AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Executive Board Meeting Minutes

**2020 Virtual Fall Executive Board Meeting**

**Session I: Saturday, October 24, 2020**

8-12pm Pacific / 9-1pm Mountain / 10-2pm Central / 11-3pm Eastern

ALA President Julius C. Jefferson called Session I of the Fall Meeting to order at 10:00 am CT.

The Board entered closed session.

**Session II: Monday, October 26, 2020**

12-3:30pm Pacific / 1-4:30pm Mountain / 2-5:30pm Central / 3-6:30pm Eastern

**Procedural/Consent Items:**

**By Consent**, APPROVED

* Fall Board Agenda, *EBD #9.4.2 (with the exceptions noted below)*
* Board Meeting Minutes June 2020, *EBD #2.1*
* Board Meeting Minutes 02-Sept-2020, *EBD 2.2, with changes*

The following agenda items were discussed by the Board:

* Virtual Meeting Rules, *EBD 12.57.3*

Mr. Garcia noted that the Virtual Meeting Rules have changes from what was approved over the summer. He requested that the new draft is reviewed and reapproved at the November Board Meeting.

* Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures Report, *EBD #12.10*

Mr. Garcia also noted that the Core document does not address what happened to council representation. Ms. Hall noted that she will confer with Kerry Ward. Mr. Ward noted that 2 of 3 councilors terms ended June 2020. The LITA councilor is only remaining councilor and will serve as Core Councilor.

Ms. Wong noted that the President-elect’s Advisory Committee described in President-elect’s Report, EBD #7.1, was established before presidential candidates were in place. Two candidates are on her advisory committee, and there are no conflicting issues, as both candidates have been consulted.

Mr. Jefferson emphasized the President’s Report, EBD #7.0, contains information regarding Holding Space and encouraged EB members to reach out with questions.

Ms. Rivera noted that she has suggested changes for the Election talking points. Mr. Jefferson encouraged her to email changes to the EB, so that changes can be forwarded to PPA.

***Executive Director Update, EBD #12.2***

Tracie Hall, ALA Executive Director, thanked staff for providing details for various reports and background for her report. She referred the Board to her report and emphasized the following priorities:

* ALA must be focused on short- and long-term stabilization, earnings, and revenue generation
* The pivot toward long-term prosperity must start today
* ALA is transitioning to a contemporary association, and the prospective growth opportunity is substantial. ALA has not yet reached a saturation point in membership nor contributed revenue
* Focus on fiscal management, in particular balancing revenue and expenses. We must earn and innovate our way to stabilization
* Focused on recovery from outsourced accounting that was exacerbated by the pandemic
* Improved budget projection tools
* LibLearnLX will highlight and build experience over assets in order to attract and convert wider audience at point of registration
* Focus on financial stability alongside a focus on member and non-member stakeholdership
* Baseline membership should not be allowed to fall below 58,000, which is only 15% of LIS practitioners. The goal is to double membership over 10 years with the following strategies:
  + Transition students to long term members
  + Offer a suite of services, including CEs, and optimize APA
  + Focus on recruitment of non-LIS and public members, while examining how other associations expand
  + Retention through semi-annual dues installments, as well as highlighting ways to maintain flexibility
  + Member survey indicates retirement is a reason for discontinuing. ALA needs to retain retirees and encourage retirees to pass the baton to younger members
  + Leverage ALA Connect Live: Two-thirds of attendees recommend and 90% find valuable
* Contributed revenue set a stretch goal for FY21 of $2.5 million
  + $500,000 general operating grant from Macarthur Foundation came through hard work. Hall specifically acknowledged Anne Manly and the Development Office
  + $2 million left to raise in FY21
  + PAG working to cultivate internal and external investment through a 3-year stabilization campaign with a goal of at $15 million
* Filling the following positions will be prioritized:
  + ODLOS Director
  + CIO
  + CFO
  + Development Director

***Forward Together, EBD #10.0***

Forward Together Workgroup Co-Chairs Joslyn Dixon and Steven Yates presented the following updates:

* The workgroup is holing a series of listening sessions throughout the rest of the year to gather feedback from members on various topics in Forward Together. The workgroup will coalesce and review this information to guide them in making updated recommendations
* Forward Together has a microsite with all Forward Together/SCOE reports, as well as meeting information and notes. There is also a Connect space.
* The workgroup meets every-other-week
* The group will also distribute a survey to Councilors with the goal of 100% participation
* The following reflects the remaining work timeline for the year:
* 8/28 ALA Core Values
* 9/11 Election and Appointment of the Board of Directors; Size of the Board
* 9/25 Elected and Appointed members to ALA Committees
* 10/9 1% Threshold for Round Table creation
* 11/6 Shared Round Table Governance Docs, Policies and Procedures
* 11/20 Redistribution of the functions of Council to other areas of the Association

