ Shannon Schultz (SCLS)
☑ Brenna Weston (Polk County Historical Society)

Staff attendees: Jeff Brunner, Sara Gold, Tom Klement, Lisa Marten, Rebecca Rosenstiel, Nick Smith

1. **Call to Order; Changes/additions to the agenda**
   J. Gurkse called the meeting to order at 1:30pm and asked for any changes to the agenda. No changes were suggested.

2. **Welcome & Recognition of Guests and Comments**
   J. Gurkse welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized the guests present: Alex Belovich, practicum student from UW Madison iSchool. J. Gurske offered the opportunity for guests to make any comments to the board at this point in the meeting and clarified that only WiLS board members are allowed to participate in the meeting discussion and vote on any action items.

3. **Mission Moment**
   J. Chamberlain shared some recent examples where we are seeing the power and value of the WiLS relationships and network in action:
   - City Library Collective (CLC) members finding connection and support through a time of grief;
   - After the announcement of Baker & Taylor's closure, the display of WiLS staff expertise and judgement in helping libraries to navigate towards solutions;
   - An opportunity to share on a national scale (via ICOLC email listserv) of WiLS' partnership and connection with WiscNet, in response to another consortium (Orbis-Cascade) inquiring if anyone had partnerships between research/education networks and broadband networks.

4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
   T. Saecker moved to approve the August 2025 meeting minutes, K. Gómez seconded. No discussion or changes suggested. Motion carried.

5. **Reports and Updates**

a. Chair's Report - J. Gurske informed the Board that the Executive Committee is working with the Staff Development group to launch the annual Executive Director review. The Board should have received their surveys recently; please submit your survey before the November 14th deadline.

b. Financial Report - T. Klement shared revised year-end financials for FY25. After a detailed reconciliation, the revenue exceeded the budget in most categories, and the year-end surplus increased by about $8,000.

   J. Chamberlain noted that closing out FY25 took longer than normal, which is why the June financials are being re-presented at this meeting. Tom expects to be caught up to current month financials by the end of the calendar year; and July-September financials will be shared with the Board as soon as they are ready in the next couple of weeks.

   FY26 budget adjustment - J. Chamberlain requested board approval to include another round of home office improvement stipends in this year's current budget. WiLS offered office improvement stipends previously in the 2022-23 budget and the plan was to offer this every three years. We can use fund balance from this year to cover this $5,200, up to $400 per staff member.

   M. Ottenad moved to approve the revised budget, S. Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

   J. Follett asked if unspent funds would rollover? J. Chamberlain explained that the office improvement stipend is relatively new, and asked the Board for their opinion. Since the stipend is expected to run every three years, rolling over funds could be difficult. It might be worth revisiting this topic again next year, to consider a stipend annually and allowing funds to rollover. This year Jennifer will review stipend funds closer to the end of the year, and if there are unspent funds, will touch base with staff to make a plan.

c. Director's Report
   J. Chamberlain presented a written report and asked for any questions. She also shared more specifics about the Strategic Plan Years 4 & 5 worksheet that the staff is currently reviewing as teams. Additionally, the Bylaws Review committee, composed of Kristina Gomez, Sarah Miller, Kim Olson Kopp, and Andi Coffin met once in October and will be continuing their work in December.

6. **Presentation: WiLS Service Spotlight on Cooperative Purchasing**
   J. Brunner and N. Smith shared an update on the growth and activities in Cooperative Purchasing.
   Slides (Dropbox)

   The coop team is made up of four core members who keep the day-to-day work happening consistently; and two additional team members who have specialties and responsibilities that help allow that day-to-day work happen. In the 2024-25 fiscal year, Cooperative Purchasing had a total of 496 members; and since July have added even more members: 4 K12 libraries and 1 public library system that brought in 12 public libraries. Interestingly, the majority of coop members are from K12 libraries; and the majority of revenue from coop subscriptions comes from academic libraries. Coop revenue grew by 14.6% in 2024-25, with an 11% increase in subscriptions. Despite the decrease in number of price quotes compared to the previous year, it was still another big year of price quotes- this is most likely due to the Common School Funds increasing.

   This past year, the coop team has been looking at strategic ways to focus on capacity with increased demand within cooperative purchasing. They held four meetings where this topic was the focus, and they came away with eight initiatives to work on:

- **Coop Email Signature**: The goal with this is to a) add another communication stream to our members, specifically for little one-off messages and reminders that aren't "critical" like would go into a big email blast, and b) improve member knowledge of the program itself
- **K12 Participation Fee**: The K12 membership fee hasn't been updated since 2013, and we've heard from some K12 participants recently that it would be worth reassessing this fee. Our hope is to attract more of the small districts with a different fee model while keeping the fee manageable and fair; an increase of revenue from a different K12 model can provide an opportunity to add an additional hours or staff.
- **Member Knowledge Base**: The Coop Team handles a lot of emails every year, and with a lot of repeat questions. With this project, we're hoping to upgrade our website documentation to make it more useful to our participants, and in the future maybe our vendors. We hope we can then use the knowledge base as a central repository for all of our help resources across all the different services the Coop team works on.
- **K12 & Admin Awareness Building**: Broaden reach and awareness of WiLS Coop Service by identifying and reaching out to school district business office staff and administrators; and creating specific messaging to this audience to explain coop services and associated fees.
- **Tech Upgrades**: Better utility of existing tools, adding features to MyWiLS, creating a MyWiLS portal for vendor partners.
- **Date Realignment:** Adjusting subscription renewals so that they are no longer year-round, but clustered in to two "seasons": January, and July-September.
- **Member/Vendor Messaging and Training**: Strengthen member and vendor partner understanding of Coop policies and procedures; Provide messaging at regular intervals (rather than one & done approach); and Reduce Coop staff time spent answering emails
- **Revitalizing CooPAC**: Reengage and reimagine what this group does and make sure that it's a good use of their time; and that it's also a good value and help for the team to make sure the needs of the members are being met, and to get responses and bring new ideas to them.

