

**Public Library Association  
Board of Directors—Midwinter Meeting  
February 10, 2017, 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM  
Denver, CO**

**DRAFT Board Actions**

- Present:** Pam Sandlian Smith, President; Felton Thomas, Past President; Monique le Conge Ziesenhenné, President-elect; Directors at Large: Rhea Brown Lawson, Michelle Jeske, Richard Kong, Carrie Plymire, Tracy Strobel; Stephanie Chase, ALA Division Councilor
- Approved Absences:** Gina Millsap, Director at Large
- PLA Staff:** Barb Macikas, Executive Director; Scott Allen, Deputy Director; Nellie Barrett, Program Coordinator; Larra Clark, PLA/OITP Deputy Director; Laurence Deutsch, Manager, Communications; Lian Drago, Program Officer, Continuing Education; Mary Hirsh, Deputy Director; Steven Hofmann, Manager, Web Communications; Kathleen Hughes, Manager, Publications; Samantha Lopez, Project Coordinator; Angela Maycock, Manager, Continuing Education; Kara O’Keefe, Manager, Marketing and Membership; Emily Plagman, Project Manager
- Guests:** Clara Bohrer, PLA Budget and Finance Committee; Mary Hastler, ALA Committee on Legislation; Dan Hoppe, ALA Associate Executive Director, Human Resources; Deborah Jacobs, Director, Global Libraries Program, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Julius Jefferson, ALA Executive Board Liaison; Kathi Kromer, ALA Associate Executive Director, Washington Office; Bobbi Newman, co-chair, PLA Health Initiative Advisory Group; Julie Robinson, co-chair, PLA Health Initiative Advisory Group
- ALA/PLA Candidates:** Wanda Brown, ALA Presidential candidate; Sue Considine PLA Director-at-large candidate; Nicolle Davies, PLA Presidential candidate; Peter Hepburn, ALA Presidential candidate; Ramiro Salazar, PLA Presidential candidate; Kelvin Watson, PLA Director-at-large candidate

1. **Welcome and Introductions**, *Pam Sandlian Smith*.
2. **By consent, approved** the 2017 Fall Board Meeting Draft Actions (2018.29).
3. **By consent, approved** the consent agenda as presented.

**Consent Items**

**Document Number**

a. Review of Actions from 2017 Fall Board Meeting.....	2018.30
b. Medical Library Association Partnership.....	2018.31 a&b
c. ALA Emerging Leaders Update .....	2018.32
d. PLA 2018 Conference Update .....	2018.33
e. Continuing Education Report .....	2018.34
f. DigitalLearn.org Update .....	2018.35
g. Leadership Academy Update .....	2018.36
h. Health Initiative Update .....	2018.37
i. Membership Report .....	2018.38
j. Project Outcome-MEAC Update.....	2018.39
k. EDI Task Force Update.....	2018.40

l. Publications Report .....	2018.41
m. <i>Public Libraries</i> and <i>PLOnline</i> Report .....	2018.42
n. Technology Report .....	2018.43 a&b
o. PLA Awards Report.....	2018.44
p. Opioid Crisis and Public Libraries Update.....	2018.45
q. Legacy Report.....	2018.46
r. Fundraising Report .....	2018.47a-c
s. PLA Statement on ALA Ballot Measure-ALA ED Requirement .....	2018.48
t. New Knight Foundation Grant-Short Story Dispenser .....	2018.49
u. PLA Spring Board Meeting Dates.....	2018.50
v. PLA Staffing Update.....	2018.51

