

**Public Library Association
Board of Directors—Midwinter Meeting
January 9, 2016, 1:00 pm – 5:30 pm
1:00 PM - 5:30 PM
Rockport Room, Hyatt Regency Boston
Boston, Massachusetts
DRAFT Board Actions**

To be reviewed and approved at the 2016 Spring 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, Gina Millsap, Manya Shorr

PLA Councillor: n/a

Approved Absences: Rivkah Sass, Jay Turner

PLA Staff: Barb Macikas, Executive Director; Scott G. Allen, Program Manager; Lian Drago, Program Officer, Continuing Education; Mary Hirsh, Manager, Special Initiatives; Steven Hofmann, Manager, Web Communications; Kathleen Hughes, Manager Publications/Editor *Public Libraries*; Melissa Faubel Johnson, Meeting Planner/National Conference Manager; Samantha Lopez, Grant Project Coordinator; Kara O'Keefe, Marketing Manager; Emily Plagman, Grant Project Manager

Guests: Clara Bohrer, Chair, PLA Budget & Finance Committee; Audra L. Caplan, PLA Past President/IFLA International Research and Exchanges Board; Janet Daly, Director of Communications, Zepheira; Nate Hill, Metropolitan New York Library Council; Deborah Jacobs, Director, Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Chris Jowaisas, Program Officer, Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Eric Miller, President, Zepheira; Meaghan K. O'Connor, DC Public Library; Raymond Santiago, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA); Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director, ALA Washington Office

ALA Presidential Candidates: Christine Lind Hage; Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe; James G. (Jim) Neal; ALA Treasurer Candidate: Susan Hildreth; PLA Presidential Candidate: Pam Sandlian Smith; PLA Board Candidates: Kevin A.R. King; Tracy Strobel

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 2016 Fall Board Actions	2016.22
b. ALA Emerging Leaders Update	2016.23
c. Committee Status Reports	2016.24
d. Continuing Education Report	2016.25
e. DigitalLearn.org Update	2016.26
f. Family Engagement Project Update	2016.27
g. Leadership Academy Update	2016.28
h. Membership Report	2016.29
i. Partners Program Update	2016.30
j. PLA 2016 Conference Update	2016.31
k. PLA Project Outcome-Performance Measurement TF	2016.32
l. Publications Report	2016.33
m. "Public Libraries" Magazine Report	2016.34
n. Technology Report	2016.35
o. What's Happening Guide (ALA Midwinter2016)	2016.36

Action/Discussion/Decision Items

- 4. Introductions of ALA Presidential and PLA Board Candidates, *Vailey Oehlke*** (no document). Oehlke introduced ALA Presidential candidates Christine Lind Hage, Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, and James G. (Jim) Neal and ALA Treasurer candidate Susan Hildreth. Oehlke also introduced PLA Presidential candidate Pam Sandlian Smith and PLA Board candidates Kevin A.R. King and Tracy Strobel.
- 5. PLA President's Report, *Vailey Oehlke*** (no document). Oehlke expressed condolences on behalf of PLA to Rivkah Sass on the passing of her husband Abe. PLA volunteer Sara Dallas agreed to cover ALA Council meetings for PLA. Oehlke noted significant time has been spent planning the legacy projects, however that work as well as the ALA Information Policy Workshop held January 7 is contributing to PLA's awareness of global perspectives, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the relationship between PLA's work and that of libraries worldwide.
- 6. DigitalLearn.org Demonstration, *Scott Allen, Jamie Hollier*** (no document). Allen and Hollier presented a demonstration of new features being developed for DigitalLearn.org in collaboration with the Chicago Public Library (CPL). After analyzing over 30 digital literacy training tools, CPL approached PLA about customizing DigitalLearn. Hollier demonstrated progress on adapting the site to create a branded point of entry for a library and to develop user (learner) and administrator interfaces for creating accounts, taking needs assessments, managing learning plans, adding content, and accessing user reports. CPL is funding the majority of this work through private grants, with the intent that CPL and PLA will release the code as open source so that any library with interest can create their own personalized DigitalLearn site. PLA anticipates that some libraries will need technical

