

**Public Library Association
Board of Directors--Fall Meeting
September 29, 2015, 8:30 am-12:30 pm
Madrona Room, Sheraton Seattle Hotel
Seattle, Washington
DRAFT Board Actions**

To be reviewed and approved at the 2016 Midwinter PLA Board of Directors Meeting

Present: Vailey Oehlke, President; Felton Thomas, President Elect; Larry Neal, Past President; Directors at Large: Carolyn Anthony, Rhea Brown Lawson, Melanie Huggins (by phone), Gina Millsap, Manya Shorr; Jay Turner.

PLA Councilor: Rivkah Sass

Approved Absences: none

PLA Staff: Barb Macikas, Executive Director; Scott Allen, Program Manager; and Mary Hirsh, Project Manager

Guests: Deborah Jacobs, Director, Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

- 1. Welcome and Introductions, Vailey Oehlke**
- 2. By consent, approved** the adoption of the agenda as presented.
- 3. Consent agenda documents:**

<u>Consent agenda documents</u>	<u>Document Number</u>
a. Draft 2015 Annual Conference Board Actions	2016.1
b. Continuing Education Report	2016.2
c. Digitalearn.org Report	2016.3
d. Partners Report	2016.6
e. PLA 2016 Conference Report	2016.7
f. "Public Libraries" Magazine Report	2016.8
g. Publications Report	2016.9
h. Project Outcome Status	2016.10
i. PLA Re-Brand Update	2016.11
j. Technology Report	2016.12

Action/Discussion/Decision Items

- 4. PLA President's Report, Vailey Oehlke** (no document). Oehlke reported on presidential activities. She has gotten media calls about weeding, which has been a hot topic, as well as positive feedback on her

first President's column in *Public Libraries* magazine. Members agreed that the target length of future President's columns should be shorter, for the benefit of both the reader and author. Staff was commended for their work on the Gates Legacy grant proposal.

5. **ACTION. Membership Report, All** (document 2016.5). The impact of conference on membership was noted. PLA does see an increase in members from the local area of the conference during conference years, but many of them do not renew. This led to a discussion of member benefits and value, and various ideas were discussed (establishing mentorship programs, reducing or eliminating the cost of webinars for members, increasing opportunities for members to give input or get involved). PLA is increasing efforts to welcome new members, via direct contact from Membership Committee representatives, a new member reception at Midwinter, and a series of targeted emails. Issues impacting public librarians, which may in turn impact their need for PLA, were noted. These included generational norms as well as issues related to the job market, such as a lack of library jobs and promotion of mid-level library staff to leadership positions at younger ages. Ensuring that the PLA repositioning work helps PLA address these issues was stressed. It was moved and **approved** that a subgroup of board members continue this discussion, and Anthony, Millsap, Oehlke, and Shorr volunteered.
6. **PLA slate for 2016 elections, Carolyn Anthony** (document 2016.13). Candidates for President are Georgia Lomax, Director, Pierce County (Wash.) Public Library and Pam Sandlian-Smith, Director, Anythink Libraries, Rangeview, Colo. Candidates for Director-at-Large (four candidates for two seats on the board) are Sonya Alcantara- Antoine, Virginia Beach (Va.) Public Library; Kevin King, Kalamazoo (Mich.) Public Library; Richard Kong, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library; and Tracy Strobel, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library.
7. **FY 2015 Year End Financial Analysis/FY 2016 overview** (document 2016.14) **and FY 2016 Year-to-Date by Project Report, Barb Macikas** (document 2016.15). PLA ended FY 2015 short about \$50,000 in revenue due to lack of Partner contributions and fewer webinars offered. However, PLA also reduced expenses from those budgeted by about \$250,000. FY 2016 was budgeted conservatively, therefore the net projected for FY 2016 is lower than recent conference years. Macikas will send the financial orientation document to the full board and schedule a call with new board members Lawson Millsap.
8. **Collective Impact Discussion, Deborah Jacobs, all** (document 2016.16). Jacobs explained that the Gates Global Libraries (GL) initiative is prioritizing collective impact (CI) as part of its wind down, using its convening power. CI is a methodology, not simply collaboration, and requires clearly defining priorities and other issues (scope, roles, needs, skills).

