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From: "Elaine Harger" <eharger@tao.agoron.com>
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*Budget report?
Spectrum follow-up on brochure?*

Here, finally, are the minutes and rest of the resolutions from Action Council. There are three separate files -- 2 for minutes, 1 for resolutions.

Elaine Harger
SRRT Secretary

SRRT Action Council I
Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans
June 26, 1999
MINUTES

PRESENT: Fred Stoss, AC; Gregory R. Mullins; Gary Colmenar; Rory Litwin; Charles Willett, AIP Coordinator; Steven Harris, AC; Jenna Freedman; Peter McDonald, AC; Mark Rosenzweig, AC; Lynn Andersen; Katia Roberto; Elizabeth Morrissett, AC; Sandy Berman, PHHTF; Karen Venturella, PHHTF; John Berry, Library Journal; Theresa Tobin, FTF; Veronda J. Pitchford, FTF; Michelle M. Durocher; Michael J. Miller, GLBTF; Mark E. Martin, AC; Jules Tate, GLBTF; James K. Phelps; Kim Edson, MN SRRT; Nel Ward, SRRT Treasurer; Carol Barta, AC; Wendy Thomas, SRRT Coordinator; Ken Thompson, SRRT Newsletter; Al Kagan, IRTF & SRRT ALA Councilor-Elect; Ann Sparanese, AC; Fran Ware, CSKTF; Barbara J. Clark, CSKTF; Carolyn L. Garnes, AC & CSKTF; Carole J. McCollough, CSKTF; Martha Zarate; Elaine Harger, SRRT Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MIDWINTER
Approved with the following amendments: Carolyn Garnes was present at ACI; Wayne Mullins suggesting during the budget update that we get a pro-bono lawyer or CPA to assist SRRT; and Fred Stoss was present at ACII.

SRRT BUDGET
Wendy Thomas, SRRT Coordinator: For many years SRRT operated in the dark financially, no budget reports came to us from OLOS. SRRT's budget was recorded on a piece of paper and sent to OLOS. We never knew if we were spending too much or too little. The lack of information was due to chaos in the OLOS office. Satia Orange has changed this situation. She began to get more budget information, but not enough, and not as detailed as we wanted. SRRT was notified of a deficit situation, and AC asked for documentation from ALA to prove deficit. We have just begun to get the necessary information. Nel, SRRT Treasurer, has just gone through the information recently supplied and has distilled it into a report. The situation is not as bad as ALA had said it was, but there is a deficit. BARC has established a special task force to look into SRRT's budget. [get list of members] We have had some communications, and will be meeting with the task force Tuesday morning.

Nel Ward, SRRT Treasurer: The detailed ledger reports requested were finally sent. Nel's report covers fiscal activity of each task force. It needs to be said, right up front, that task forces did not necessarily go over the budgets they requested and that were approved. The deficits indicated resulted from the fact that we budgeted over SRRT's actual revenue. No task force is to blame for any over-expenditures. Looking at the "SRRT Budget Overview, 1992-1998" it is clear that SRRT main source of revenue is membership dues, and for the 6 years covered by the report SRRT spent more than it brought in. One clear factor of the present deficit is the \$5000 promised by Barbara Ford to IRTF that has yet to be transferred into SRRT's budget

Teresa Tobin asked about the SRRT administrative budget, it was her impression that task force budgets were not reflected in ALA financial reports, but that SRRT keeps track of that on its own.

Nel answered that figures in each ledger are sorted by task force. To which Wendy added that while SRRT AC votes on task force budgets, at no point do the funds budgeted ever get reflected in ALA financial reports, only actual revenues and actual expenditures.

Nel pointed out that there isn't much money left over from dues after the newsletter is paid for. ALA charges postage, etc., the newsletter costs \$7000, and dues income was \$11,000 this year. Wendy added that we've learned a little more about ALA charges. For instance, 5% of dues income is taken out of the budget for conference fees. An additional 5% is taken off for all meal functions. ALA charges \$600 /year to CSKTF for mailing out the book award seals. Carolyn Ganes asked if there is information regarding how much money is made from sales of the seals. Nel reported that the cost of printing seals is almost the same as selling them. Carolyn asked that the record reflect that negotiations for printing and purchases have always been made by ALA, not by the CSKTF. Nel noted that in one instance ALA could have saved a considerable amount of money on airplane tickets if it had not made reservations at the last minute. Also, GLBTF newsletter is mailed out with 55cent stamps, but it only costs 33 cent to mail. ALA also uses FedEx frequently, which is a waste of money. Ken Thompson reported that he requested 20 copies of the newsletter once and they were all sent individually. Fred Stoss added that from the perspective of program planner, he has been very frustrated trying to get information about conference costs in any given city, and has been told that ALA can't provide such information. And yet, SLA can provide detailed costs of microphones, VCRs etc. for each hotel to program planners two years in advance. Fred went on to say that ALA needs to do better organizing and let conference program planners know what costs to anticipate. Jules Tate asked whether or not, when a task force does any fundraising, ALA gives an accounting of where those funds go? Nel said that ALA indicates in the performance reports that funds have been deposited, but there no detailed information about the source of the funds. Rory Litwin noted that the performance reports provide very little information. Charles Willett added that detailed ledger reports are very helpful, and asked about their frequency. Nel said she believed they were only issued as annual reports. Nel informed the meeting that a copy of the ledger reports were in the OLOS office at the convention hall and invited everyone to look at them. Wendy added that people should make copies, but to be sure that the set stays in the folder for others to review. Barbara Clark asked if charges for rooms, equipment etc. were available. Nel

