

Action Council II
2005 Midwinter Meeting
Boston, MA

In attendance: Terry Epperson, Carol Gulyas, Sam Trosow, Cynthia Whitacre, Diedre Conkling, Aryana Bates, Peter McDonald, Mark Rosenzweig, Elaine Harger, Spring Raulerson, Mark Hudson, Al Kagan, Sally Driscoll, Fred Stoss, Tom Twiss, Rory Litwin, Theresa Tobin, Dana Lubow, Ginny Moore, Rhonda Neugebauer

Announcements: The Progressive Librarian's Guild will be presenting the Miriam Braverman Memorial Award for library/information science students who write an essay concerning social responsibilities and libraries.

Strategic Planning Feedback:

Mark R. opened with an explanation as to how he has shifted thinking since the last meeting regarding making changes to the strategic planning document.

It was suggested that we add: "Public good, public interest, or social responsibilities to the section on values."

Others noted that putting the ideas up front—in the values section—was important and discussed specific wording options.

Fred Stoss moved that we suggest that ALA add "Social Responsibility and the Public Good" into the values statement.

Mark Hudson seconded.

It was pointed out that the feedback form does not have a section for changing the values statement; perhaps the statement should go elsewhere.

Others indicated that the values statements in the strategic plan were written before Social Responsibilities were added to the core values of ALA. Perhaps it is time for ALA to revisit the values section of the strategic plan and change it to reflect those core values.

Additional discussion took place, indicating that we don't have to limit "Social Responsibility and the Public Good" to one section of the form, but that it can go in both the values and the organizational sections.

That idea was taken as a friendly amendment to the motion.

Elaine Harger suggested a specific mechanism for providing feedback to put this information in both the organization section and the values section: placing it in the feedback form under both the section specifically labeled "organization" and at the end of the form under "other" to give feedback on the comments section.

The motion carried unanimously.

Response to threat of Library Closures:

Mark Rosenzweig reported on council's response to the Salinas resolution, indicating that he did not think it had strong support and that many spoke against it.

Carol Gulyas offered a draft "Endangered Libraries List" resolution, with the idea that this list would be similar to an "endangered species" list, providing a PR vehicle for action on library closures. The final clause of the resolution reads:

"Therefore be it resolved that the American Library Association establish an 'Endangered Libraries List' which will capture and centralize in readily accessible format, information on libraries whose funding is endangered and encourage the dissemination of this list as an organizing tool."

Discussion was generally positive about the idea. T. Epperson suggested that this is also similar to the Historical Preservation list, so that it will not only point out those libraries that are about to close, but will also point out what has already been closed.

E. Harger noted that they should have an "Extinct" list, since many libraries have closed in recent years.

It was also stated that the list should not only include physical buildings, but virtual collections and databases that have died for lack of funding/support.

It was decided that the feeling is generally positive for this resolution and that Carol Gulyas would work with others to prepare it to be presented to Council at Annual this summer.

ALA Presidential Candidates:

Christine Lind Hage and Leslie Burger addressed the group, followed by questions from the floor.

Afterwards, E. Harger moved that SRRT support neither of the candidates for office. M. Rosenzweig seconded.

Mark Hudson spoke against the motion, indicating that there might be good reason to support Burger, who represents SRRT values in many ways, if not in all.

Vote: 6 in favor, 2 against, 1 abstention

Budget:

C. Gulyas reported that she needed to collect budget requests from task forces for next year.

T. Tobin reminded the group that Action Council needs to vote on the budget at this meeting.

7
R. Litwin agreed that was the case. The budget was re-created through discussion and information from Gulyas providing \$500 per task force for \$500 per round table, except for Feminist Task Force, who budgeted \$2000 for 2006 programs, taking into account the income they have obtained in the past year. Total budget: \$5000.

M. Jones moves that we pass the budget as discussed.

M. Hudson seconds.

F. Stoss asked if this includes anything extra for a postcard insert in the newsletter, which would cost around \$400.

Discussion ensued regarding the idea of a postcard insert to gather information about round table interests of individual members.

7
Aryana Bates indicated that, as a new member, it was unclear to her that there were round tables; E. Harger affirmed this, in saying that the paper and online membership forms don't make this clear. TFs ?

T. Tobin spoke against making people choose on paper, that the fluidity of roundtable membership is valuable.

R. Litwin spoke in support of Tobin's comment.

F. Stoss suggested that we list task forces in newsletter, how to join, get active, get on listservs, and then we would let individual task forces keep track of their own membership.

S. Driscoll indicated that she thought that the postcard was part of a focus on bringing in new leaders.

R. Litwin indicated that, if this is not going to impact the budget, we could pick up this discussion outside of this meeting.

Call for vote on the budget as described. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Harger presented a resolution against disinformation. In her discussion, she referred to the Friends of Cuban Libraries as an example of such a disinformation effort. She had given drafts of the resolution to those involved in the Intellectual Freedom committee. She sought SRRT's endorsement so that she could take it to ALA council.

C. Gulyas indicated that the document was given to IFRT today, but without the bibliography, which gives added weight to the resolution. Even without the bibliography, there was a predisposition to support the resolution in IFRT.

R. Litwin noted that the meeting time is almost consumed. Called for a motion to extend.

F. Stoss moved to extend for 30 minutes. S. Trusow seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

M. Hudson spoke in favor of the disinformation resolution. Would like to see SRRT take more action on the media system in this country.

