

American Library Association

DIVISION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Minutes of Buffalo Conference Meetings

BOARD MEETING, JUNE 16, 1946

The Board of Directors held its first meeting, in connection with the Annual Conference of the A.L.A., in the Hotel Statler, Sunday, June 16, 1946, at 8:30 p.m.

Present: President Amy Winslow, presiding; First Vice-President Martha B. Merrell; Second Vice-President Anne I. Hume; Acting Executive Secretary and Treasurer Nordica Penneman; Directors: John S. Richards (designated by Chairman Elsie Gordon to represent the Adult Education Section), Mrs. Dorothy T. Hagerman (Branch Librarians), Milton A. Drescher (Business and Technology), Magnus K. Kristoffersen (Lending), Carl Vitz (Librarians of Large Libraries), Glenn M. Lewis (Order and Book Selection), Isabel DuBois (Service Librarians), Anne I. Hume (Small Librarian).

Invited to participate but without vote were Marian McFadden, division representative on the Advisory Committee for the Department of Information and Advisory Services at A.L.A. Headquarters; Helen Seymour, chairman of the Membership Committee and division councilor; (three other councilors, Anne I. Hume, Magnus K. Kristoffersen and John S. Richards are listed under directors); and Ruth Gregory, executive secretary elect.

Minutes of the Board Meetings of December 29 and 30, 1945, were approved without reading as they had been sent to all members of the Board and no corrections had been reported.

Secretary's Report. (Exhibit A) Acting Executive Secretary Nordica Penneman reported on business carried on since the last Board Meeting and presented two matters for Board action, namely, the determination of a date for making an official membership count, and disposition of extra councilors elected in the Spring. The report was accepted on motion of Mrs. Hagerman. Discussion on the two matters presented was deferred until later in the meeting.

Treasurer's Report. (Exhibit B) Treasurer Nordica Penneman read the financial report from September 1, 1945 to June 12, 1946. The balance on hand on June 12, 1946 was \$1993.08. The report was accepted on motion of Mr. Vitz.

Division Representation at A.L.A. Headquarters. Marian McFadden presented her Report of the Representative of the Public Libraries Division to the Special Information and Advisory Services Committee, February 23-24, 1946. (Exhibit C)

Following the reading of the report, President Winslow announced that, in view of the fact that matters were developing rapidly and the situation was acute, she had already appointed a committee, John S. Richards, chairman, Julia Grothaus, Walter Kaiser, Muriel Perry, Marian McFadden, to study the organization of the Department of Information and Advisory Services, and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors and, eventually, to the Executive Board of A.L.A.

Mr. Richards reported on the provision passed by the Executive Board, ^{of ALA} bringing to Council a recommendation that Council endorse dipping into the \$20,000 a

year made available through the release, by the Carnegie Corporation, of the obligation to hold its endowment intact as principle, and that the first claim be to do something for the A.O.R.L. in the way of services at Headquarters.

In the considerable discussion which followed, these points emerged: that if Council adopted the recommendation, the A.O.R.L. would be taken care of temporarily, but that the Division of Public Libraries would not; that something should be done to restore the strength in the public libraries field at Headquarters which had been weakened by non-replacement of vacancies in the positions of Adult Education Specialist, Statistics Assistant, and Chief of the Department of Information and Advisory Services; that the intent to do something about it is there, but funds are lacking, and that the division might contribute financially. It was suggested that Mr. Richards confer with the Extension Division and the Trustees Division to explore the possibility of the three divisions joining in a financial contribution. The situation was recognized as critical since the A.O.R.L. was asking for immediate Council action, and it was felt that the Division of Public Libraries should act at once to protect public library interests at Headquarters. It was decided to have the matter come up at the first Division Business Meeting, on Tuesday, June 17, Miss McFadden to present her report, followed by the presentation for adoption by the membership of the division, of a resolution stating the division's position. President Winslow, thereupon, appointed Miss McFadden, Mr. Richards and Mr. Vitz to formulate the resolution.

Publications Committee Report. (Exhibit D) In the absence of Miriam E. McNally, chairman of the Publications Committee, the Acting Executive Secretary read her report.

