

**Policy Monitoring Committee: Report to ALA Council,  
Annual Conference**

**ACTION ITEM: 1. Organization Membership Dues and Perquisites**

At the 2010 Midwinter Meeting, ALA Council approved the insertion of revisions to Policy 12.1 into the Policy Manual. At that time, PMC notified Council of its intent to propose removal of specific dues levels from the policy, both because specific dues levels do not constitute policy, and because it is inappropriate to include in a policy manual information that can be expected to change with some frequency. As is often the case, the task was more complex than it first appeared.

The current policy reads:

12. Organization Membership Dues and Prerequisites

The Bylaws, Article I, Section 2-B, C, and D, authorize Council to set the dues and perquisites of Chapters, Organization Members, and Corporate Members. The dues and perquisites established effective with the 2001 Membership Year are as follows:

Chapter Members: Dues \$110 annually.

Organization Members

- All organization member dues go to support the public awareness efforts of ALA through the Washington Office and the Public Information Office, specifically.
- Each Organization member may designate one Key Partner member. The Key Partner should be an individual who is in a position to support libraries and is not an employee of the library (e.g. mayor, city manager, superintendent, school principal, academic dean, library trustee, etc.)
- The Key Partner will receive briefing bulletins, either printed or electronic, on library issues.
- The Key Partner is a non-voting member of ALA and will not serve on ALA committees.

1. Library and Library School

Library Budget Dues:  
Under \$50,000 -- \$110  
\$50,000-\$150,000 -- \$175  
\$151,000-\$250,000 -- \$520

\$251,000-\$500,000 -- \$865  
\$501,000-\$999,000 -- \$1,210  
Over \$1,000,000 -- \$1,415

2. All other Nonprofit Organization Members (chapters, library associations, international libraries, and nonprofit organizations other than libraries and library schools): Dues \$110 annually. For members joining ALA under Bylaw 1.2 B-C, the prerequisites of membership shall be American Libraries ALA Handbook of Organization and Membership Directory, eligibility for division and round table membership, eligibility for insurance, and discounts on library materials.

Corporate Members:

Level 1: Dues \$500 annually

Level 2: Dues \$2,000 annually

The benefits to corporate members in each of these categories are available from the Membership Office (See Current Reference File for details).

In addition to the presence of specific dues amounts, PMC notes the following problems:

- Somewhere between 2009 and 2010, the caption changed, as "Prerequisites" became "Prerequisites"
- The information about Bylaws authorization is inaccurate. Bylaws Article 1, Section 1 as a whole establishes the categories of membership. Part A covers personal members, B and C cover Chapters and Organization Members, and D covers Corporate Members. Article 1, Section 2 gives Council the authority to set dues, and Section 3 gives Council authority to set prerequisites.
- Chapter members are not "Organization members", but both Organization members and Chapter members receive the same prerequisites, and the current organization of the Policy makes that difficult to understand.
- Prerequisites of membership listed include the handbook of organization and membership directory, but these are no longer distributed (both are online).
- The caption is inaccurate. This Policy only covers Chapter and Organization members. It does not deal with Personal members at all, and Corporate members are present only as a reference.
- Problem 6A: The "Key Partner" section is obsolete. According to John Chrastka, "With the advent of both ALTAFF and the Office for Library Advocacy's e-newsletter, the intent of the 'Key Partner' project is now located in those areas rather than in Membership. The 'key partner' idea predated both of these advocacy units and has been lapped by the work of these units. Also, significant concerns exist about opting a 'partner' into a mailing or emailing regime without their own willful action. It has not been successfully operationalized through membership but the outcomes are being realized through the I Love Libraries newsletter."

To address these matters, PMC proposes the following:

- Change Prerequisites to Prerequisites. There was some discussion about whether the term "Benefits" should be used, since it was much less likely to run afoul of spell checkers in the future, but "Prerequisites" is the more accurate term.

