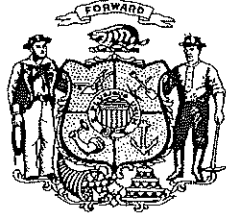


# State of Wisconsin

SENATE CHAIR  
**Howard Marklein**

316 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882  
Phone: (608) 266-0703



ASSEMBLY CHAIR  
**Mark Born**

308 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708-8953  
Phone: (608) 266-2540

## Joint Committee on Finance

### MEMORANDUM

To: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Howard Marklein  
Representative Mark Born

Date: April 17, 2024

Re: s. 16.515/16.505(2), Stats. Request

Attached is a copy of a request from the Department of Administration, received April 17, 2024, pursuant to s. 16.515/16.505(2), Stats., on behalf of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Please review the material and notify **Senator Marklein** or **Representative Born** no later than **Monday, May 6, 2024**, if you have any concerns about the request or if you would like the Committee to meet formally to consider it.

Also, please contact us if you need further information.

Attachments

HM:MB:jm



STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor  
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary

**Date:** April 17, 2024  
**To:** The Honorable Howard Marklein, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Finance  
The Honorable Mark Born, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Finance  
**From:** Kathy K. Blumenfeld, Secretary <sup>DS</sup>  
Department of Administration *KB*  
**Subject:** s. 16.515/16.505(2) Request(s)

APR 17 2024  
*St. Finance*

Enclosed are request(s) that have been approved by this department under the authority granted in s. 16.515 and s. 16.505(2). The explanation for each request is included in the attached materials. Listed below is a summary of each item:

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>2023-24</u>		<u>2024-25</u>	
		<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>
WHS 20.245(1)(h)	Gifts, grants, and membership sales		1.0		1.0

As provided in s. 16.515, the request(s) will be approved on May 8, 2024, unless we are notified prior to that time that the Joint Committee on Finance wishes to meet in formal session about any of the requests.

Please contact Kirsten Grinde at (608) 266-1353, or the analyst who reviewed the request in the Division of Executive Budget and Finance, if you have any additional questions.

Attachments



STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor  
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary  
Brian Pahnke, Administrator

**Date:** April 15, 2024

**To:** Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary  
Department of Administration

**From:** Sara Hynek  
Executive Policy and Budget Manager

**Subject:** Request Under s. 16.505(2) from the Wisconsin Historical Society for a 1.0 FTE Program Revenue Marketing Specialist Position.

**Request:**

The Wisconsin Historical Society requests the creation of a 1.0 FTE PR marketing specialist permanent position to serve as the technical director of the newly acquired Al. Ringling Theatre.

**Revenue Sources for Appropriation(s):**

The revenue source for the position in the gifts and grants appropriation under s. 20.245(1)(h) is a donation from the Al. Ringling Theatre Friends, Inc. (Friends), a nonprofit organization that supports the theatre through fund-raising and promotional efforts. The organization raised over \$3 million to support the transition of the theatre to the society's ownership and to fund operational costs through an endowment. As the gifts and grants appropriation is a program revenue continuing, all moneys received appropriation, there is no accompanying request to increase expenditure authority.

**Background:**

The society's Division of Museums and Historic Sites conducts exhibitions, tours, performances, and other public programs at the society's 12 historic sites and museums, which include Old World Wisconsin, Wade House, and, relatedly for purposes of this request, Circus World.

Circus World is located in Baraboo and is the original home of the Ringling Bros. Circus and a national historic landmark. Circus World functions as both a museum and a live performance venue. Visitors may tour seven buildings that showcase wood-carved circus parade wagons, costuming, props, and rail equipment. During the summer season (May through August), Circus World presents traditional circus performances featuring acrobats, animals, and other circus talent. Circus World is primarily a program revenue-funded operation, with summer tickets ranging from \$15 to \$23. Circus World operations are overseen by a director who is a state employee.

The Al. Ringling Theatre is also located in Baraboo. It was built in 1915 by Albert Ringling and designed by the Rapp & Rapp architectural firm using European architecture in the style of French opera houses. The theatre features a domed theater and multiple murals. It seats 700 and hosts local dance recitals and theater shows, weddings and other private special events, classic movie nights, holiday performances, and concerts.

Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary  
Page 2  
April 15, 2024

In July 2022, the Friends and the society began discussions to make the theatre an extension of Circus World in order to ensure the long-term success of the theatre. The society conducted a feasibility study that concluded the Friends needed to raise approximately \$3 million for facility improvements, transition costs, and an operating endowment. The Friends met this fund-raising goal, and on March 14, 2024, the Friends and the society reached an agreement for the society to acquire the theatre. The vice president of the Friends noted that "[T]he theatre will now benefit from the Society's resources, operating infrastructure and expertise." In general, Circus World and the theatre will continue their respective operations but be linked for community circus history programming in the Baraboo area.