Following the reading, Mr. Vitz objected to the statement in the report that "returns from the questionnaire were unanimously opposed to a periodical for the Public Libraries Division", for the reason that he, for one, had responded in favor of a periodical. He then went on to describe some of his ideas as to the possible nature it might have, namely, that it might contain digests of things outstanding in library literature, such as articles now buried in Commission bulletins; that it might contain data sheets for furniture, floor coverings, poster helps, etc., which would intine result in an encyclopedia of library information, with an index; that the library handbooks, which had been recommended by the Publications Committee, could be financed more inexpensively by publication on a subscription basis in a periodical than by separate publication. He also called attention to the fact that the title "Public Libraries" is now in the public domain. Approval of Mr. Vitz' ideas was expressed, and President Winslow asked that he present them at the Division Business Meeting.

Membership. Helen Seymour reported informally on the activities of the Membership Committee, and called attention to the article on the Division of Public Libraries appearing on the inside cover of the A.L.A. Bulletin for June, 1946, and the article by President Winslow in the Wilson Bulletin for May 1946. She feels that direct mail promotion is needed, but said that she lacks clerical help to undertake it. On motion of Mr. Vitz, it was voted that the Membership Committee be continued another year and that its number be enlarged after consultation with the committee, itself, and with the Board of Directors.

The question of deciding upon a date for making an official membership count upon which to base Council allotment was next considered. On motion of Mr. Vitz, it was voted to carry non-renewals until later in the year, and to use the figure, 2151, as of June 12, 1946, for this year's official membership count. For the future, it was the consensus of the Board that the decision upon a date should be

made by A.L.A. so that the date would be the same for all divisions. On motion of Mr. Vitz, the Board instructed the Executive Secretary to write the Executive Secretary of A.L.A. asking that A.L.A. fix a date for a final membership count upon which to base division representation to the A.L.A. Council.

Councilors. The disposition of the newly elected Councilors was the discussed. It was decided to seat them in order, according to the number of votes received by each, those not seated at this time to be "councilors elect" and to be notified that they would be seated as the membership increases.

The order, according to the number of votes received, is as follows:

- 1. R. Russell Mann 357 votes
- 2. Robert D. Franklin 297
- 3. Stuart O. Sherman 293
- 4. Richard B. Sealock 292
- 5. Sigrid A. Edge 286
- 6. Richard Mimich 261

Personnel Board. President Winslow announced that she had appointed Martha B. Merrell and Glenn M. Lewis, as alternate, to represent the division at the meeting of the Personnel Board on Monday, June 17.

A.L.A. Editorial Committee had asked for a meeting with the Publications Committee of the Division of Public Libraries on Sunday afternoon, June 16. President Winslow announced that the Committee representation had been so small that she had asked Glenn Lewis and Florence Gifford to attend also.

Organization. President Winslow then reviewed the discussion on the Organization Report at the December 1945 Board Meeting. According to decision made at that time, the sections were to discuss at their business meetings whether they wished to continue to exist, and were to go ahead and elect officers. She said that she would call for reports from the section chairmen at the Business Meeting on Thursday, June 20. The newly elected officers were to represent the sections at the Board Meeting on Friday, June 21. She also raised the question as to whether the proposed constitution should be considered for adoption if the sections voted to dissolve. It was decided to wait and see what the sections decided to do.

Proceedings. Method of handling reports and proceedings of the meetings was then outlined by the Executive Secretary, and names of those who would report the meetings for the sections were given to her.

After a brief discussion about the conference program, the meeting adjourned.

BUSINESS MEETING, JUNE 13, 1946

The first Business Meeting of the Division of Public Libraries was held on Monday, June 17, 1946, at 10 o'clock, in the Memorial Auditorium, President Amy Winslow presiding. After brief introductory remarks she called for reports.

Secretary's Report. (Exhibit E) The Acting Executive Secretary read her report, which recapitulated the history of the division and organizational activity to date. The report was accepted.

Treasurer's Report. (Exhibit B) The Treasurer's report was read and accepted.

Report of the Representative of the Public Libraries Division to the Special Information and Advisory Services Committee, February 23-24, 1946 (Exhibit C) was read by Marian McFadden.

President Winslow then announced that concern had been felt at the Board Meeting the night before in regard to recent developments which made it urgent that the Division of Public Libraries act to protect public library interests at Headquarters, and that a committee had been appointed to draw up a resolution to present to the membership for adoption. John S. Richards then presented the resolution:

The Division of Public Libraries has viewed with concern the gradual diminution of services at A.L.A. Headquarters which are of importance to public libraries, beginning with the loss of the Adult Education specialist, and later the statistics assistant, the assistant to the chief of the Department of Information and Advisory Services and finally by the resignation of the chief of the department.