- Rather than adding a statement about the constitutional authorization for Council to set dues and perquisites, limit the statement to a more general one about where categories of membership are defined. A statement concerning authorization to determine dues and perquisites is unnecessary, and including it provides an opportunity for policy statements to become inaccurate over time as the Constitution or Bylaws may be revised, and references to it are not. A look at older iterations of the Bylaws suggests that this is what happened in this case.
- Recognize that Policy 12 is about perquisites for Chapters and Organization members and make it explicit in the caption.
- Remove the Key Partner provisions of Chapter 12.
- Combine the list of perquisites (which are now identical), removing the reference to the handbook and directory.
- Remove the reference to Corporate Member benefits, since they are not the subject of this policy, and the revised caption makes that clear.

Accordingly, **PMC MOVES** revision of Policy 12 to read (in its entirety):

#### 12. Organization and Chapter Membership Perquisites

Categories of membership are established in the Bylaws, Article I, Section 1. Specific perquisites of Chapter and Organization membership include: *American Libraries*; Eligibility for division and round table membership; Eligibility for insurance; Discounts on library materials. In addition, all Organization member dues go to support the public awareness efforts of ALA through the Washington Office and the Public Information Office.

It should be noted that there is some question as to whether the perquisites of membership should be included in the Policy Manual at all, since, as we have seen, they may change over time. If perquisites are removed from the policy, the only thing that remains is the final sentence (and the caption would need to be changed). **By presentation of this report**, PMC suggests that the Membership Committee consider the matter. The special task force referred to in Action Item 5 would also need to address the issue.

#### **ACTION ITEM: 2. Roll Call Votes**

Current policy states:

5.5.6 Roll Call Votes. Action of the Council on matters of policy will be on roll call vote if the presiding officer so determines or on request from a Councilor. Results of roll call votes shall be published in *American Libraries* for the information of the membership. Results of other recorded votes shall be reported to membership.

As written, this policy contradicts Sturgis, which states "A vote by roll call may be required by the bylaws or may be decided upon by the assembly following a motion from a member. A majority vote is required to order a roll call." In addition, as written, current policy places a limitation on what may be subject to a roll call ("... matters of policy ..."). PMC believes it is problematic for policy to contradict the Association's

agreed-upon parliamentary authority, and further believes that it is not necessary to embody in the Policy Manual matters that are covered by that parliamentary authority.

If the first sentence of 5.5.6 is eliminated as contradictory and unnecessary, two points remain: an indication that roll call votes will be reported in *American Libraries*; and that results of other votes shall be reported to the membership (by means unspecified). If this is all that remains of 5.5.6, then the caption is inaccurate.

Currently, the results of votes of Council are contained in the minutes of the meetings, and in the report of Council Actions, both of which are available on the Association website. There seems to have been no roll call vote since at least 1979.

Prior to 1970, there was no requirement that the recorded votes of Council be published. After passage of what now appears as 5.5.6, Council votes were published to the membership via a special mailing to each Association member. This was later replaced by publication of the detailed voting record in *American Libraries*. That practice was discontinued in 1992 (following lengthy Council debate) partly for financial reasons. The decision may also have been influenced by ongoing discussions of editorial authority for ALA publications. The result of those discussions is reflected in Policy 10.1 Responsibility for Content of ALA Publications, which states (in the last paragraph) that "The decision as to appropriate material for inclusion in the publication shall rest with the editor guided by the ALA Constitution, its Bylaws, and relevant policies as adopted by the ALA Council ...". Current wording of 5.5.6 with regard to the reporting of votes appears to have resulted from compromise on many fronts, but preserving two principles: (1) That Council's actions should be made publicly available, and (2) that when a vote is so significant or controversial as to be taken by roll call, the detailed results of the vote should be reported in an official publishing outlet of the Association.

In the intervening decades, electronic communication has burgeoned, and the ALA Website has been developed. It is likely that the overwhelming majority of Association Members would expect to find voting records on the ALA Website rather than in a monthly print journal. Even this may change over time, so rather than specify a particular venue for publication of Council votes, PMC suggests that the principle of public reporting, and of detailed reporting of roll call votes be preserved through a more generally stated policy.

Accordingly, **PMC MOVES** that 5.5.6 be REVISED to read:

#### 5.5.6 Reporting of Council Votes

Results of recorded votes of Council shall be published in a widely available official outlet of the Association. Results of roll call votes shall be published promptly and in detail.