D. Conkling suggested it be taken to GODORT and other International Relations committees (ARRL, ALTA, ALCTS)

The resolution, containing the following resolved clauses, was moved by Elaine Harger and seconded by Tom Twiss, co-chairs of the International Responsibilities Task Force:

“Resolved that SRRT encourages its members to help raise public consciousness of the many ways in which disinformation campaigns are used to manipulate public opinion in all spheres of life;

Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) denounces the use of librarianship as a cover for disinformation campaigns; and be it further

Resolved that the SRRT calls on the American Library Association, all its members and affiliates to join in efforts to inform the public about the widespread use of disinformation campaigns within our society.”

The motion carried unanimously.

SRRT Councilor's Report

A. Kagan reported that he asked the ALA endowment manager about socially responsible investing. ALA has started putting about 1% of the endowment into such investments, but received a 14% return. Since the return was so large, they may increase the percentage of the endowment dedicated to this type of purchase. Kagan also indicated that he has a different take on the Salinas resolution than Rosenzweig reported earlier, in that he thinks that council was not as negative as Mark thought. Otherwise, most of council's work will happen at future meetings.

SRRT Brochure Re-design

Carol presented a draft brochure that she, Theresa, Rory and Fred worked on. She indicated that the document in front of us was just the copy, and that it had not yet been looked at by a designer. It had been run by *LJ*'s John Berry, who approved of it.

R. Litwin indicated that they will take it to the OLOS office PR person to do actual design work.

E. Harger questioned whether ALA would charge for that service. Others around the room echoed her question.

R. Litwin said that his understanding was that OLOS would provide this service to us at no charge.

A. Kagan and others questioned whether Black Caucus is actually one of SRRT's key accomplishments.

It was agreed that the history of Black Caucus should be researched.

General discussion included:

- *If an existing ALA member wants to join, there should be a line for ALA member number*
- *In the interest of time, proofreading notes should be given to Carol after the meeting.*
- *"Agree that social responsibilities is a core value" (under "About SRRT") is a passive phrase; something more active might be appropriate. Also, since it's an ALA core value, this might not be the best phrase to use. Perhaps "promote" as a core value would be more appropriate.*
- *"Since 1969" could replace "for over 30 years"*
- *There should be mention of action council as the governing body of SRRT.*

Mark Hudson moved to accept this document in principle. Al Kagan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Cynthia Whitacre reported on process to create AACR3 by the Committee on Cataloging Description and Access. This is a major reorganization since AACR2, focused only on descriptive cataloging (not subject analysis).

Al Kagan suggested that Sandy Berman be asked to look at the report Cynthia had in hand.

Terry Epperson reported as liaison to the Freedom to Read Foundation.

The president of FTRF (Gordon Conable) recently died; John W. Berry is to take over for the rest of his term (through June 2005). Generally, the news is good. Many cases are being overturned as unconstitutional, and we've received good things elsewhere. Cases discussed include:

- *Ashcroft v. ACLU: Supreme Court upheld the injunction barring enforcement of the Children's Online Protection Act. The case now returns to the District Court to determine whether COPA is the least restrictive means of achieving the government's goal of protecting children from sexually explicit materials.*
- *John Doe and ACLU v. Ashcroft, et al: Southern District of NY ruled that provisions of the PATRIOT Act which permit the FBI to compel production of information without judicial review is unconstitutional. The government will appeal.*

- Muslim Community Association v. Ashcroft: Challenges PATRIOT Act section 215. The government filed a motion to dismiss on the grounds that plaintiffs do not have standing to challenge the law. The court heard oral argument; a decision is pending.
- Video Software Dealers, et al v. Maleng: Challenge a Washington State law barring the sale or rental to minors of video games depicting violence against law enforcement officers. District Court entered summary judgement in favor of the plaintiffs, overturning the provision as an unconstitutional restriction on speech. The state has not appealed.
- ACLU v. Department of Justice: FTRF and ACLU filed a FOIA request for information concerning use of Section 215 of PATRIOT Act following Ashcroft's claim that the FBI had never used the section. After the FOIA request was refused, the plaintiffs filed a lawsuit to force the FBI to process the request. The District Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and in June 2004 the FBI began to release records and documents concerning the FBI's use of Section 215.

Note that the Sunset provisions of Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act (that is, those provisions that require that these sections of the law must be re-affirmed or they expire) are coming soon. This will be a major arena of effort for the FTRF this Spring. We have the advantage on this one because we only have to block passage.

S. Trusow asked if ALA will follow the attorney when she leaves Jenner & Block. Epperson didn't know.

E. Harger motion to extend meeting.
M. Hudson second.
Motion carried unanimously.

Additional items

F. Stoss reports that OLOS would like to create a spreadsheet to keep track of all of their programs at annual meetings. His agenda item "Membership Communication Program" was taken care of under "Budget" above.

R. Neugebauer discusses the formation of a new group called the Emergency Coalition to Defend Educational Travel (ECDET) that is supported by the Latin American Studies Association's Cuba Section. ECDET is an organization including members from accredited colleges and universities and academic associations (including AAUP). They are moving toward a court challenge to Cuba travel restrictions based on rights of academic freedom. This organization is supported by a number of groups, and would like SRRT's support also.

E. Harger moved that we support in principle the ECDET.
D. Lubow seconded.
Motion carried unanimously.