***Financial Update***

ALA Treasurer Maggie Farrell noted the following, in addition to the reports:

* There will be a budget retreat in November
* Revised Financial Talking Points will be sent later this week later
* The Operating Workgroup has started to meet

Joint BARC /F&A Report, EBD #3.2

BARC Chair Peter Hepburn provided the following updates:

* BARC received updates from Publishing, Conference Services, Membership, and strategic investments at its Fall Meeting.
* BARC will help guide ALA toward long term financial health, but recognizes the timely and urgent needs
* BARC continues to work toward greater transparency, providing information on meetings and reports
* BARC will have one member serve as liaison to all Round Tables moving forward
* BARC/F&A continues to be concerned over lack of updated financial documents
* Mr. Hepburn noted that the FY21 Budget, EBD #3.10, includes a projected loss just over 11 million. BARC will monitor this
* Finance staff will continue to work to have updated financials for FY21

Final FY21 Budget Approval, EBD #3.10

Ms. Farrell noted that the changes in the budget from the last review primarily reflect decreases in travel and legal fees and increases in contributed income to $2.5 million. She also noted the following:

* Finance asked Conference Services to analyze possibilities for Annual Conference and the document provides various scenarios regarding ALA Annual 2021, including:
  + Live Conference based on 40% attendance (using experience with SARS in 2003 as guide)
  + Virtual ALA conference
  + The Final FY21 Budget takes into account the scenarios, and ALA will follow the budget path dependent on the decision regarding holding or not holding the event live. Thus, approving this budget will include this varied scenario planning, given how unusual the situation we face
* Includes 23 days of furlough, which is an 8% reduction in staff expenses. This will be monitored and reduced if possible. Benefits will not be impacted
* Planned contingency of $525,000 to build up reserve
* Annual Estimates of Income revised to $67 million

Mr. Neal expressed appreciation for the addition of the conference scenarios. He supports approval but noted that contributed income needs to be monitored very closely as the budget is so dependent on it.

The group discussed concerns on travel being reduced and how that will impact divisions. Ms. Farrell noted that travel is not completely eliminated. She emphasized that communication within ALA is just as important as with member leaders.

F&A moves to approve Final FY21 Budget as presented in EBD #3.10

**APPROVED** Final FY21 Budget as presented in EBD #3.10

Ms. Farrell noted that she is working with Ms. Moritz on a timeline for the FY20 audit. This will impact loading the net asset balance for FY22.

F&A moves that the Executive Board accept the 2019 Retirement Plan Audit as issued by Mueller & Co., LLP., as presented in EBD #3.12a.

**APPROVED** acceptance of 2019 Retirement Plan Audit as issued by Mueller & Co., LLP., as presented in EBD #3.12a.

5-year Pivot Plan FY21–FY25, EBD #12.1.1

Ms. Hall directed the Board to the document and asked for feedback and discussion:

Ms. Schneider requested more information on reaching the contributed income level, given the Director Development and Major Gifts Officer vacancy, even with an Executive Director with direct experience in this field.

Mr. Neal noted his appreciation for the vision, but there needs to be more effort to communicate with members on how Forward Together and the Operating Agreement review intersect with the Pivot Plan, along with more financial information.

Ms. Wong noted that there is an intersectionality within the organization for many of the plan’s components. She looks forward to identifying where staff skill and talent will be needed.

Ms. McCauley is looking forward to the business plan for LibLearnX and how member volunteers can support this. Ms. Farrell noted that items will need to be pulled out for a discussion. Mr. Jefferson noted that LibLearnX has not been officially approved, but we will be hearing more about it.

Ms. Schneider requested more info on ASAE benchmarking.

Endowment Trustee Report, EBD #13.1

Pat Wand, Senior Trustee, provided the following updates on Trustee activities:

* Remain alert to pandemic effects
* Defined terms of endowment transfer for FY21 & FY22
* Continue to address racial and social justice:
  + Opportunities for minority managed funds
  + Added two trustees from underrepresented populations
  + Working with minority owned fund
* Status of endowment at end of September:
  + Market value: $55.5. million
  + Book value: $15.8 million
* As of today, total value at $56 million
* Rate of Return has seen steady growth, with a few exceptions. September saw a loss because funds were removed for transfer
* Invested in 13 separate funds, including new fund S&P 500 Fossil Fuel Free Fund, and we are now at 55% ESG investments
* Other Activities:
  + Monitor market continually
  + Work with ALA Treasurer and Senior Management to respond to request for FY21 & FY 22 loan, as well as looking at possible payout changes for FY22
  + Withdrew from Partners Group, which was an ESG alternatives manager, but they closed their ESG funding effort
  + Continuing education efforts
  + Creating a glossary of investment terms and FAQ on costs of managing endowment
  + Monitor trends in assets, with each trustee responsible for one class
  + Orientation session for new Trustees in September and for Council in November (11/10/2020)

Mr. Garcia commended Trustees for getting to such a high level of ESG and to ensure we are not invested in for-profit prison companies.