**ACTION ITEM: 3. Revisions to Council Minutes.**

Current wording of 5.5.7 *Minutes reads as follows:*

Minutes of Council meetings shall be approved for distribution by the President and President-elect and distributed promptly. Council members shall be requested to submit additions or corrections within 10 days of receipt of the minutes, such additions and corrections to be placed on the agenda of Council's next meeting, at which formal approval of the minutes shall take place.

At the 2009 Annual Conference, PMC noted problems with Policy 5.5.7, both as regards clarity, and as to whether 10 days is a reasonable time limit for comment. PMC did not propose any changes to the policy pending determination of actual practice.

The practice for at least two decades has been that the Minutes of Council meetings are approved for distribution to Council by the Executive Director. Distribution currently takes the form of electronic distribution and inclusion on the Website as a Council document. Councilors are expected to read the minutes and submit any corrections to the Council Secretariat. Cosmetic corrections (typos, grammar, formatting, etc.) are made as they are reported. More substantive corrections are included on the agenda for the next Council Meeting so that they may be approved by Council. Once the minutes are approved as amended, the Council Document is corrected. Since this process has been followed without comment for some time, PMC proposes that the policy be rewritten to reflect actual practice. Accordingly,

PMC MOVES that Policy 5.5.7 be revised to read:

#### 5.5.7 Revisions to Council Minutes

Minutes of Council meetings shall be approved for distribution by the Executive Director and distributed to Council promptly. Council members shall be requested to submit additions or corrections promptly after receipt. Cosmetic and editorial corrections will be made as they are received. Substantive corrections received are placed on the agenda of Council's next official meeting, at which formal approval of the minutes shall take place.

Note that this revision is purposely silent on the matters of what constitutes "promptly", and on what constitutes "distribution."

#### **ACTION ITEM: 4. Policy 10.**

In the course of considering the various ways in which the word "Headquarters" is used in the Policy Manual, PMC had occasion to consult Policy 10.5 Executive Board Review, whereupon it noted that this policy is not logically located, and that the section caption is misleading.

The current arrangement of topics is (in the interest of space, the full text of only 10.5 is included):

#### 10. Headquarters and Publications

- 10.1 Responsibility for Content of ALA Publications
  - 10.1.1. Definition of an ALA Publication
  - 10.1.2. Archiving of Electronic Publications
- 10.2 American Libraries: Editorial Policy
- 10.3 Sex-Stereotyping Terminology [in ALA publications]
- 10.4 Reproduction of Articles
- 10.5 Executive Board Review

The Executive Board shall review administrative decisions made in the internal management of Headquarters by the Executive Director, and the Executive Director shall be authorized to carry out the provisions of the budget including hiring and firing of staff without submitting matters previously authorized or individual appointments to the Executive Board except in the form of reports of action. Any action by the Executive Director shall be subject to review by the Executive Board upon request of any member of the Executive Board.

Note that 10.1 through 10.4 all concern ALA publications, while 10.5 is concerned with the authority of the Executive Director, as related to the authority of the Executive Board.

10.5 originally stood alone as Section 10 from the 1950s to the late 1980's when the other policies began to be passed. It appears that the first additional policies to be passed were placed with the original policy on Executive Board Review because they were in a sense managerial issues. As other policies about publications were added, they found their home with the others in Section 10. An attempt was made to make the section coherent through the wording of the caption.

These stratagems, however, are unsatisfactory. 10.5 bears little relationship to the remainder of Section 10, and it would be difficult to create a caption that could convey the span of the whole section. In effect, 10.5 is hidden here.

The content of 10.5 is itself peculiar. The Constitution, Article VIII, Sec. 3 outlines the responsibilities and authority of the Executive Director with regard to headquarters and its personnel and carrying out the provisions of the budget. Article VII, Section 3 outlines the authority of the Executive Board. The only additional information contained in Policy 10.5 is to stipulate that the Executive Board has the authority to review actions of the Executive Director, and to indicate how such a review might be asked for.