The Division contemplates with added concern a prolonged temporary arrangement. The Division, therefore, wishes to go on record as urging the appointment of a Public Library Specialist and as rapidly as possible the restoration of the other discontinued services. The Division calls attention to the fact that at least 50% of the A.L.A. membership is directly concerned with the maintenance and development of good public library service. Because of the gravity of the situation and the immediate needs, the Division of Public Libraries recommends that this resolution be transmitted to the Executive Board of the A.L.A. with the earnest request that it be given the fullest consideration at the time of preparation of the next A.L.A. budget.

The resolution was passed unanimously, and the ^{Acting} Executive Secretary instructed to transmit it to the Executive Board of the A.L.A. before its meeting on Friday, June 22.

Organization Report. (Exhibit F) In the absence of Chairman Richard B. Sealock, the Acting Executive Secretary read the report of the Organization Committee.

President Winslow reviewed the discussion at the Board Meeting in December, 1945, to the effect that A.L.A. is already burdened with committees and that it might be a good idea if the Division of Public Libraries started out with no subdivisions, with a Program Committee set up to take care of the various interests. She then asked for discussion from the membership.

Various points of view were expressed, some favoring simplicity; some, subdivisions by size; others, by subject; some favoring the more informal round tables, as opposed to the more formal sections.

Mr. Sealock came in, and made some remarks supplementing the committee report. Further discussion was postponed until the second Business Meeting on Thursday, June 20.

Report of Publications Committee (Exhibit D) was summarized by R. Russell Munn.

President Winslow remarked that there had been little response to the questionnaire in the A.L.A. Bulletin asking what kind of publications were wanted. There was some discussion, and questions as to cost and editorship were raised. It was growing late and further discussion was postponed until the Thursday Business Meeting.

Purpose and Function of the Division. The President then called for expression from the members as to what they thought the purpose and function of the Division should be. A number responded. Mr. Franklin spoke for closer work with library trustees. Mr. Richards hoped that the division would become a correlating instead of a disrupting force ~~as~~ has been the tendency in recent reorganization, and that the Division of Public Libraries could do something to put an integrating force into the whole thing. Miss Harris spoke along the same line. Miss Rutzen regretted that children's work is not included in the Public Libraries Division. Mr. Greenaway raised the question whether there ~~is~~ ^{are} to be official contacts with the other divisions.

Constitution. Discussion of the constitution was deferred, as there was no time for it.

Resolution in Honor of Julia Wright Merrill. (Exhibit G) Ralph Dunbar presented a resolution honoring Julia Wright Merrill. It was adopted by a rising vote, and the Executive Secretary was instructed to transmit it to Miss Merrill.

Announcements. President Winslow announced that the time of the Institute had been changed to 8:30 a.m., and reminded ^{assistants} chairmen of the Discussion Groups to send reports of their meetings to the Executive Secretary.

The meeting adjourned.

PROGRAM MEETING, JUNE 18, 1946

The general session was held on Tuesday afternoon, June 18, 1946, at 2:30 p.m., in the Memorial Auditorium, President Amy Winslow presiding. The following program, relating to the general theme "The Public Library and the Formation of Public Opinion", was presented:

"A Basic Philosophy of Library Service for Adult Education," Cyril O. Houle, dean, University College, University of Chicago

"Library Service to Business and Industry," G. B. Arthur, Business Counseling Division, U.S. Department of Commerce

"A National Plan for Public Library Service," Lowell Martin, Graduate Library School, University of Chicago

(Papers will be published in the A. L. A. Bulletin)

Following the program, President Winslow announced that discussion groups would meet that evening to discuss subjects growing out of the addresses just heard. She also announced the programs for the remaining meetings of the Institute on Public Library Management.

The meeting then adjourned.

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The five discussion groups met at 8:30 p.m., in rooms of the Memorial Auditorium.

Group 1 - Topic: Should the Public Library Redefine Its Objectives in Order to permit Greater Emphasis on Adult Educational Activities? How Can This Be Done? - Leader, Glen Burch, American Association for Adult Education

Group 2 - Topic: What should Libraries Do about Films? - Leader, R. Russell Munn, A.L.A. Audio-Visual Committee (Under sponsorship of A.L.A. Audio-Visual Committee)

Group 3 - Topic: Should Service to Business Be a Function of the Smaller Library? How Develop Such Service? - Leader, Marian C. Manley, Business Branch, Newark Public Library.

