

**Public Library Association
Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting
Colorado Convention Center, Denver, CO
Monday, January 26, 2009**

Draft Board Actions

Present: Carol Sheffer, President; Jan Sanders, Past President; Sari Feldman, President Elect; Directors at Large: Irene Blalock; Audra Caplan; Sara Dallas; Marion Francis; Michael Golrick; Mary Anne Hodel; Kathy Knox; Judy Napier; Larry Neal; Neel Parikh; Susan Hill Pieper; Eva Poole; Cathy Elizabeth Sanford; Gary Shaffer; Marcia Warner;

PLA Councilor: Christine Lind Hage;

Representative from Assoc. of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends & Foundations:
Donald Roalkvam (non-voting board member);

PLA Staff: Greta Southard, Executive Director; Joseph Potaczek, Deputy Director; Kathleen Hughes, Manager Publications/Editor *Public Libraries*; Louisa Worthington, Manager Marketing & Communications; Linda Bostrom, Manager, Professional Development; Douglas Dawson, Web Services Manager; Julianna Kloeppel, Program Coordinator; Kathleen Chau, Project Manager Gates Grant;

Absent: Lillian Snyder.

1. **By consent, approved** the adoption of the agenda as amended by removing 2009 Spring Symposium Update, 2009.33, from the consent agenda and moving to a discussion item.
2. **By consent, accepted** the following reports on the consent agenda:
 - Draft 2009 Fall Board Actions, 2009.22; Membership Report, 2009.23; PLA Publications Report, 2009.24; Partners Program Status Report, 2009.25; *Public Libraries* Magazine Report, 2009.26; Every Child Ready to Read Evaluation Task Force Report, 2009.27; Education Activities Update, 2009.28; Library Support Staff Certification Program Briefing Document, 2009.29; Leadership Task Force Report, 2009.30; Schedule of PLA Programs at ALA 2009 Annual Conference, 2009.31; Website Update, 2009.32; Report from the 2009 Nominating Committee, 2009.34.

Discussion agenda

3. **Reviewed and discussed** the following reports on the ALA Council Agenda
 - Proposed revisions to the interpretation(s) of the *ALA Library Bill of Rights*, 2009.35
 - ALA Task Force on Electronic Member Participation Report, 2009.36

Regarding report 2009.36, Electronic Member Participation, discussion included the following issues:

- Suggestion that ALA review its business models; concern was expressed that convening a Midwinter meeting may no longer be cost effective as a means to conduct association business relative to the meeting's current scope and scale.
- Policy implications of the report seem to be benign, no potential negative impact on PLA, recommendations seem logical.

Motion, to endorse in concept the ALA Task Force on Electronic Member Participation Report and advised the ALA division councilor to advise the PLA Board of any subsequent issues that arise from this report. **Approved**

Regarding the *ALA Library Bill of Rights* Report, 2009.35, discussion included:

- Chair of PLA IF Advisory Group, Dallas, reported that they support the Recommended changes
- Board advised ALA Councilor to support the document if voted on at Council meetings.

4. Reviewed and discussed 2009 Spring Symposium Update, 2009.33. Discussion included the following topics:

- Broad and wide ranging discussion of financial concerns associated with this event due to the economic downturn
- Board members volunteered to assist with viral marketing, posting on PUBLIB list serve
- Wide ranging discussion of marketing approaches and tactics, noted that the local drive in population is relatively small as compared to other urban locations, will factor in to any future site planning.
- Discussed the need to take a more in depth look at the Spring Symposium as part of PLA's program of work. Is this still a viable continuing education offering, need to look at the current event and historical information before determining the future of this event?
- Suggestion that PLA consider presenting a National Conference every year rather than every other year as is the current pattern. This comment elicited much discussion, both pro and con. Many issues to research and consider before proposing such a change in our conference planning.

4. Received report(s) from Budget and Finance Cmt Chair, *M. Boria*, relating to the following documents; FY08-09 Financial Analysis & Management Report, through November 2008, 2009.37; FY08-09 Year-to-Date by Project Rpt, through November 2008, 2009.38 (noted revised report, original report picked up quarterly budget revenues rather than annual budget in four projects); Introduction to the FY2010 Budget Planning Process, no document. Overall, PLA is in healthy financial condition; however, we have significant exposure due to our heavy dependence on National Conference returning substantial net revenue. Committee thoroughly reviewed and discussed all reports. Board discussion included the following topics:

- B&F committee recommends that PLA undertake a dues study. B&F is concerned that dues income does not adequately support the PLA basic operating expenses.
- B&F committee recommends that based on the dues study; they will then be a position to recommend potential next steps. There is general feeling among the committee that a dues increase is warranted; however, further research needs to be conducted prior to recommending any action.