assistance and may pay PLA or its subcontractors to help set up sites. The features are undergoing user testing with CPL and should be finalized by March 2016. Other DigitalLearn improvements (upgrades to the TEACH section, new course topics, translation, and closed captioning) were reviewed. Attendees questioned how DigitalLearn is being used. Although intended as a self-directed learning tool, Hollier reported that DigitalLearn is being used for classroom instruction, school district training days, and more. Board members suggested PLA approach hardware vendors to suggest that links to DigitalLearn come “preloaded” on computers and other devices to encourage those with low digital literacy to learn before using their devices.

- 7. Report from Budget and Finance Committee Chair, Clara Bohrer** (documents 2016.37, 2016.38, 2016.39). Attendees were referred to various reports.
 - a. FY15: PLA had a healthy fund balance at the end of FY15, however revenue goals were not met for webinars, advertising, sponsorship, and publications. Bohrer reported that the Committee considered if PLA's goals are too aggressive but agreed that success should be revisited after staff complete new planning processes regarding both webinars and sponsorships. In the past, PLA could raise nearly \$175,000 each year from sponsorships, but PLA does not currently have staff dedicated to fundraising.
 - b. FY16: It was noted that the \$2.8 million closing fund balance predicted may be conservative, given that PLA Conference exhibit sales are strong, registration is on track, and other early revenue data is positive (such as a large Every Child Ready to Read purchase). However only limited data is available on FY16 given the timing of the meeting.
 - c. FY17: The draft FY17 budget, without anticipated legacy funding, was reviewed. Revenue projections account for the planned \$2 increase in membership dues. PLA will receive about \$51,000 in interest from long term investments, and board members were encouraged to think about how PLA should spend those funds, which will be decided at the spring 2016 board meeting.
 - d. Grant Reports: ALA's accounting system has improved to enable PLA to pull out grant status data, and a report on PLA's four major grants was briefly reviewed.
- 8. Gates Foundation Update, Deborah Jacobs** (no document). Jacobs reported on legacy partner meetings in October and December, noting partners received training on “design thinking.” Revising the problem statement to better reflect work at the library support organization level was accomplished. The legacy initiative will challenge library support organizations to evolve to establish new partnerships, create a culture of innovation, identify and apply data and resources, and move beyond simply providing access to information to becoming critical centers of support for practitioners. Legacy partners are proposing organizational capacity work that Gates Global Libraries (GL) initiative staff is excited about as it may yield models for other organizations. Part of that work includes developing a strong funding base. This will contribute to the sustainability of legacy work, which was noted as a concern early in discussions between GL and PLA.

Jacobs reviewed the status of the partners' proposals. The University of Washington Technology and Social Change Group (TASCHA) carried out significant revisions before submitting their penultimate

proposal in late December. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has been on hold while they replace their Executive Secretary (Gerald Leitner was recently appointed). PLA submitted a legacy proposal draft on January 8 and is expected to submit the penultimate proposal on February 19, which will be circulated for external review. Including potential legacy funds, PLA's support from GL will total about \$14.4 million. Communication to the field about legacy was discussed. The legacy grant will not be approved before the PLA Conference in Denver but may be announced at the ALA Annual Conference.

Additionally, Jacobs noted the potential for a strong partnership between PLA and the African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA). She also reported that organizations that participated in recent collaborative impact discussions will receive an update from GL in the near future.