promised to ask BARC for an exact listing of costs, and added that the "Round Table Handbook" says that charges for conference expenses are estimated and 1/12th is charged each month to roundtable budgets, so there really shouldn't be additional charges. Wendy reported that following last year's SRRT AC discussion concerning the increasing number of SRRT programs, ALA was asked for information on what a room costs at ALA conferences, but she received no answer to any of the three letters she sent. This was one item on the list of discussion points for the Tuesday BARC meeting. Michael Miller asked if layman's explanation of budget report could be provided. Nel noted, as an example of the difficulties in figuring out the budget, that FTF revenues from some breakfast fundraisers never appeared in budget reports. Additionally confusing is the practice of ALA accounting methods to use a minus sign in balance columns to indicate _positive_ balances. Charles added that ALA's other practice of duplicating revenues and expenses in the reports is also confusing. Wendy, noted also that there are always interesting and sometimes very large discrepancies between year-end and year-beginning balances for each fiscal year, and said that these figures should bear some resemblance to each other. Nel suggested that a sudden influx of membership dues might account for such large differences. Lynn Anderson noted that the accrual method of accounting ALA uses is very confusing. The question was asked if SRRT AC needed to revisit this years budget. Wendy replied that some decision needs to be made for BARC about deficit reduction, but we must also insist that they answer questions also. Barbara asked whether anyone besides task force chairs can make expenditures, and Nel answered that ALA can. To which Barbara wondered how anyone can do any planning if others are charging things against our budgets. Nel quipped that this is a problem, just like a husband and wife who don't communicate.

MOTION: ALA staff should make budget reports intelligible to ALA members.

Wendy asked task force chairs to look at the ledgers, and if it seems that there is income not reflected to let Wendy and Nel know. Peter volunteered to inquire how other organizations deal with similar problems, to help in communicating with other treasurers in ALA to see what their situations, practices, etc. are, and to come up with some statement, set of principles and requests for budgeting. Nel noted that ALA divisions don't have treasurers, their ALA staff people take care of finances. Maybe budgeting is one of the duties of ALA staff. Wendy added that GODORT and EMEIRT are similar to SRRT in size and activity. Fred suggested that SRRT ask at the Round Table Coordinating meeting if anyone else has budget problems. Barbara asked if SRRT is expected to go to the BARC meeting with a proposal. Nel responded that she, Wendy, and Elaine met to discuss what to do and come up with a plan. The only proposal now is that task forces review the budget reports and be prepared to continue the budget discussion at AC II, where we will have to talk about next year's budget also. Al Kagan stated that his position for a long time has been that we've been given no information from ALA, and can't be held responsible for what has happened. We can tell BARC that now that SRRT is getting the information we've repeatedly requested, we will be totally responsible from now on, but can't be expected to pay back a deficit when we never knew it was developing. Cal ??? asked if SRRT officers had a list of points and questions to present to BARC? Wendy noted that this discussion was generating just such a Elizabeth Morrisett recalled that newsletter costs might be clarified by looking at past minutes. Jules expressed his frustration that the information given to SRRT is always incomplete and not always credible. He wondered if SRRT is being charged for ALA

inefficiencies, and if we are outgrowing our size and should consider becoming a division. Nel noted that the three smallest divisions are subsidized by ALA. To which Michael asked if such subsidies are limited to only three. John Berry said that when divisions find themselves broke they just get money from ALA. He added that this arrangement to subsidize small divisions has a long history, and that the process of becoming a division is very hard. He suggested that any action plan could tell BARC that ALA must consult with the SRRT treasurer and get his/her approval before any ALA charges any expenditure against the SRRT account. That way SRRT would know where money is going.

Wendy brought the budget discussion to a close by inviting anyone who wants to observe to the BARC meeting on Tuesday, June 29, 9:15-11:50 at the Marriott, Napoleon Room. She encouraged everyone to come. Task force chairs must look at general ledgers, any questions, problems, and get back to Nel with any additions to our list of questions. Nel added her appreciation that the discussion just concluded was very productive and relatively calm. Barbara asked if anyone at ALA takes any responsibility for monitoring budgets, and Carolyn noted that CSK had three revenue areas, books, pamphlets, and seals, and yet hasn't seemed to make any money off them. Sandy asked if budget allocations for current fiscal year are still available. He noted that the Poverty task force was supposed to have \$800 for this year, hasn't spent it, but needs to use it now. Nel said that, yes funds can be used before September.