The coop team decided to try these initiatives first before suggesting to hire another staff member, largely because they are unsure how long the surge in cooperative purchasing's usage will persist. The team felt it was more sustainable to try to leverage existing tools, resources, and workflows towards a potential sustainable solution before hiring; though they may need additional short-term help to implement larger initiatives on this list, or perhaps in the future the team may need to expand.

Cooperative Purchasing is working with vendors and member libraries in the wake of Baker & Taylor's closure. WiLS already has a relationship with Mackin and Ingram that are book provisioning services; as well as OverDrive, who is interested in helping members with hosting ebooks and audiobooks. WiLS has also received unprompted outreach from both Amazon and Barnes and Noble for their services.

Discussion:
The Board thanked the Cooperative Purchasing team for their work. S. Miller shared the platform that WiscNet uses for their organization's knowledgebase: [Confluence](#).

7. **Discussion & Action: K12 Cooperative Purchasing fee changes**
   Sara Gold and Lisa Marten
   Documents: [Email from S. Gold](#)

   S. Gold and L. Marten shared a proposal to change the fee model for K12 cooperative purchasing members. The current pricing of $199 per entity (in case of public schools it is the entire district) hasn't changed since 2013. The new model proposes a move from a flat fee to a tiered pricing structure based on enrollment. The new model, if implemented, would increase revenue from about $51,000 to almost $72,000 annually for K12 libraries. S. Gold reiterated that although K12 libraries don't make up the

largest portion of coop revenue, they do make up the greatest number in volume of subscriptions. It is estimated that over 66% of coop staff time is spent on managing K12 subscriptions, while 60% of coop revenue is derived from K12 members; moving to a tiered pricing structure would help close that gap and cover staff time dedicated to these subscriptions' management.

The proposed tiered fee structure was also shared with CooPAC, who supported the structure.

Discussion:

A. Prellwitz asked why the formula for K12 is not similar to the Academic model? L. Marten shared that the idea was to keep the formula more simple for K12 calculations, and S. Gold added that the number of subscriptions that K12 members tend to have, which is typically higher than Academic libraries subscribe to, a model similar to the Academic model would make it unsustainable for K12 members.

K. Gómez asked why there was a $75 difference between Medium and Large, when the other tiers have a $50 difference between them? S. Gold said that this increase aligns with the larger amount of staff-time that goes into working with subscriptions when FTEs are of those sizes; along with knowing historically what schools of these sizes can bear and what they are able to invest in. Examples of the personal touch that the coop team places on K12s include: running usage statistics in databases for members; running comparisons between products needed for curriculum; and connecting new school staff to their resources.

M. King asked if there is K12 representation on CooPAC? Has there been feedback on this from K12 members? Was the $20,000 revenue-increase a benchmark that coop was trying to meet? S. Gold shared that CooPAC is requested to have three members-each from each member type (K12, Academic, Public, and Special), and right now there are two K12 member representatives. This update has not been shared out with membership yet. The $20,000 wasn't a benchmark; it was just the calculated difference based on the final tiered model proposed today. Lisa and Sara ran some numbers just ahead of this meeting, and while $20,000 does bring the totals closer, it still does not cover the amount of staff time going towards K12 subscription management. J. Chamberlain added that unlike that Academic model, there is not a service fee attached to the participation fee.

J. Follett thanked the team for their thoughtfulness in developing this model; it's a valuable change.

If approved, the timeline on this would be fairly quick, since schools begin to prepare their budgets in January. Cooperative Purchasing will begin working with the Communications Team in December to develop messaging that can go out in December/January so that schools can begin to prepare; with additional messaging throughout 2026. The new tiered model would begin with the 2025-26 K12 subscription/membership year on September 1st, 2026.

M. King moved to accept the changes to the K12 Cooperative Purchasing fee model as presented, J. Follett seconded. No additional discussion. Motion carried.

8. **Roundtable Discussion: What's happening in your organizations or among your peers?**

Potential topics include:

- For those impacted by the new digital accessibility standards coming into effect in April 2026 or April 2027). How is your organization handling these changes? What are you prioritizing? Do you have tool or vendor recommendations (or warnings)?
- Baker & Taylor closure - What strategies are you relying on for print solutions?
- Do you have other news or updates to share?

Discussion:

M. King shared that, in relation to the new ADA compliance standards, UW System Libraries have found that most vendors' platforms are not in compliance, and this has a lot to do with PDFs, which do not comply with the new ADA standards. Right now, their library is taking the approach of prioritizing

updating content that is used for instruction- anything that students use in a course; and everything else can be updated after.

S. Miller shared that WiscNet has been receiving a lot of questions from libraries on this topic, too, asking for advice. They are working with staff from WVLS to host a webinar on this topic, trying to help develop support for libraries. She will send out more information on this when they have the details and webinar(s) scheduled.

K. Olson-Kopp shared that they've heard of a private organization that has had a lawsuit brought against them related to this; and the court used the same criteria they would for a public organization to make a decision. So they've been trying to bring their website up to these standards as well.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 3:30pm

Next meeting will be via Zoom on January 13, 2026. See you in the New Year!