PMC wonders whether it is necessary to articulate this information at all; if it is necessary to articulate it, whether it belongs in policy at all; and whether it would be more appropriately located in the Constitution, where the duties of both bodies are defined. **By presentation of this report** PMC requests Constitution and Bylaws to consider the matter. PMC will accordingly make no attempt to reword it, pending input from Constitution and Bylaws.

In the meantime, in order to address the illogic of the current organization, and to "unhide" 10.5,

## PMC MOVES

That the Caption at 10 be revised to read:

### 10. ALA Publications

THAT a new section 13 of the Policy Manual be created, and that the current 10.5 be removed from its current location and renumbered so that the new section would appear as:

### 13. Executive Board and Executive Director

#### 13.1 Executive Board Review

The Executive Board shall review administrative decisions made in the internal management of Headquarters by the Executive Director, and the Executive Director shall be authorized to carry out the provisions of the budget including hiring and firing of staff without submitting matters previously authorized or individual appointments to the Executive Board except in the form of reports of action. Any action by the Executive Director shall be subject to review by the Executive Board upon request of any member of the Executive Board.

PMC, or a special task force on the Policy Manual should consider, **in concert with Constitution and Bylaws** whether this policy is necessary, and how and whether it might be rewritten to make its purpose and provisions clear. Should it be decided that the policy is necessary, the special task force should consider its ultimate location. For example, should information about Executive Board be located closer to the beginning of the section of governance policies? Should items about the Executive Board and Council be combined into a single section?

#### **ACTION ITEM: 5. Policy Manual Revision**

The Policy Manual was originally created as a result of the work of the "Ihrig Committee" and has been maintained since its inception first by Staff, and later through creation of the Policy Monitoring Committee. As evidenced by this present report and by the PMC reports of the past several years, careful examination of almost any policy (either in isolation or in context) often reveals some curiosity of wording, numbering, title, grammar, appropriateness, clarity, purpose, obsolescence, need, etc. These issues have heretofore been dealt with as they arise or are noticed, but that approach depends largely on the particular bent of the current chair and members of PMC. Other possible approaches would be to engage a consultant/editor, or to make an assignment to specific Headquarters staff, or to appoint a special Task Force with the specific charge to carry out a thorough examination of the Policy Manual, and to propose such changes as are deemed necessary, including, but not limited to:

- Renumbering to provide room for expansion where needed
- Renumbering to provide a more logical order of policies
- Matching policy names with content
- Deletion of obsolete policies
- Deletion of obsolete parts of policies
- Identification and clarification of primary intent of policies, and revision as necessary to reflect that purpose
- Clarification or deletion of confusing parts of policies
- Verification that policies reflect actual practice
- Identification of policies that contain an "exclusive" list and consideration whether an "exemplary" list should be used in order to reduce future need for revision, and/or to clarify whether a policy is needed for each specific instance, or for classes of instances
- Deletion of policies that simply restate accepted parliamentary practice or provisions of the Constitution or Bylaws
- Identification of policies that may not be appropriately considered policy, and determination of appropriate placement/treatment (e.g. as guidelines, bylaws, or deleted)
- Making editorial/grammatical changes as necessary (e.g. which vs that; will vs shall; use of consistent terminology to convey concepts)
- Verifying correctness, currency, and appropriateness of all references, including references to the Constitution, Bylaws, other policies, the Policy Reference File (instead of the "Current Reference File")
- Considering how or whether Web capabilities might be used to enhance navigation through the Manual, and location, accessibility and relation of policies to each other and to other documents.

Doing work such as this is beyond the capacity of the three-member Policy Monitoring Committee. It requires a degree of continuity not possible through the regular appointment process and limitation of PMC membership to current Councilors. It benefits from having an individual or individuals specifically recruited and appointed because of their interest in this kind of work. Accordingly,

#### PMC MOVES

That a special task force be appointed and charged with carrying out a thorough examination of the Policy Manual, and proposing such changes are necessary, including, but not limited to

- Renumbering to provide room for expansion where needed
- Renumbering to provide a more logical order of policies
- Matching policy names with content
- Deletion of obsolete policies
- Deletion of obsolete parts of policies
- Identification and clarification of primary intent of policies, and revision as necessary to reflect that purpose
- Clarification or deletion of confusing parts of policies
- Verification that policies reflect actual practice