### Action/Discussion/Decision Items

4. **Introductions of ALA Presidential and PLA Board Candidates** (no document). The candidates introduced themselves and stated the positions for which they are running in the 2018 elections.
5. **PLA President's Report, Smith** (no document). Smith reported on recent activity as follows.
  - Smith and Hirsh attended a meeting convened by the Seattle Public Library, where the need for library school education to move the public library field forward and better help libraries serve communities was discussed. Library school graduates entering the public library field need to have people skills and not rely entirely on learning on the job. Board members were interested in learning more and continuing these discussions, and Hirsh will circulate notes for additional information.
  - Smith reached out to the president of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, to discuss collaboration, with the goals of creating a stronger relationship between PLA and ILFA and affecting the impact that public libraries have globally.
  - Smith shared the new strategic plan for Anythink Libraries, which was developed over the last year. She noted that individual libraries in Colorado have held community dialogues using the Aspen model, and a convening with high level policymakers throughout state took place in May 2017.
6. **Report from Budget and Finance Committee Chair, Bohrer** (2018.52-55). Bohrer referred board members the fiscal year 2018 (FY18) Balance Sheet, the FY17 Programs by Project report, the PLA Conference Comparison between FY16 and FY18, and a report on PLA grants, all as of November 2017.
  - The Budget and Finance Committee met and reviewed more recent reports (December 2017), and noted that FY18 operating revenues are down \$170,000 from budget, but that most shortfalls are due to timing and revenue is expected to meet budget. Operating expenses are down by approximately the same amount. FY18 is expected to close with a fund balance of \$2.8 million. For grants, PLA has secured \$20 million over 10+ year period and is budgeted to spend \$2.7 million in FY18. PLA will earn \$35-\$55,000 in interest in FY18, and the committee will make a recommendation on use of those funds later this spring.
  - In FY18, PLA will provide ALA with overhead totaling \$882,000 from general operations and \$434,000 from grants.
  - The financial status of ALA was discussed. ALA cut 40 positions in its general fund since 2009, reducing capacity. ALA leadership is currently evaluating its assets, such as the headquarters property, for stability and to find \$6-8 million to invest in technology, fundraising, and advocacy. The executive directors and fiscal officers for ALA units convened during Midwinter, suggesting that ALA urgently address its budget issues, and do so with transparency to ALA Council and other leadership.

Status of decisions related to the ALA headquarters property and the future of the Midwinter Meeting are not clear. Some ALA actions that may affect PLA for FY19 include a potential dues increase as well as investments in technology, which may help with member engagement. ALA is also discussing how divisions could “cofund” activity to serve the entire organization, for instance via loans that require repayment. PLA’s fund balance, which is substantially higher than the \$750,000 recommended, could support such cofunding. The collaboration of ALA units, and some of the steps individual units are taking to be realistic and consider major changes, was seen as positive.

7. **ALA Treasurer and ALA Finance Director reports**, *Hildreth, Leon* (2018.56). Technical difficulties prevented these reports from being delivered.
8. **ALA Executive Board Liaison Report**, *Jefferson* (2018.57-58, plus on-site documents). Jefferson referred board members to background including the ALA Dues Proposal, ALA Organizational Effectiveness document, ALA Board Talking Points, ALA Midwinter Planning background, and the ALA Five-Year Financial and Technology Plans. Jefferson reported that ALA is examining its organizational effectiveness, structure, sustainability, core revenue, and technology capacity. The board wants to hear from ALA members about structure and organization to inform its discussion. A new business development team has been established to consider revenue opportunities, and efforts to leverage the ALA headquarters property were again noted. One drive for new revenue is related to ALA’s technology capacity; recommendations from the IT consultant suggested the need for major investments, so new funding is needed. The future of the Midwinter Meeting is being discussed, and there is the potential for incremental changes in 2019 and 2020 or eliminating the meeting altogether. Board members noted that libraries have difficulty justifying the expense to send staff to Midwinter, and vendors have indicated their marketing budgets may not support continued participation in Midwinter due to the low return. Board members agreed PLA should provide input into the discussion of Midwinter.

Jefferson also highlighted the establishment of the ALA Policy Corp, which will create strong library advocates. Twelve members were accepted for the initial class out of 68 applications. This led to a short discussion of threats to federal funding for libraries. Finally, status of the ALA Executive Director search was noted. The upcoming ballot measure to require the ALA Executive Director to have a library degree will succeed only if a quorum (25% of the membership) votes and the measure passes.

9. **Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) Status and Next Steps**, *Smith, Macikas* (2018.59). Since 2001, PLA and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) have worked cooperatively on the ECRR project. A new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will spell out the next steps for each organization including disengaging from our partnership in order to allow each organization to pursue related initiatives. For PLA, this means merging ECRR work into the broader focus on family engagement. The importance of including ECRR experts and leaders in our family engagement work was noted.
10. **Communications and PLA Board Speaker’s Bureau**, *Macikas, Deutsch* (2018.60). Deutsch briefly presented the plan to develop the speaker’s bureau throughout 2018. The board supported the plan as written. It was confirmed that PLA would support speaker expenses when necessary so member leaders do not need personal or library funds. It was also suggested that PLA communicate when and where any talks were taking place so PLA leaders can attend, observe and support each other.
11. **ALA Committee on Legislation Report**, (on-site document). Hastler, a PLA member who serves on the ALA Committee on Legislation, thanked members for action around the threats to net neutrality and library funding. Similar threats are expected and corresponding action will be needed when the

President releases his budget proposal in the near future. She reported that the Committee is examining its charge. Communication to ALA divisions and state chapters is critical to ALA's advocacy success, and assisting members to develop long term relationships with legislators is a goal. Helping members engage with their representatives routinely, and not just when action is needed, is important.