The society's request for a marketing specialist position essentially would allow the society to accrete the current director position of the theatre from a Friends employee to a state employee.

**Analysis:**

The marketing specialist would function as the technical director of the theatre. The technical director coordinates the technical operations of the theatre, such as lighting, sound, staging, equipment, and carpentry. The society states that it expects the position to ensure performances are executed to the highest quality and safety standards, evaluate and maintain all technical equipment used in productions at the theatre, and support touring productions. Further, the society states the position would work closely with the society and Circus World to support overall development efforts of the Wisconsin Historical Foundation.

The position would not have direct report staff (but may work with contracted staff) and would report to the Director of Circus World. The anticipated salary and fringe benefit costs are estimated to be approximately \$74,000 PR, supported by the ongoing endowment from the Friends; as such, the society does not anticipate that state funding or earned site revenue will be needed for this position. The Friends gift and endowment will support the immediate maintenance needs of the theatre, as well as short-term operating expenses. The society states that ongoing operating expenses of the theatre are expected to be supported by earned revenue, and if the theatre is increasingly successful, staffing needs may be reevaluated and funded with the earned revenue.

Utilities for the theatre will be funded through the society's energy costs appropriation. Although tangentially related to this request, it is important to note that the society already spends 100 percent of its energy costs appropriation and is not anticipating using the gift or endowment for the theatre's utility expenses.

The creation of the position brings the current director role of a new state asset into state service as a marketing specialist, supported by sufficient program revenue from an endowment. The fiscal and creative success of the theatre necessitates oversight from an individual skilled in theater production and outreach. The society indicates that the incumbent would receive budget and finance support to develop annual fiscal year goals and an operating budget. The society also states that there are no appropriate vacancies to be used for the theatre and that Circus World staffing is already limited. These considerations indicate that the creation of a new 1.0 FTE PR marketing specialist position is appropriate and necessary for the success of the theatre.

**Recommendation:**

Approve the request.

**CORRESPONDENCE/Memorandum**

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Administration

**Date:** April 15, 2024  
**To:** Brian Pahnke  
**From:** Sara Hynek  
**Subject:** Section 16.505(2) Request

Attached is a s. 16.505(2) request analysis for your approval and processing. Listed below is a summary of each item:

**DOA RECOMMENDATION:**

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	2023-24		2024-25	
		<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>
WHS 20.245(1)(h)	Gifts, grants, and membership sales		1.0		1.0

**AGENCY REQUEST:**

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	2023-24		2024-25	
		<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>
WHS 20.245(1)(h)	Gifts, grants, and membership sales		1.0		1.0

BP APPROVAL 



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

March 21, 2024

Mr. Brian Pahnke  
State Budget Director  
Department of Administration  
101 East Wilson Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Madison, WI 53702

*Delivered to Sara Hynek via email: [Sara.Hynek@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sara.Hynek@wisconsin.gov)*

**RE: Section 16.505\515 Request for 1.0 FTE PR Al. Ringling Theater Technical Director Position (Wis. Stat § 20.245 (1)(h))**

Dear Mr. Pahnke:

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §§ 16.505 and 16.515, the Wisconsin Historical Society ("WHS" or the "Society") requests one new gift-funded (PR / Wis. Stat. § 20.245 (1)(h)) Technical Director position starting as soon as possible to support the Al. Ringling Theater in Baraboo. The Wisconsin Historical Foundation, on behalf of the Society, has received contributed income and endowment support from private donations to fund the salary and fringe benefits of this position and the Society is not requesting any additional funding.

On Friday, March 14, 2024, the Society's Board of Curators approved the acquisition of the historic Al. Ringling Theater ("Theater") through donation from the Al. Ringling Theater Friends ("Friends"). WHS and the Friends will soon execute the real estate transaction and the Society will assume ownership as well as the responsibility for its maintenance, preservation, and operations. The Theater will become an extension of the Circus World campus, an existing Society historic attraction also located in Baraboo. Much like Circus World, the Theater is both an homage to the past, but also an alive and dynamic icon of present-day Baraboo.

The Technical Director position is essential to the Theater's operation, relevance, and success. The position will coordinate and manage all theatrical technical elements for the Theater and serve as the expert and trouble-shooter for day-to-day show technical operations, ensuring that performances and associated activities are executed to the highest quality and safety standards. The Technical Director will also be responsible for evaluating and maintaining all the technical equipment used for theatrical productions. They will interface with touring productions, to ensure all critical production elements are met and rehearsals run smoothly. The position will oversee third party contracted partners and serve in a management position, acting as an ambassador of

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[wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org)

B. Pahnke  
Page 2  
March 21, 2024

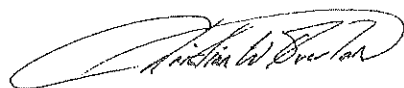
both the Theatre and WHS. The position also advises on technical operations, contributes to strategic planning for Circus World and the Theater, and supports development efforts of the Wisconsin Historical Foundation.

