

**MEMORANDUM:**

**To:** Winnefox Library System Trustees  
**From:** Clairellyn Sommersmith, Director  
**Subject:** Report of System Activities  
**Date:** January 29, 2025

**Director Activities:** Recently, I have been kept busy prepping for the Winnefox Annual Meeting on January 28 and working with the tech staff to prefill the libraries' Annual Reports. The Winnefox Annual Report will be presented at the March board meeting. I will also be attending Library Legislative Day between now and the next board meeting.

**System News:** We are scheduling staff trainings for 2025 and have planned the meeting dates for the strategic planning process. Winnefox staff will be meeting with WiLS staff on April 22; member library directors will be meeting the following Tuesday on April 29. The Winnefox board will receive a strategic planning survey this spring as well.

**Library News:** We have two new directors at Winnefox Libraries. Wendy Schlomann has started at the Leon-Saxeville Library in Pine River and Marsha Schneider will be starting at the Poy Sippi Library in February.

The Elisha D. Smith Library in Menasha will be reopening on February 8 following their 7-month renovation. Pictures so far show a bright and modern library and, I personally, cannot wait to see their new space.

The Leon-Saxeville Library will receive \$45,000 from the Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin to increase the visibility and access of their library over the next five years.

Winnefox is sponsoring three libraries to go through the WiLS small library strategic planning cohort: Caestecker Library, Plainfield Library, and Redgranite Library.

**2024 in Review:** This is a chance to look back at the past year and highlight just some of the accomplishments and successes from the system and Winnefox libraries.

- Three new library directors started: Darryl Eschete, Oshkosh; Sheila Scholtz, Endeavor; Alex Coggeshell, Ripon
- 2024 was the year of huge program attendance from Taylor Swift parties to Bluey Events, to speed puzzling, tabletop game competitions, and even an opportunity to read to baby goats!
- Hancock Public Library and Ripon Public Library were awarded the highly competitive Flexibly Facilities grant. Their building projects will begin this spring/summer.
- Numerous libraries received grant funding from local entities.
- Elisha D. Smith Library and Brandon Public Library spent most of 2024 in temporary locations as their buildings were being remodeled. Menasha's remodel is finished, and Brandon's should be completed this summer.

- Wautoma Public Library and Berlin Public Library put new meeting rooms in their libraries to accommodate community needs.
- Winnefox distributed 3 infrastructure grants awards: Poy Sippi for a carpeting project; Montello for toilet and drinking foundation replacements; Neshkoro for handicap accessible door entrances,
- With LSTA Funding, Winnefox sent 11 librarians to the Wisconsin Library Conference, 5 librarians to the Public Library Association Conference in Columbus Ohio, and paid for 12 director certification classes.
- Libby/Overdrive circulation increased by 6.6% between 2023 and 2024
- Winnefox office saw a major transition with the retirement of long-time employee Julie Schmude, and the promotion of Marcy Cannon to Business Manager and the hiring of Mary Schneider as the new Administrative Specialist.

In the coming year Winnefox will see two more libraries start renovation projects, the premier of two JobPods, an expansive and comprehensive strategic plan, a new training and resource website for libraries, and more! We are also hopeful that all library director positions will be filled.