

1997-98 CD#17.1
(1998 Midwinter Meeting)

SECOND REPORT TO COUNCIL
POLICY MONITORING COMM.

In response to action at Council I, the Policy Monitoring Committee met and reviewed the issues raised by CD#49B, which was approved by Council at the 1997 Annual Conference. This amended Policy 5.5.2, and in the Committee's opinion, this change is conflict with the ALA's Constitution and Bylaws.

In view of the Council's intent, the Policy Monitoring Committee proposes the following revision to the second paragraph of Policy 5.5.2, to read:

"At each annual Conference there shall be an information session with the Membership, Council, and the Executive Board held first on the Sunday of the Conference, to be followed by Membership Meeting I, followed by Council I."

Note: In the event a quorum is not present for the Membership Meeting, the last paragraph of Policy 7.4.7 shall apply, allowing the convening of a Membership Forum for the purpose of discussing matters of concern.

Respectfully submitted,

PMC Members:

Gretchen Wronka, John Barrett, Pamela Spencer (Intern), and Don Sager, chair

Adopted by Council, 1998 Midwinter Mtg.

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

RESOLVED, that ALA policy 5.5.2, paragraph 2, be followed and that in 1998 and succeeding years, the FIRST Membership meeting at the annual conference be the "joint session of Membership and Council with the Executive Board, for information only, to be held prior to other meetings of Council and Membership," and that this meeting be scheduled for a two hour time block prior to Council Session I, so that there is sufficient time to allow for appropriate informational reports and for questions and answers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a SECOND Membership meeting be scheduled for a 1.5 hour time block later that same day (or the next if it is still within the first 2 days of conference), at which the ALA president or vice-president presides (whether or not a quorum is present); for which an agenda of topics for discussion (identified by resolutions submitted, in accord with the Guidelines...7.4.7, and by topics suggested via listserv) is publicized in advance; and at which, if members present desire to transact business, quorum counts are made efficiently and unobtrusively at intervals throughout, with a business session being called to order at any point at which there is business to transact and a quorum is established.

BACKGROUND

ALA membership meetings at annual conferences in recent years have been attended by fewer members than have been needed to reach a quorum, especially since members across the country voted overwhelmingly by mail ballot several years ago to increase the quorum necessary to transact business. This is attributed by some to lack of member interest (voting with their preferences of where they choose to be), and by others to lack of publicity, lack of signage, locations being difficult to find, etc. We have been experimenting for a number of years; when one thing works, another does not, and the result continues to be no quorum. Some members do not mind this. Others do. And no member wants to lose the opportunity of meeting as "the membership" should there be a compelling need.

At the same time, members regularly need information and Policy 5.5.2 seems to have been forgotten. This year the first information meeting of Council and Membership with the Executive Board was billed as in the official program, on signs, and on agenda as a Council/EB information session. This meeting has historically been "the forum" at which members and councilors received informational reports from the president for the executive board, the treasurer, and executive director and at which questions could be asked about the information provided, and about current issues. The presence of a quorum at this meeting seems not to be a problem, since no business is scheduled to be transacted. The first whereas of the resolution proposes returning the first membership meeting to what our policy calls for, an information session with council, and lengthening it so that members, not just councilors, can ask questions.

Even if there is no burning issue to draw members in any given year, it is critical to the future health of ALA that there is always available to membership an opportunity in the form of a scheduled membership meeting at which members may raise issues of concern, present and debate resolutions requesting council action and providing direction to council. It is also important to view this meeting as an opportunity, but not a mandate, for business to be transacted. Sturgis (our parliamentary guide) does not say that we may not hold a meeting, that we may not report and discuss, only that we may not transact business until the quorum (as our membership has defined it) is present. It seems perfectly possible to call a meeting to order, do a quorum count, and if a quorum is not present make an electronic note on the screen about the nature of the meeting (discussion, not business) so that all entering after the first quorum count will know what is going on. The presiding officer can continue with the discussion, q & a, reports, etc. Quorum counts can continue, efficiently and unobtrusively every 10-15 minutes, and if and when a quorum is reached, the presiding officer can announce it, and move immediately into a formal business meeting at which resolutions (which may have been previously distributed and discussed) can be formally introduced and debated.

Submitted by Mary Jane Anderson, Councilor at Large
Seconded by

Patricia M. Berg, Councilor at Large

ALA policies
5:5.2
7.4.7

1996-1997 CD#17
1997 Midwinter Conference

REPORT TO COUNCIL
POLICY MONITORING COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 1997

In accordance with Policy 5.6, the Policy Monitoring Committee has reviewed all Council actions taken at the 1996 Annual Meeting for possible incorporation into, addition to, or changes in the *ALA Policy Manual*.

FOR ACTION

- Item #1 Policy 5.5.2 Council-Board Session: Change the heading of 5.5.2 Council-Board Session to read: "Council/Executive Board/Membership Session."

[PMC recommends that this heading be changed to reflect the nature of this policy.]

FOR INFORMATION

- Item #1 Library Bill of Rights Interpretation on Electronic Access to Information, Services and Networks. This document, 1995-96 CD# 19.1, was adopted by Council, although the phrase "Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children" is being reviewed by the Committee on Intellectual Freedom. The words in italics were suggested when Council adopted this document.

ITEMS UNDER REVIEW

- Item #1 ALA Policy 54 Library Personnel Practices. Referred to the OLPR Advisory Committee.
- Item #2 ALA Policy 59.3 Goals for Indian Library and Information Service. Referred to the OLOS Library Service to American Indians Subcommittee.
- Item #3 Policy revisions related to Americans with Disabilities Act. Referred to the ASCLA Americans with Disabilities Act Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

PMC Members:

Jan Keene, Gretchen Wronka, Don Sager, chair

This additional wording was proposed by COO and approved by Council at Midwinter 1993, CD#28.1.

Item #5 ALA Policy 5.2, Council-Board Session. Add to paragraph one: "Any member of the Association may participate in the information session."

This wording is proposed by the Policy Monitoring Committee to clarify existing practice.

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AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Item: COUNCIL Item Number: 205.4
Approved by: ALA Council Page: 1 of 1
Issue Date: July 14, 1958 Supersedes: _____

Procedures

VOTED, That (1) all future meetings of ALA include at least one session of Council with the Executive Board to be held prior to other Council meetings for information only; (2) Minority reports on controversial issues be given to Council so that members may clearly understand both sides of the issues involved; (3) Serious attempts be made to provide for table seating arrangements with microphones in easy access.