Group 4 - Topic: Should the Library Organize and Conduct Discussion Groups? If So, How is it done? - Leader, John Cheney, Public Library of the District of Columbia

Group 5 - Topic: What do the Non-borrowers- the other 75 percent - Want From the Library? What Should We Do about It? - Leader, Irving Lieberman, Michigan State Library, Lansing

Leaders of each group were asked to assign someone to write written reports of the discussions.

BUSINESS MEETING, JUNE 20, 1946

The second Business Meeting was held on Thursday afternoon, June 20, 1946, at 2:30 p.m. in the Memorial Auditorium, President Amy Winslow presiding.

Membership Report (Exhibit H) was read by Helen Seymour, Chairman of the Membership Committee. The membership count, as of June 12, 1946, was 2151.

President Winslow pointed out that the potential membership is much larger since about 50% of A.L.A. members are in the public library field, and asked for suggestions for increasing membership in the division. Several were offered: promotion by direct mail- let it be known that there is no extra cost- send postal to librarians of large libraries just before the time for paying annual dues- a blurb descriptive of all divisions to be enclosed with A.L.A. membership blanks- make contacts with state associations- need information on membership blanks telling how to belong to more than one division. Miss Gregory reported that Miss McFadden is now making a revised form for the A.L.A. Membership Committee. It was suggested that Miss Seymour confer with her.

Publications. President Winslow then asked for continuation of Monday's discussion on the subject of publications for the division. There was wide divergence of opinion. Some felt that there were enough library periodicals already. One thought that a page in an existing periodical was sufficient. Several wanted studies on public library work. Mr. Vitz, upon request of the President, read a letter which he had addressed to Mr. Munn, then chairman of the Publications Committee, in which he had outlined his ideas of a regular periodical along the lines of the old School Arts Magazine, which might become an encyclopedia of library practice.

President Winslow asked for an expression of approval by a show of hands. Majority approved.

Mr. Spaulding moved that the discussion of the afternoon be sent to the Publications Committee, and that it make a study of Mr. Vitz' suggestions. The motion, was seconded, voted upon and passed.

Organization. President Winslow next presented for further discussion the type of organization wanted by the membership, first asking for reports from section representatives on their Wednesday Business Meetings.

The sections reported as follows: Adult Education, Business and Technology, Order and Book Selection, and Service Librarians wished to continue as sections; Branch Librarians, and Lending postponed action pending a poll of their entire membership; Librarians of Large Libraries postponed action until the points at issue become clearer; Small Libraries recommended that the division be organized as a single unit with programs directed to the various interests represented.

There was considerable discussion, but it was a general feeling that the pattern of the organization should not be frozen for a while. President Winslow asked for an opinion poll for guidance of the Board and the Organization Committee, by a show of hands to the following four questions;

1. How many prefer that the division operate as a single unit with a Board elected by the entire membership, with interest groups finding satisfaction through informal round table programs, discussions, etc., and through general programming?

25 hands raised.

2. How many prefer an organization as was proposed by the Organization Committee with sections organized primarily on the basis of size?

No hands raised.

3. How many prefer the present type of organization, with sections organized to represent any type of interest, whether by size or type of library, subject interest or function?

No hands raised.

4. How many prefer an organization subdivided, not by size, but by subject, keeping together small and large libraries and functions?

19 hands raised.

It was moved, seconded and voted that the division continue to exist another year under the temporary constitution.

It was noted that the temporary constitution calls for a second vice-president, and that none had been elected. Mr. Spaulding moved suspension of the rules, and that Emerson Greenaway be made second vice-president by common assent. He withdrew the motion when it was pointed out that Mr. Greenaway is chairman of the Fourth Activities Committee, and the appointment of a second vice-president was referred to the Board of Directors.

Resolutions Committee Report (Exhibit I) was read by the chairman, Eselia E. Wefel. The report was adopted on motion of Mr. Drescher.

Elections Committee Report (Exhibit J) was read by the chairman, Elsie McKay.

New officers are: president (one year term), Carl Vitz, Cincinnati Public Library; vice president (one year term), Martha B. Merrell, Racine Public Library; executive secretary (one year term), Ruth Gregory, Waukegan Public Library; treasurer (three year term), Nordica Fenneman, Chicago Public Library.

President Winslow then turned over the "invisible gavel" to Mr. Vitz, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nordica Fenneman

Nordica Fenneman

Acting Executive Secretary