***Membership Report, EBD #12.11***

Melissa Walling, Director, Membership Development and Customer Service, noted that there was a small recent update to the written report. She provided the following highlights:

* March membership counts are included in the report and reflect a specific point in time in March. This showed a small decline, but she estimates that 9% decline is actually where we are today. There was a slight increase in Roundtable membership
* Committee on Membership looking for an endorsement that they are on right track with recommendations on the new membership model:
  + In 2018, ALA commissioned various studies to rethink the model. The current structure was cumbersome internally with so many levels, as well as confusing in the marketplace
  + A bundled upgrade approach would be preferable
  + Looking at phased implementation approach
  + Phase one - collapsing 11 categories into 4:
    - Professional Option 1 for those with MLIS or above $35,000/per year
    - Professional Option 2
    - Student
    - Advocates

Mr. Garcia noted that many Roundtables offer free student memberships and asked if this model allow for that. Ms. Walling noted that this model does not change or recommend Division/Roundtable pricing. Student members for Roundtables are dues-paying ALA members.

Ms. Wong asked about institutional membership, specifically groups that pay for all their students. Ms. Walling noted there is not research for that, but staff is beginning to look at that. Institutional membership structure would remain the same. We do need to consider better ways to sponsor memberships.

The Committee on Membership is not making a final recommendation at this time, but rather asking for an initial endorsement that this is a good direction to continue.

Ms. Wong emphasized that Phase 2 should look at chapters, affiliates, and other nonprofits to see if there is room for shared memberships.

***ALA Code of Conduct Review, EBD #12.6***

Ms. Schneider noted the work by ALA Community Engagements Manager David Sheffieck on the Code of Conduct for ALA-owned online spaces. She moved to approve creation of a Membership Review Committee for the Code of Conduct, as outlined in EBD #12.6.

Discussion noted that the Executive Board cannot establish a sitting committee. Ms. Schneider amended her motion to create a working group which will lead the implementation of an Online Code of Conduct

**APPROVED** creation of a working group which will lead the implementation of an Online Code of Conduct

Mr. Sheffieck will follow-up with ALA Governance and the Committee on Organization regarding possible establishment of a sitting committee.

***Information Technology Report EBD #12.8***

Sherri Vanyek, Director, Information Technology, provided the following highlights from her report:

* New storage system was installed in August 2020, which was found to be faulty and causing outages. HP accepted responsibility and will replace new system at their cost of $200,000
* Core IMIS membership updated to combine 3 divisions
* Established a technology roadmap to move IT away from being a cost center, including:
  + New Learning Management System
  + Moving systems to the Cloud
  + Business intelligence Software Implementation
  + Content Management System Implementation
  + Replace single sign-on technology
* Total IT Investment just over $4 million. IT implemented measures in FY20 to track capital expenditures and came in just under budget
* The FY21 budget was originally reduced by 5%, and subsequently further reduced to $3,162,709 through a combination of operating expense reductions, moving investment projects to future fiscal years, and by deferring the hires of a CIO, Director of Infrastructure, User Experience Manager, and Internet administrator positions
* EBD #12.8a outlays the investment plan through FY25

Ms. Farrell asked for more details on the Store overspend. Ms. Vanyek noted there are three systems for e-commerce: Stores, Dues & Donations, and Registrations. Dues and Donations has been stabilized. The Store has been stable for the last few weeks. ALA is dissatisfied with the vendor and considering switching vendors. The fulfillment company for the store will no longer provide that service or customer service, which is also an area for reconsideration in collaboration with Publishing.

Ms. Wong emphasized that ALA needs to evaluate our systems to ensure effectiveness and that investment is used well. Ms. Vanyek noted that IT has limited support hours so that we live within our means, and we are at the point where we evaluate where we are in relation to our various systems.

