

LRB – FISCAL REVIEW SECTION ANALYSIS

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

ITEM 6, FILE 030878

OCTOBER 28, 2003

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File #030878 is a resolution relative to the application for a Shipshape Grant by Milwaukee Public Library.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

1. This resolution authorizes the Milwaukee Public Library (MPL) to apply for a Shipshape Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Coastal Management. This is a joint project between MPL and Wisconsin Marine Historical Society (WMHS). The purpose of the project is to convert over 7,000 Great Lakes vessel files from paper format to a computerized database. *This is a new grant.*
2. The WMHS is dedicated to discovering, collecting, recording, preserving and disseminating materials related to Great Lakes maritime history. For over 40 years, since 1959, the Society and MPL have collaborated and developed one of the most extensive depositories of Great Lakes historical materials in existence, called the Great Lakes Marine Collection. Many of the files are approximately 50 years old, on acid laden paper, causing the photos and articles to deteriorate. In recent years, the collection has also become a victim to theft.
3. The vessel files are the most heavily used part of the collection. The contents of the ship file contains historical data: photographs of the vessel, magazine and newspaper articles about the ship, when it was built and for whom, who was the captain, type of cargo, when did it sink and if the wreck has been found, a painting or perhaps a blueprint of the hull, and other facts pertinent to marine researchers and the general public. Each vessel is listed in *CountyCat*, the library's online catalog, by the name of the vessel as the title of a book, and the names of the owners and captains as the authors.
4. The grant will fund for the paper archival vessel files to be converted into an electronic format to facilitate the daily updating of the records and to provide for its preservation. Data entry staff will be hired to supplement the work of the WMHS and its volunteers, consolidating information from various WMHS databases. Future phases of grant may include loading the information on the MPL website.
5. WMHS is also seeking matching funds to this grant.

FISCAL IMPACT

1. Through this resolution, Milwaukee Public Library is authorized to apply for the Shipshape Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Coastal Management.
2. The funding is approximately \$50,000.
3. The period is from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005.

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