12. **ALA Washington Office Update**, *Kromer* (no document). Kromer provided updates on net neutrality, E-rate, Title 44 and the Government Printing Office, and other issues. She encouraged members to send examples of how their libraries benefit from E-rate discounts for use in advocacy. The bill to reauthorize the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has been introduced. IMLS has not been authorized for two years, which makes the agency vulnerable and makes advocating for IMLS appropriations difficult. The bill has 10 cosponsors, and the Washington Office is seeking additional cosponsors from specific states. The Washington Office is also beginning to discuss roll out of the 2020 census with the United States Census Bureau. Changes in how the census is administered will challenge communities but may be an opportunity for libraries to show value. The Washington Office is developing new tools for how libraries and library boards can establish relationships with legislators, capitalizing on the motivation and interest that was apparent after the 2017 push to re-fund IMLS. It was also noted that constituents often call their legislators for help and services that libraries can provide, so developing relationships based on jointly serving the needs of the community may be productive. Finally, Kromer reported on some planned changes to ALA Legislative Day, designed to provide more networking time and a better educational experience, particularly for new members. Feedback from legislators has indicated ALA advocates should focus first on the value of libraries and not on specific "niche" issues. There will be no Legislative Day in 2019 because ALA's Annual Conference will be in Washington, DC.
13. **PLA Strategic Planning Process Update**, *Smith, Macikas* (on-site document). The latest iteration of the revised PLA strategic plan was distributed. Board members will take time to review it and should post questions or feedback to the board's email list. The Board suggested holding focus groups at the PLA conference in March to test assumptions. The spring 2018 board meeting will include a more substantial discussion of the plan. Staff will work with GMMB to coordinate PLA member and nonmember input to the draft.
14. **From Awareness to Funding Survey Update**, *Clark, Macikas* (on-site document). Clark reported that the data on voter awareness and support of library funding is less supportive than anticipated, so the results will be released as a call to action to libraries to educate and motivate their communities. Positive findings included strong support for libraries, which have a generally positive image. Conversely, the softening of support for funding public institutions generally is evident, and community members do not understand that most library funding is local. Specifically, the decline in support for libraries among parents of school age children was surprising. A program on the results will be held at the PLA Conference. The potential to get member input on how to use the survey results was noted, perhaps in conjunction with efforts to get input on the PLA strategic plan. Conducting virtual town halls and holding events at the 2018 ALA Annual Conference were also suggested.
15. **IMLS-Inclusive Internship Initiative**, (2018.61). IMLS extended funding for the initiative, allowing PLA to repeat it in 2018. This relaxes the need for PLA to identify other funding to continue the project, although long-term sustainability remains a goal. Hirsh was thanked for her work on the project and proposal. The idea of bringing some of the interns to National Library Legislative Day in May to advocate for libraries was suggested.

16. **Review of the ALA Council Agenda**, *Chase* (no document). Chase reviewed issues to be discussed, including planned open discussion during the Planning Budget Assembly, presentations by the ALA board candidates, a resolution on the leadership pipeline and related issues about orientation (or lack thereof) to Council service, While the future of Midwinter is not on the agenda for open discussion, Chase volunteered to provide PLA input through PLA's CPCT representative to the ALA Conference Committee, Michael Bobish. The Board discussed how PLA might be active to influence Council discussion around these critical issues related to ALA's future and its structure. Suggestions included collaborating with the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL), engaging consultants with expertise in strategy, considering scenario planning, and motivating PLA members to be active in commenting on ALA Connect when ALA seeks member input.
17. **Executive Session**, *Board members, Macikas, Hoppe* (no document). An executive session was held related to an ALA human resources issue.
18. **New Business**, *All* (no document). Jacobs provided a status update on PLA's legacy grant, noting that phase 1 reports have been submitted and are being reviewed by the foundation. Showing that PLA and the other partners were able to meet milestones, handle the funding responsibility, and be nimble will reassure that foundation that the partners can manage the remaining funding through 2026 once the Global Libraries program ends. She commended PLA for its work and all legacy partners for learning to collaborate and work together to serve the field. Macikas reported that the legacy process has been valuable professional development for PLA staff and leaders and thanked Global Libraries for being a great "thought partner."
19. **Date of Next Meeting**, *All* (no document). The next meeting will be held on Sunday, May 6, 2018 in Washington, DC.
20. **Adjournment**. There being no new business, it was moved and **approved** to adjourn the meeting at 5pm.