- Discussion included the question: what is considered 'basic service' or 'basic operating'. Staff noted that this is defined in ALA policy and would be consulted as part of the dues study.
- B&F committee noted that the PLA dues have not increased in 12 years. Prior dues increase raised dues from \$35 to \$50 in 1996.
- The committee anticipates providing a range of potential options for the Board to consider at a future meeting.

Motion, the Board directs the Budget and Finance Committee to commence a dues study with final report to the Board by Midwinter 2010. **Approved**

5. Reviewed Romance Writers Association of America Request for Pilot Award, 2009.39. RWAA.

Motion, to approve a one year trial award of \$4,500 sponsored by the Romance Writers Association for a library supporting the romance genre. The trial award would also carry a \$500 administrative fee payable to PLA. **Approved**

6. Received Advocacy Project Status Report (Gates Grant), 2009.40. Overall, grant is an overwhelming success. The funder (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) is very pleased with the results of this project. The Turning the Page training will be offered at the Spring Symposium free of charge to PLA members, a community of practice was established for the TTP virtual learning lounge and available to grantees. Brief discussion on the sustainability of the project as preparation for further discussions with the Foundation. Discussion included:

- Feasibility of offering the curriculum via a license agreement to others for continued training implementation by others, such as state library agencies or state library associations.
- A Board member noted that they did not want PLA to tie its leadership activities currently under development by the PLA Leadership Task Force to the Gates Foundation. After it was mentioned that leadership is an ongoing area of interest of the Foundation.
- Potential to train-the-trainer to develop a broader cadre of trainers for state agencies.
- No decisions or substantive recommendations to pursue from the Board. Directed staff to continue to engage in discussions with the Funder.

7. Received Strategic Opportunities Update, 2009.41. Discussion included the PLA Boards' interest in providing more input to National Endowment for the Arts regarding titles to include in its Big Read program. The general feeling was that NEA would welcome suggestions from PLA. Board member Blalock has a NEA contact person to provide to staff so that we can request a PLA representative be added to their planning committee.

8. Visit from the ALA Executive Board liaison, Mario Gonzalez. Provide verbal update on a number of ALA initiatives, no documents. Discussion included:

- Update on APA, recipients of a \$407,000 IMLS grant regarding development of library support staff certification
- April 14 is National Library Workers day
- ALA endowment has lost \$9 million dollars as a result many ALA awards and scholarships will be impacted
- ALA is actively engaged in convincing the Consumer Product Safety Commission that there is no lead paint threat in children's books and materials in public libraries. ALA is filing legal comments

- Mario's talking points are available on the ALA Executive Board website
9. Visit from Emily Sheketoff, Associate Executive Director, ALA Washington Office, 2009.42. Discussion included:
- Additional update regarding the Consumer Product Safety Commission, ALA is filing comments. Emily sees two options given the existing ruling, 1) libraries can remove books from the children's room; 2) libraries can ban children under the age of 12 using the children's room. Neither of these are acceptable options to ALA or public libraries.
 - House recovery package will be voted on in the near future. Libraries are not specifically mentioned; however, libraries fall under the rubric of education as discussed in the recovery package. State Governors will have monies to pay for educational programming. Everyone was encouraged to contact their state library about programs that they (libraries) could roll out immediately.
 - IMLS is developing an easy access protocol to best practices to help with financial literacy programming that libraries have an immediate need for.
 - There is money available for Head Start and libraries can partner with them to access those monies.
 - Washington Office is working with the Gates Foundation on a broadband grant initiative.
9. Visit from Nann Blaine Hilyard, PLA representative to the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF) Board. No document. Discussion included the following
- ALTAFF is official, the former Association for Library Trustees and Advocates merged with the Friends of the Library USA effective February 1, 2009.
 - ALTAFF will be presenting four programs at the upcoming summer ALA Annual Conference
 - ALTAFF will still be located in Philadelphia (former home of FOLUSA) and Sally Reed is the Executive Director of this newly formed ALA division. Sally is based in Philadelphia. Offices will continue to be located there during Sally's tenure as ED.

Meeting Adjourned.