

## Interim Report of the Presidential Policy Manual Revision Task Force

### Introduction:

At the 2010 Annual Conference the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee (PMC) in its report to Council moved; "that a special task force be appointed and charged with carrying out a thorough examination of the Policy Manual, and proposing such changes are necessary, including but not limited to:

- Renumbering to provide room for expansion where needed
- Renumbering to provide a more logical order of policies
- Matching policy names with content
- Deletion of obsolete policies
- Deletion of obsolete parts of policies
- Identification and clarification of primary intent of policies, and revision as necessary to reflect that purpose
- Clarification or deletion of confusing parts of policies
- Verification that policies reflect actual practice
- Identification of policies that contain an "exclusive" list and consideration whether an "exemplary" list should be used in order to reduce future need for revision, and/or to clarify whether a policy is needed for each specific instance, or for classes of instances
- Deletion of policies that simply restate accepted parliamentary practice or provisions of the Constitution or Bylaws
- Identification of policies that may not be appropriately considered policy, and determination of appropriate placement/treatment (e.g. as guidelines, bylaws, or deleted)
- Making editorial/grammatical changes as necessary (e.g. which vs. that; will vs. shall; use of consistent terminology to convey concepts)
- Verifying correctness, currency, and appropriateness of all references, including references to the Constitution, Bylaws, other policies, the Policy Reference File (instead of the "Current Reference File")
- Considering how or whether Web capabilities might be used to enhance navigation through the Manual, and location, accessibility and relation of policies to each other and to other documents.

The Task Force should consult freely with PMC and Council, and should keep PMC and Council apprised of progress. PMC recommends that the initial charge be for not less than two years, with the possibility of extension as necessary to complete the work."

In July of 2010 President Roberta Stevens appointed the ALA Policy Manual Revision Task Force (PMRTF). PMRTF's charge is listed in Appendix A and the Task Force's roster of members and the ALA staff liaison is listed in Appendix B. Since August 2010, PMRTF has had meetings at the 2011 Midwinter and Annual and Midwinter conferences and conference calls between conferences. Connect ALA has been employed as a placeholder for work of the Task Force.

### **Approach:**

In organizing its work the Task Force early on decided that one item included in the charge was beyond the group's scope given the nature of the task at hand and the time allotted to its completion. This was "verification that policies reflect actual practice". Thus this item was not addressed in any Task Force deliberation. The Task Force leaves this item up to future Council or committee exploration.

Members of the Task Force were assigned sections of the current ALA Policy Manual to examine in light of the charge and to consider if the sections made sense, could be reduced, clarified, or procedure separated from policy. Drafts were then placed on the Task Force's site on ALA Connect for discussion.

Prior to our initial face- to-face meetings at 2011 Midwinter, it was decided that the ALA Policy Manual's sections should be reorganized. Such reorganization would facilitate searching for specific policies or interest areas. Proposed Section 1 contains sections dealing with organizational and operational policies. Proposed Section 2 contains sections expressing positions and public policy statements. As indicated in the attached working documents material in some sections was moved to other areas to enhance the continuity and readability of the ALA Policy Manual. Some sections no longer exist as they were seen to contain outdated policy or were repetition of material found elsewhere.

The section 6.4 of the old ALA Policy Manual has been removed and placed in an Appendix to the ALA Policy Manual. This section contains the operating agreement between ALA and its Divisions. The Task Force felt that as such it should have a separate place in the document. It is also noted that this section has not been addressed in any way by the Task Force.

### **Observations:**

Any policy manual over time becomes a fragmented document as new policy is inserted, old policy deleted, wording adjusted to reflect organizational changes and changes in the society the entity represents. In addition to policy changes procedures tend to be inserted as well.

The task faced by the members of the Task Force was a monumental one, requiring extensive knowledge of ALA, its Divisions and Round Tables and Council history and practice. That Task Force members had varying and different, but time wise long,

experiences in ALA was one of the factors that enabled our discussions to be productive and constructive. The presence and assistance given by Lois Ann Gregory-Wood was an essential part of our deliberations and work to this point.

**Product:**

What is being presented for Council examination and response is two sets of documents. The first set takes the current ALA Policy Manual and indicates the editing process employed in coming to a new ALA Policy Manual draft. The second document is the draft ALA Policy Manual in completed form. The Task Force is sending these documents out prior to ALA Midwinter 2012 so that Council can examine and provide to the Task Force comments which can be then be used at our Midwinter meetings and discussions between Midwinter and Annual to further refine the draft ALA Policy Manual document.

The Task Force's charge included a two year time span for it to complete its work. It is the intent of the Task Force to present a final report and a new ALA Policy Manual for Council consideration and action at the 2012 Annual Conference in Anaheim, California.

## **Appendix A – ALA Policy Manual Revision Task Force Charge**

The task force is charged with carrying out a thorough examination of the *ALA Policy Manual*, and proposing such changes, including, but not limited to:

- Renumbering to provide room for expansion where needed
- Renumbering to provide a more logical order of policies
- Matching policy names with content
- Deletion of obsolete policies
- Deletion of obsolete parts of policies
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The Task Force should keep Council apprised of its progress. The initial charge be for not less than two years, with the possibility of extension as necessary to complete the work.

## Appendix B – Task Force Members and Liaison

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