NEWSLETTER

Ken Thompson reported that the newsletter costs about \$2000 to print. He said that it might be possible to bring cost down, but printing got really expensive, after the cost of domestic paper sky-rocketed when Japan began buying U.S. trees. Currently, the ALA print manager is using a new lower cost print shop, but not for SRRT because he thought that SRRT had a strict policy about using only union printers. Ken also reported that ALA has another contract with a mailing company that prints and mails at a discount. SRRT could have ALA print the newsletter itself. Another possibility is that SRRT could save even more money by going to electronic distribution, via e-mail or posting on the website. SRRT could print and mail postcard announcements that the new issue of the newsletter is now available electronically. He asked if SRRT wants consider a format change of the newsletter as a means of deficit reduction.

Al asked if a union printer cheaper than the one ALA uses could be found and have ALA use them? Or, if ALA could print it cheaper in-house, then we should investigate that option. Ken said that the money numbers get slippery for ALA production, and that it doesn't look like it would generate a giant savings. He suggested that it might be cheaper to go with outside package deal. He estimated that SRRT might save \$500 using ALA's internal printing facilities. On the question of going to another union printer, Ken thinks that ALA would want to use a shop that has an internal distribution center also. This might make it a cumbersome process. Nel asked if ALA charges a fee for its services? Ken said, yes. On the matter of electronic publishing, Katia noted that a significant number of SRRT members are not on e-mail. Cal asked how much would it cost to use both electronic and paper formats. Ken noted that this would generate no savings.

Wendy asked people to respond to the idea of electronic publishing, and suggested that we could try it for a year or two.

Carol Barta made a motion that: for one year SRRT distribute the newsletter electronically beginning with the first newsletter of next FY. We will revisit the decision next year to see if what the response is.

She added that we would need to investigate the cost of sending a postcard, and if that cost is too high, it might not be worth it. Charles suggested that we could do it ourselves. Nel added that there would be the additional cost of printing mailing labels, \$35. She asked about reducing the number of newsletters to 2 issues instead of 4 per year. Ken replied that the saving generated from printing 2 per year could probably accommodate SRRT's need to reduce the deficit.

Elaine expressed reservations about electronic-only format. Al suggested that Nel's idea of 2 issues per year might be the best option, especially as we don't know how many people can get it electronically. Steve Harris cautioned that SRRT might "disappear" from library schools that subscribe to SRRT Newsletter if we went electronic-only. Mark Rosenzweig noted that a newsletter is an important organizational tool, and Elizabeth added that, as an elderly person she thinks it is important to look at what the younger generation is used to and give serious consideration to a change in format. She added that SRRT programs are more important for the money we have. Jules suggested that maybe the newsletter should be made available simultaneously on the web. Nel worried that a postcard to announce electronic availability might cost as much as 2 issues per year. Ken said that the suggestion to move to electronic format was an attempt to free up money for programming in the future. He also noted that only about 50% of task forces submit reports, and said that really needs to change. Carol, withdrew her motion.

Al proposed a three part MOTION. Next year 2 issues of the SRRT Newsletter will be issued in print on a trial basis; SRRT will investigate ways to save money on newsletter; and a report of this discussion will be put on the website, in the newsletter, and over e-mail to solicit input from readers on format alternatives. Motion seconded by Sandy Berman.

Motion passed, one opposed.

GLBTF REPORT

Michael Miller reported that a GLBTF ad hoc committee proceeded with petitions for round table status, but because of a technicality COO asked for the petition to be redone and for new signatures to be gathered. Michael read a letter covering GLBTF activities and contributions to librarianship, and then distributed the new petitions for signatures.

Steve asked what GLBTF will gain from becoming a roundtable? Michael responded that GLBTF would get its own budget line, have a central role within ALA, build its own membership, get into intellectual freedom discussions, and become a front runner in issues the task force is already involved with (non-discrimination, filtering, etc.). GLBTF members want to be a formal partner in ALA discussions. Wendy noted that SRRT has a tradition of bringing up task forces to the point of going off to become roundtables - GODORT and EMEIRT for instance. Michael said that GLBTF wants to retain a strong tie with SRRT. Ken asked what the implications would be for SRRT's size and right to a member on ALA Council? Wendy said it wouldn't have a big impact.

RESOLUTIONS

Mark Rosenzweig presented three resolutions.

Resolution on ALA Membership Meeting Quorum - PASSED

Resolution on Sandy Berman - PASSED

Resolution on ALA and Professional Disputes in Libraries Involving the Infringement of Librarians Rights and Responsibilities - PASSED

All three resolutions will be taken to ALA Council.

Meeting adjourned 12:00pm

Minutes submitted by Elaine Harger, September 12, 1999

Elaine Harger
49 Osborne Terrace
Newark NJ 07108
973/623-7642 home
212/569-0290 ext. 404 work
eharger@tao.agoron.com