***Public Policy and Advocacy Office (PPA) Report,*** ***PPA Office Report EBD #12.12 & PPA Office Dashboard and Scorecard, CBD #5.0***

Kathi Kromer, AED Washington Office, provided the following updates:

* PPA has reached the end of three-year strategic plan, which had four objectives:
  + Build a stronger advocacy foundation
  + Improve the reputation and visibility of ALA in Washington
  + Modernize information management and communications
  + Focus on policy outcomes
* Over the past three years, the plan has guided PPA efforts and goals. It allowed PPA to leverage our resources to achieve successes for libraries and advance the mission of ALA
* Some of the highlights over the past three years include:
  + Increased federal funding by $21 million dollars for libraries after the administration threatened to eliminate funding for IMLS
  + Worked to get Marrakesh Treaty ratified, helping to make reading materials more widely available and accessible formats
  + Secured the passage of the Music Modernization Act and to reauthorize the Museum and Library Services Act
  + Director of IMLS and the Director of the Government Publishing Office nominated in regular time and confirmed by the Senate
  + Ensured access to information in every community throughout our eBooks for All campaign
  + Prepared libraries across the country for the 2020 census and worked to support a fair and inclusive count
  + Secured $50 million in CARES Act to help libraries bridge the digital divide during the pandemic
  + Launched the national network of key contacts pilot project and added two additional cohorts of the Public Policy Corps
  + Held dozens of Hill events and advocacy training sessions, as well as launched many new advocacy tools to help members advocate for libraries.
* Given the high degree of uncertainty with the pandemic, PPA recommended to the Committee on Legislation that the strategic plan concepts be extended for one more year. The committee agreed
* Library funding, including emergency coronavirus funding, will remain a top priority, with broadband policy a close second. Both sides of the House are proposing billion-dollar legislation that would further broadband adoption infrastructure
* COVID relief funding is stalled in negotiations, and it seems very unlikely a deal will be reached before the election. Some of the contentious issues are the amount of state and local fiscal relief and whether to offer liability protections to employers that reopen. The House has offered two relief plans, which include funding for libraries
* There are 35 Senate seats, 435 House seats, 11 governors and many more seats on down ballots that will impact libraries
* It will be a challenge to keep libraries on the minds of elected officials as we compete with many special interests. PPA plans to build upon the groundwork that President Jefferson laid during his national tour this summer
* Strengthened our advocate engagement. PPA had an almost 300% increase in advocate activity to the Hill, and PPA has seen an increase of nearly 10,000 advocates in the past six months
* Pivoted from the Fly-in in February to an immediate push for the emergency relief funding. We saw sustained action from our advocates, at 2-3% higher than the industry standard
* Increased our Twitter following by nearly 20% and continue to grow our offices digital footprint

Ms. Kroner thanked the Board for its support and advocacy efforts, as well as the PPA team for outstanding work during challenging times.

Mr. Garcia asked for more details on plans for 2021 with the Fly-in and Policy Corps, if any. Ms. Kromer noted that PPA is waiting to see the election results before forming a strategy, and pandemic concerns will also be a factor.

**Conference Services Report, *EBD 12.13***

Earla Jones, Conference Services Director, provided the following highlights from the report:

* Insurance Claim for Annual Conference 2020:
  + - The claims adjustors received preliminary documentation
    - Conference Services has projected net of $1.4 million in income for FY20, and the preliminary insurance report was at $1.5 million
* Midwinter 2021:
  + - Registration opens in November, so there is no update yet on numbers or revenue
    - Exhibits at 44%, which is about $99,000.
    - Including the option to donate to the 21st century fund with registration
* Budget with three scenarios for Annual 2021 was approved, and the contract for McCormick place has not yet been signed

Mr. Garcia asked for more details on efforts at accessibility. Ms. Jones noted that all events advertised through site are captioned, both recorded and live. Main sessions will include ASL interpreters.

Ms. Wong asked how the Board can support registration for Midwinter and implementing LibLearnX moving forward. Ms. Jones noted that there is some concern that registration is not lost in the noise of the election, as registration opens the same week. The plan is to stress the benefits of participating in Midwinter, and that even if there are business meeting requiring attention, there is an opportunity to support all programing in a virtual environment. We want to flip the conversation that this is an opportunity – members are not confined by time and location. Conference Services and CMO are working to generate promotion pieces in addition to regular marketing

Ms. Jones provided an update on LibLearnX:

* Based on recommendation of Conference Committee, Conference Services is sunsetting Midwinter in 2021. There were town hall meetings in 2019 and focus groups in 2020 that led to establishing an event which will be in line with 5-year pivot plan. The event will be positioned as a member benefit, with added value for professional development, including learning and networking opportunities. The event will also have capped participation
* An MLIS conference services staff member was hired to guide content and process

Mr. Jefferson expressed concern that the Board was not provided an opportunity for more input in shaping LibLearnX and its approval. Ms. Hall noted that she will take responsibility moving forward to ensure that the Board has the opportunity to provide insight in the development of LibLearnX

Mr. Jefferson also shared concerns that there seems to be a lack of diversity in ALA’s featured speakers at Midwinter 2021, and conferences in general. ALA should consider if we have the right conference for right now.

**Executive Board Liaison Updates:** Board Members will provide their updates via email.

The Board entered closed session.