- Identification of policies that contain an “exclusive” list and consideration whether an “exemplary” list should be used in order to reduce future need for revision, and/or to clarify whether a policy is needed for each specific instance, or for classes of instances
- Deletion of policies that simply restate accepted parliamentary practice or provisions of the Constitution or Bylaws
- Identification of policies that may not be appropriately considered policy, and determination of appropriate placement/treatment (e.g. as guidelines, bylaws, or deleted)
- Making editorial/grammatical changes as necessary (e.g. which vs that; will vs shall; use of consistent terminology to convey concepts)
- Verifying correctness, currency, and appropriateness of all references, including references to the Constitution, Bylaws, other policies, the Policy Reference File (instead of the “Current Reference File”)
- Considering how or whether Web capabilities might be used to enhance navigation through the Manual, and location, accessibility and relation of policies to each other and to other documents.

The Task Force should consult freely with PMC and Council, and should keep PMC and Council apprised of progress.

PMC recommends that the initial charge be for not less than two years, with the possibility of extension as necessary to complete the work.

## **NON-ACTION ITEMS**

### **NON-ACTION ITEM: 6. The ALA Policy Process**

Attached to this report you will find as CD 17.1, “The ALA Policy Process - An Introduction for New Councilors.” The ALA policy process can be a bit murky, and is not widely understood. The attached document (CD #17.1) was prepared by the PMC Chair for ALA Council Orientation at the 2010 Midwinter. It is included here for the information of all Councilors.

### **NON-ACTION ITEM: 7. Terminology regarding gender identity**

At the Midwinter Meeting in 2009, Council approved a number of revisions to the Policy Manual to incorporate current preferred terminology regarding “gender identity or expression.” Two policies remain that require revisions to include newer terminology. 7.1.1 Non-Discrimination in Conference Contracts; and 54.16. Gay rights. Because those two policies presented additional issues that needed to be resolved, PMC requested that GLBTRT examine them and propose specific revised text as soon as feasible. PMC understands that there will be proposals forthcoming at this Annual Conference.

### **NON-ACTION ITEM: 8. Programmatic Priorities (housekeeping)**

At the 2010 Midwinter meeting, Council approved the FY2011 programmatic priorities for the American Library Association. These priorities are approved annually, and appear in 1.4 Key Action Areas. The priorities approved in 2010 were unchanged from the text that appears at 1.4. The parenthetical reference will be updated to reflect this most recent approval as a matter of housekeeping.

**NON-ACTION ITEM: 9. A ritual reminder: Revisions and Additions to the Policy Manual**

Policy Monitoring Committee would like to remind the Council of the following:

- A. Policy Monitoring Committee is not responsible for writing policy. New policies should be proposed in a formal manner, including the full and precise intended text to be used.
- B. Policy Monitoring Committee proposes revisions to policy either (1) in response to specific proposals submitted to and passed by Council, or (2) as housekeeping or editorial actions. Proposals submitted to Council should include the precise revisions desired, presented in full, as they would appear in the revised policy.
- C. Statements of one-time action do not belong in a policy manual. Policies express a permanent or continual condition, process, or stand, and should be written in those terms. Words such as "affirms" or "reaffirms," which describe one-time actions, are not appropriate to a policy manual, while words such as "supports" or "encourages" are.
- D. Policy manuals should not include details that can be expected to change with some frequency. Policies state the framework within which the changeable details are determined. The changeable details should be recorded elsewhere.

**PENDING ITEMS:**

Other non-urgent matters remain pending. These include:

- Future revision of 6.2.1 to reflect implementation of electronic signatures for petitions
- Ambiguity of the term "Headquarters"

**In Conclusion:** The Committee wishes to thank its staff liaison, Lois Ann Gregory Wood, for her knowledgeable, cheerful, and ready assistance, and John Chrastka for his help with matters related to membership.

Submitted, for the Policy Monitoring Committee  
Janet Swan Hill, Chair  
Barbara Stripling  
Jane Sessa

Lois Ann Gregory-Wood, Staff Liaison