**EBD #12.27**

**2020-2021**

**TO:** ALA Executive Board

**RE:** Governance Meetings Schedule in lieu of the discontinuance of the traditional Midwinter Event & Exhibits

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

Discussion and vote

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

Julius C. Jefferson, Jr. ALA President

[jjefferson@ala.org](mailto:jjefferson@ala.org)

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Julius C. Jefferson, Jr. ALA President

[jjefferson@ala.org](mailto:jjefferson@ala.org)

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

The Board approves [insert selected option]

**DATE:** March 1, 2021

**Background**

ALA has been focused on changing the landscape of the Midwinter (January Event) Meeting. The motivation for this examination was the noticeable downward trends in member attendance and exhibitor participation and resulting declines in revenue generated by the event. The ALA Conference Committee discussed options to (a) change Midwinter, (b) eliminate Midwinter and (c) eliminate the present Midwinter but replace with an alternative event. The ALA Conference Committee sought feedback on a proposal to replace the current Midwinter Meeting with an alternative event. The Conference Committee presented a model for replacement of Midwinter to the ALA Executive Board (*2018-2019 Conference Committee Report submitted January 2019* [*EBD 10.1*](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/ebd10_1_future_of_midwinter.pdf)) and stated that the change to a “new event” is an ALA business decision.

Conference Services reviewed the documents and recommendations presented over the several months by the Conference Committee regarding the replacement of the Midwinter meeting. A concept draft *(2018-2019 Conference Services Report March 2019* [*EBD 12.23.2*](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/ExecutiveBoard/20182019Docs/ebd12_23.2_Vision%20%2822%29%20Concept_Marketing%20v3b%20%281%29.pdf)*)* has been brought to the ALA Executive Board for review and discussion. A year later after in-person strategy workshops, focus group interviews with key stakeholders, and learning design processes, Conference Services presented a new January event, the Library Learning Experience (LibLearnX) *(2019-2020 Conference Services Report submitted March 2020* [*EBD 12.45*](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/ExecutiveBoard/20192020Docs/ebd%2012.45%20Conference%20Services%20Report.pdf)*).*

Given that the Midwinter Meetings was primarily focused on conducting the business of the Association, the question remains on how the governing bodies of the Association will conduct business meetings in lieu of the discontinuance of the traditional Midwinter Meeting. Due to the pandemic, member leaders and staff were able to successfully pivot and conduct their meetings virtually. In addition, we have an opportunity to pilot a new concept by holding a full day of governance meetings in conjunction to the new January event, LibLearnX. Initial discussions about the replacement of the Midwinter Meetings included the following points:

* “Motivate the staff and member leadership to create more meaningful opportunities for committee work outside of the traditional dependence on a Midwinter Meeting, while still accommodating high level governance activity for which face-to-face meeting time offers significant advantages.” – Midwinter Leadership Talking Points 2019
* “The new event design will feature professional development and networking, with a provision for meetings of key governance groups. One of the issues which the ALA Conference Committee and ALA Conference Services are addressing is how to enable leadership to participate with other members in important discussions on future trends, directions and concerns – and still have critical face-to-face business meetings.” – 2018-2019 Conference Committee Report submitted January 2019 [EBD 10.1](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/ebd10_1_future_of_midwinter.pdf)

Per ALA Bylaws, Article IV. Council Section 1. b.

*Meetings. The Council shall hold at least two meetings each year. Such meetings shall be held, one at the time and place of the annual conference of the Association and* ***one not less than three months before the next annual conference****, at a time designated by the Executive Board. The latter shall be called the* ***midwinter meeting****. Other meetings may be called by the president and shall be called upon request of twenty members.*

For board discussion and consideration, the following options are to be decided by the Board on how best to conduct the governance meetings due to the discontinuance of the Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits Event.

**Options for Discussion & Consideration**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OPTIONS** | **PRO/ADVANTAGES** | **CONS/DISADVANTAGES** |
| **Option A:**  One-time pilot of a hybrid approach (virtual & in-person): hold some Governance meetings (EB, Info Session, Finance) virtually and hold an in-person Council Meeting in conjunction with the New January Event, The Library Learning Experience (LibLearnX). This would be a pre-event to the main program event. | -Member leader engagement & support of the new LibLearnX event  -Less updates to ALA’s governing documents of Midwinter references | -Cost of the Council Room ($115k)  -Cost of member leaders and staff to attend (varies) |
| **Option B:**  Virtual Approach: hold the Governance Meetings virtually (similar to the 2020 Virtual Annual Conference and the 2021 Virtual Midwinter Event). | -More accessible as it allows Councilors who are unable to travel to participate in the meeting.  -Less expensive | -Updates to the ALA’s governing documents of Midwinter references  -Missed opportunity for in person connection and engagement |

Note: During the ALA Council Meeting scheduled on March 31 we will conduct a virtual informal poll to see the interest of Council on how they would like to best conduct the Council Meeting (virtual vs. in-person).