- 9. Legacy Grant Update, Vailey Oehlke, Barb Macikas, Mary Hirsh, Scott Allen** (document 2016.40). Hirsh and Allen provided an update on activities proposed in the most recent PLA legacy proposal draft. The strong correlation to the PLA Strategic Plan was noted. Comments by board members and others addressed the potential to present Leadership Academy content internationally, incorporating sustainability throughout the projects, and considering the impact of legacy work on current staff and anticipated new staff.
- 10. Project Outcome Demo, Emily Plagman** (no document). Plagman provided an overview of Project Outcome, which has been "live" for about six months. Enrollment numbers have exceeded estimates, with nearly 750 Project Outcome participants by December 2015. Over 200 public libraries are using the Project Outcome survey tools and measuring the outcomes of at least one program or service within their library. Project Outcome staff and task force members are holding monthly webinars, presenting at many library conferences, and coordinating with state library agencies by providing aggregate data for participating libraries and assisting with communications. The Project Outcome Task Force is meeting at the ALA 2016 Midwinter Meeting to finalize the advanced measures they expect to test in early 2016.
- 11. ALA Executive Board Liaison Report** (document 2016.41). The document was noted but not discussed.
- 12. Zepheira Presentation, Vailey Oehlke, Eric Miller** (no document). Miller presented on the challenges that libraries have getting search engines and apps to include library services in searches and voice queries such as "find free wifi near me." Improving how libraries communicate about their services and increasing "linked data" may help reach new audiences and increase community engagement, particularly given the increase in mobile device searching and use of terms such as "around me." The challenge is trying to translate the multitude of services (wifi, catalogs, archives, maker spaces, programs, classes, etc.) that libraries provide into links that get published and iterated. Zepheira is working with many library systems to that end, focusing on catalogs initially but moving to other services, programs, and special collections. Ultimately, the larger issue for PLA may be helping

libraries be proactive and control how their collections get exposed over the Internet without relying on vendors or simply what may be currently coming up, for instance, in Google searches. Barriers include lack of understanding and interest in this issue, lack of resources or staff capacity to develop higher web visibility, and concerns about outsourcing data when it is necessary to use vendors to this end.

13. ACTION. Robert Wood Johnson Concept Paper, *Scott Allen* (documents 2016.43, 2016.43a). The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Building a Culture of Health initiative has developed a framework for community health improvement, which includes the number of public libraries per 100,000 people as an important measure of a social and economic environment that supports health. RWJF staff are interested in further understanding the contribution public libraries can make to health, and after two conference calls with PLA staff, they invited PLA to submit a concept paper for a potential grant project. The draft concept paper was reviewed. Board members suggested highlighting the library's abilities related to nutrition education and services, serving as a community center, and serving specific populations such as the homebound, homeless and seniors. It was specifically suggested that PLA propose to work with publishers to allow multi-user access via public libraries to e-books on health or nutrition, at no charge for a specific time period. The ALA Digital Content Working Group (DCWG) visited publishers in December 2015, and some expressed interest in this idea. The RWJF project may offer an opportunity to pilot and evaluate this strategy. Finally, the board hoped RWJF's support and endorsement of a report on public libraries and health would be well received by health care insurers and providers and generate positive attention for libraries. It was moved and **approved** that PLA should revise and submit the concept paper and continue discussions with RWJF.

14. PLA Re-Positioning Update, *Kara O'Keefe, Barb Macikas* (document 2016.44). O'Keefe reviewed status of developing the positioning statement and story, noting the target audience is PLA members and potential PLA members. Suggestions from the group included highlighting two aspects of public libraries: their inclusiveness, and their position at the center of many community conversations.

15. ACTION. Creation of PLA Web Content Working Group, *Barb Macikas, Steven Hofmann* (document 2016.45). Hofmann noted that PLA's web site has been primarily an information channel about PLA activity, whereas other ALA divisions offer more tools. One of the 2016 Emerging Leader projects will begin to move PLA forward in adding more resources to the web site, however ultimately member leader expertise is needed, so establishing a PLA Web Content Working Group was proposed. It was moved and **approved** that the PLA Web Content Working Group be established.

16. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Report, *Raymond Santiago* (no document). Santiago reported that the Public Library Standing Committee of IFLA meets twice annually and holds events such as seminars organized with local public libraries during IFLA Congresses. Topics have included technology facilitated access to information and the socially isolated (homeless, mentally ill). IFLA is compiling a list of the "1001 libraries to see before you die." It was suggested that Santiago write an article for a PLA publication about his role as a US public

librarian within IFLA, and/or about how libraries worldwide experience similar challenges. Macikas and Santiago agreed to discuss article options.

17. IFLA-International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) Report, *Audra Caplan* (no document). It was reported that about 570 organizations (including PLA) have signed on to IFLA's Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development. The declaration calls upon United Nations Member States to make an international commitment through the post-2015 development agenda to ensure that everyone has access to, and is able to understand, and use the information that is necessary to promote sustainable development and democratic societies. Caplan also reported on the "Connecting the Next 4 Billion" event held in September 2015 at the New York Public Library. Participants discussed the importance of not only access but also education and digital literacy, as well as the gender divide in many countries.

18. Review of the ALA Council Agenda, (no document). Sara Dallas will provide a report on ALA Council meetings after Midwinter.

19. ALA Digital Content Working Group (DCWG), *Carolyn Anthony* (document 2016.46). Anthony referenced the report on the DCWG's December 2015 meeting with publishers in New York, NY. A highlight of the meeting was confirming some publishers' interest in exploring the concept of simultaneous access to certain non-fiction titles, which could support public libraries' efforts to align goals with community needs. Anthony noted that the DCWG structure is unique within ALA and that ALA needs input on what the DCWG should do. The board responded that pricing of e-books remains PLA's primary concern, and noted that library collections are skewed, with more print than digital and more digital fiction than digital nonfiction. The DCWG has been effective in addressing pricing issues; successes include getting publishers to sell to libraries, getting them to talk to ALA regularly, and increasing their willingness to experiment. Besides e-book issues, libraries also need more information on what is being done with patron data, and also help assessing the value and usage of their electronic resources such as databases. It was also suggested the DCWG consider how to address seamless access to digital content.

20. Washington Office, Library Challenge/One Card IMLS/White House launch and Workforce update, *Emily Sheketoff* (document 2016.47) The written report was noted, and the following issues received PLA board input.

- a. The ConnectED Library Challenge strengthens partnerships between schools and libraries so that every child enrolled in school can receive a library card. While PLA supports the initiative, board members noted that "one card" programs may inadvertently suggest that school and public libraries are the same. It was also noted that dwindling support for school libraries is putting additional burdens on public libraries, and these burdens may not be recognized by policymakers. PLA supports advocating to policymakers that school libraries and public libraries have differing expertise and programming.
- b. The Open E-books app is a public-private partnership that makes top-selling books available to low-income kids for free. School and public libraries serving 70% low-income communities

may qualify to participate in the three-year pilot. The platform, curation process, and publisher authentication process were discussed. Concern was expressed that data from the pilot will stay with the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) and will not tie to the local library, which would be of value.

- c. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law in July 2014, has not yet released final regulations, but ALA has provided comments outlining the essential role of libraries. Some states have begun to allocate funding to WIOA activities.
- d. The \$1.1 trillion Omnibus spending bill passed in December increased funding for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and for Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) by about \$2 million each. In order to protect these funds from advocacy by groups who didn't get increases, the ALA Washington Office will work with ALA members in February and March to get their representatives to sign letters in support of these programs.

21. ACTION. Guidelines for Gender Neutral Restrooms, *Barb Macikas* (document 2016.48). The potential for PLA to get involved in developing policy around gender neutral bathrooms was discussed. Concern was expressed that the issue is not high priority for PLA to address specifically. Rather, PLA might identify and share resources as appropriate, while also exploring broader issues (for instance, services to patrons undergoing gender transitions generally). It was moved and **approved** that PLA would monitor and promote resources around gender neutral services and would ask the ALA Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) if they are active on similar issues.

22. New Business. As there was no new business, it was moved and **approved** to adjourn the meeting at 5:30pm.