### **History of the Al. Ringling Theater**

The Ringling brothers, who in 1884 created the beginnings of their world-famous circus, never forgot their hometown where they received their start in show business. Al Ringling, who was the eminent enterpriser of the family, along with his wife Louise (Lou), engaged the Rapp & Rapp Architectural Firm of Chicago to design a theater and auditorium on a one-third scale model of the great opera hall of the Palace of Versailles in Paris. The building, completed in 1915, is considered one of America's most beautiful playhouses. For over 108 years, the showhouse has been a center of cultural life in Baraboo, providing musical and artistic presentations, as well as many other community endeavors which continue today.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Christian W. Overland  
The Ruth and Hartley Baker Director  
Phone: (608) 264-6440  
E-mail: [christian.overland@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:christian.overland@wisconsinhistory.org)

Enclosure: Technical Director Position Description

## **Technical Director for Circus World Museum/AL. Ringling Theater**

### **Position Summary**

Under the general supervision of the Director of Circus World, the Technical Director will coordinate and manage all theatrical technical elements for Circus World and the AL. Ringling Theater. It serves as Circus World's expert and trouble-shooter for day to day show technical operations, ensuring that performances and associated activities are executed to the highest quality and safety standards.

The ideal candidate has education and hands on experience working directly with Lighting, Sound, and Projection elements, in a professional theatrical environment. The incumbent draws upon experience to determine operational needs and best practices. He or she also advises Circus World staff on technical operations, contributes to strategic planning for Circus World and the AL. Ringling Theater, supports development efforts of the Wisconsin Historical Foundation.

### **Goals and Worker Activities**

#### **25% A. Coordinates and manages technical elements of daily operations**

- A1. Regularly evaluates and maintains technical equipment including inventory management
- A2. Ensure that all technical elements function smoothly during rehearsals and performances
- A3. Ensure that all technical equipment is always safe and secure pursuant to local, state and federal codes.
- A4. Apply safety standards and regulations for technical equipment and practice safe work methods.
- A5. Interface with all touring productions for the technical needs of each production.

#### **25% B. Acts as Circus World's onsite expert for technical matters**

- B1. Serves as Circus World liaison with guest talent with regard to technical needs
- B2. Present for all load-in and load-out activity
- B3. Present for all performances at the AL. Ringling Theater
- B4. Primary trouble-shooter for technical challenges
- B5. Create and manage the fiscal year budgetary needs for all technical elements.
- B6. Work with site accountant and WHS procurement regarding any technical related contracting.

#### **25% C. Ensures that all performances and performance related activities are of a high quality and meet safety standards**

- C1. Point person for load-in and load-out with guest talent



- C2. Prepares timeline for loading activities
- C3. Assesses and communicates technical needs of guest talent in a timely manner
- C4. Coordinates vendor deliveries for performances
- C5. Communicates with Front of House for opening doors
- C6. Create and manage theater emergency safety plans with all associated staff.

**20% D. Supports Special Events at Circus World and the AL. Ringling Theater**

- D1. Coordinates event preparations including technical needs and venue readiness
- D2. Set up, operation, and strike of technical elements for each event
- D3. Communicates any challenges to Leadership

**5% E. Other duties as assigned**

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required**

1. Knowledge of theatrical operational best practices from production background
2. Knowledge of Circus artform, culture and community
3. Ability to plan, develop and implement schedules for special events and performances
4. Excellent written and verbal communication skills
5. Experience creating and managing budgets for theatrical environments and productions.
6. Act as an ambassador and representative of Circus World and the Wisconsin Historical Society with guest talent, vendors, and guests
7. Intricate technical knowledge of theatrical lighting, sound, projection, rigging, and design
8. Ability to work effectively with a variety of people, including heads of social service agencies, leaders of community groups, members of local historical societies, public librarians, university history and education departments, Historical Society colleagues, private donors, and others
9. Ability to travel independently within Wisconsin and out of state as necessary
10. Able to legally operate a motor vehicle from the Wisconsin Department of Administration State Fleet in the State of Wisconsin
11. Proficient in Microsoft suite of programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher)

SPECIAL NOTES: Must have a valid driver's license upon appointment.

**Physical Demands of this job are:**

- Must be able to lift at least 40 pounds and have the physical dexterity and flexibility to work in an active site and office environment for long work days
- Must be comfortable working at heights above 25 feet
- Regular standing and walking throughout the day
- Moderate sitting at computer terminal