Discussion focused on CI at the library level versus PLA level, reasons for urgency behind the move to CI, how CI differs from previous collaborations, and next steps for PLA and its partners. The urgency for public libraries themselves to become outward facing calls for the field to move to CI. At the community level, using CI is an effective strategy to engage other partners and show the value of

libraries. At the library support organization level, therefore, PLA and its partners should be modeling CI and encouraging understanding of CI among members and library systems. CI at the library support level may also help present a common agenda that can successfully engage the funding community, which will be important after the Global Libraries program has ended. In terms of next steps, GL is convening key library organizations to continue discussions started at Next Library 2015. CI is also being considered for integration into the draft Legacy proposals, which currently include a “connectivity-alignment-coproduction” pathway with partner organizations. Engaging non-library stakeholders such as the National League of Cities and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) will be critical, but first steps will include aligning library support organizations. This is important to move toward agreement, consider past examples of joint projects, and identify barriers to collaboration.

9. **ICMA Conference Debrief**, *all* (no document). Board members agreed meeting at the ICMA Conference should continue. Board members also suggested that PLA should work toward more explicit participation in the ICMA meeting, through leadership meetings and presentations, for instance on how public libraries can make city managers’ work easier. Expanding collaboration with ICMA members outside the conference was proposed, including working more closely with state ICMA chapters. Among the types of members and groups represented by ICMA, public libraries may share the most similarities with transit authorities, parks and certain other entities due to similarities such as governing board similarities, open access, a mission to serve the entire community, etc. Sass highlighted a session on measures of civic health which was particularly relevant to public libraries and might be considered for a future PLA event.
10. **Aspen Discussion and Debrief**, *Gina Millsap* (document 2016.17). Members briefly discussed the lunch meeting with Amy Garmer of The Aspen Institute, held the day prior. In addition, Millsap shared the presentation from her library’s community meetings, which have been successful. She elaborated on specific challenges, such as how presenting the “library as platform” requires explanation. Similarities between these Aspen dialogs and steps to solicit community input in the *Planning for Results* tool were noted, and given that *Planning for Results* is around 20 years old, this activity may be “replacing” it for some libraries. While the efforts to hold community dialogs based on the Aspen report are pilots now, they may be promoted and sustained through work of the Legacy grant, which references the Aspen report repeatedly in proposing activity designed to orient libraries to their community needs.
11. **Gates Foundation, Legacy Grant Status**, *Vailey Oehlke, Barb Macikas* (document 2016.18). Progress in drafting the Legacy grant proposal was reviewed. Since the last board meeting, a new set of activities designed to increase PLA’s organizational capacity has been added. PLA has meetings with the Gates Foundation and Legacy Partners tentatively scheduled for October and December 2015 and expects to receive feedback and additional timeline information at those events.
12. **ACTION. Summer Food Programs**, *Scott Allen, Mary Hirsh* (document 2016.19). Staff prepared a short report on public library involvement in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s summer

food programs, noting that approximately 10% of public libraries participate and that PLA could help promote and encourage additional involvement. Many board members noted that their libraries are involved. Sass noted that her local United Way has funded an expansion of the program in her libraries, and Thomas noted his library system does not limit its food program to summer. Participation is an excellent way to show that public libraries can be a lifeline for basic human needs and can respond to crisis situations for community members. Challenges, however, were noted, in terms of using volunteers, sustaining the programs, and more.

Public libraries embrace the opportunity to participate in the summer food program because it meets the educational goals of libraries (children suffering from hunger struggle to learn); it meets the goal that libraries address priority community needs; it positions the library in the community as providing more than just books; it can be operationalized given USDA resources and library abilities; and it is a platform for engaging other community partners. The potential for PLA to rally around an issue such as this and promote it as a public library priority or “campaign” over a sustained period was suggested. If planned appropriately, this could help engage members, show member value, and tie into and therefore extend the impact of activity like PLA Conference. It was moved and **approved** that planning should be initiated for how PLA could identify, plan for, and promote a coordinated priority for public libraries.

13. **ALA Advocacy Implementation Plan, all** (document 2016.20). The report from PLA Legislation and Advocacy Committee chair Jan Sanders was reviewed, and PLA’s efforts to more closely align with the ALA Advocacy Implementation Plan were noted.
14. **ACTION. PLA Boot Camp Program.** The final Bootcamp program was held recently. Although PLA will no longer offer the Boot Camp program specifically, the need for PLA to offer some management resources was recognized. PLA owns the Boot Camp content but has not planned any future activity. It was moved and **approved** that PLA staff should develop plans for library management courses or other resources and present them to the board at a future meeting.
15. **Future Board Meetings and Scheduling.** It was reported that ALA may hold a joint division meeting in the fall of 2016 in Chicago, offering an opportunity for the PLA board to meet with other divisions. PLA may also chose to send only the President-elect, as some smaller divisions do. ALA efforts to have the incoming leadership of the ALA units collaborate were briefly noted. The next board meeting will be held from 1pm to 5:30pm on Saturday, January 9 at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston, MA.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50am.