

ALA Personal Member Dues Adjustment Proposal

1. What is the dues resolution that Council passed during the 2013 Midwinter Meeting in Seattle?

Here is the wording of the resolution approved by Council:

RESOLVED

Beginning in September 2013 and continuing annually through September 2017, personal member dues will be reviewed by the ALA Executive Board, which may approve a dues adjustment not to exceed the percentage change in the national average Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous calendar year, rounded to the nearest dollar. Any increase beyond the above provision proposed by the Executive Board will require approval by a vote of Council and a mail vote of ALA personal members.

This provision shall be formally evaluated by the Executive Board and Council in 2016 with input from ALA personal members. Any subsequent dues adjustment will require approval by a vote of the ALA Executive Board, Council and a mail vote of ALA personal members.

2. When was the last adjustment made to personal member dues and why is this proposal being presented now?

Members approved the last adjustment in the spring of 2006. That adjustment supported the goals in *ALA Ahead to 2010* and resulted in the establishment of the Office for Library Advocacy, support for programs to increase public awareness of the value of all types of libraries, and support for library legislation. The additional dues revenue also provided ALA chapters with advocacy software to assist them in making their case for libraries.

Since the last dues adjustment, ALA has aggressively implemented the goals of ALA's strategic plan, *ALA 2015*, developed with input from thousands of ALA members. *ALA 2015* calls for a more active and proactive association, and though great progress has been made, ALA has reached its financial limit. A dues adjustment is necessary to continue the work that has begun.

Like our member libraries, ALA has reduced its expenses by making reductions and by improving efficiencies. Since 2008, operating budgets have been flat or reduced and 29 staff

positions have been cut or frozen. ALA will continue to seek cost savings and generate as much non-dues revenue as possible, but this is not enough. The small proposed dues adjustment is needed to meet our goals.

3. If this proposal is approved, the new rate for third-year, regular members would be \$133 if approved by the ALA Executive Board. How does this rate compare to dues for other associations?

Here are the current dues amounts for other national associations:

- American Association of Law Libraries: \$228
- American Society of Information Science and Technology: \$140
- ISTE: International Society for Technology in Education: \$225
- Medical Library Association: \$195
- National Council of Teachers of English: \$50
- Special Libraries Association: For individuals with salaries \$18,000 and under: \$40; \$18,001-\$34,999: \$114; \$35,000-\$74,999: \$185; \$75,000 and above: \$200

4. If the dues are adjusted, what added value will my ALA membership offer?

Since the last dues adjustment, ALA members have benefited from improved communications from ALA via *AL Direct*, the weekly *American Libraries* e-newsletter; have had hundreds of online continuing education courses and webinars from which to choose, and have received many more opportunities to network with colleagues via ALA Connect.

While sustaining all of its current programs, services and benefits, this dues adjustment would allow ALA to augment valuable work on its many *ALA 2015* strategic initiatives, including:

- **Library Advocacy:** Supporting the efforts of advocates seeking to improve and increase funding for libraries of all types by developing resources and training for advocates at the local, state and national level. This includes continuing concrete support to libraries through resources such as ALA's advocacy tutorial webinars and the "Tough Economy Toolkit" that help our members confront budget issues and demonstrate the value of their libraries to their community. ALA's public awareness campaign, *@ your library*[®] continues to promote the use and awareness of public, school, and academic libraries.
- **Federal Legislation:** Maintaining effective advocacy at the federal level for legislation that preserves and promotes fundamental library values by lobbying Congress, partnering and working with others "inside the Beltway" and beyond and engaging in grassroots advocacy on behalf of the public and all types of libraries – public, school, academic, federal and research. This includes making libraries eligible for funding to provide high-speed, affordable broadband services, as well as eligibility for other federal programs.
- **Intellectual Freedom:** Continuing to educate librarians and the general public about the nature and importance of intellectual freedom in libraries. This includes helping hundreds of librarians who face censorship challenges each year, providing education around issues of privacy and confidentiality, and celebrating the freedom to read.

- **Digital Content:** Continuing its leadership role in helping libraries transform in the digital realm. This includes ongoing work with publishers to ensure that digital/e-books – and related standards and practices – will be a viable and vital part of library services and making the public aware by bringing media attention to the issue.
- **Diversity:** Supporting diversity as a fundamental value of the association, its members and library workers. This includes developing resources and providing training on recruitment and retention, personal and professional leadership, organizational change, team and capacity building, and service strategies for diverse user populations.
- **Community Engagement:** Helping libraries to become more authentically rooted in community life, occupy a more purposeful and strategic space within the community, and prepare leaders who can fulfill the promise of libraries in transforming communities.
- **Online CE:** Expanding the number of easily accessed online continuing education courses, including workshops, e-courses, webinars, across a wide range of topics and for all types of libraries – with many offered free or at reduced rates for members.
- **Member engagement:** Providing more opportunities for both face-to-face and virtual engagement. Examples include ALA Connect and the Virtual Membership Meeting. This also includes the Emerging Leaders program and the new Leadership Institute that will debut in 2013.
- **Member value programs and benefits:** Expanding member discount and added value programs on auto and homeowners insurance, shipping services, car rentals, office supplies, special access to low-interest credit cards, and other useful products and services. Detailed information can be found at www.ala.org/membership/mvp.

5. Can we raise the funds we need through other sources?

Dues are the most reliable source of income for any association, but dues make up only about 20 percent of ALA’s operating income. For every dollar paid by members, ALA generated another four dollars through conferences, publishing, workshops and grants. The *ALA 2015 Strategic Plan* calls for the association to develop and sustain the resources required to ensure the vitality of the association, its programs and services. The dues adjustment is only one part of the overall strategy needed to meet our goals and the challenges ahead.

6. ALA has never tied dues adjustments to an external index like the Consumer Price Index. Why is that being proposed and how will it affect my dues?

Basing dues rates on an index allows for small, incremental increases as opposed to larger increases that are necessary if the adjustments are made only every 5-10 years. With an average CPI increase of 2.5% a year, this would translate into \$1-\$4 based on your membership type. These small increases would minimize the “wear and tear” on members and the association.

If the average Consumer Price Index goes up, your dues could go up by that percentage if the ALA Executive Board approves the change. If there is no change or a decrease in the CPI, your

dues will stay the same. This approach will provide ALA with steady incremental increases in dues revenue necessary to help advance the goals in the *ALA 2015 Strategic Plan*.

Two ALA divisions – ACRL and PLA – have already adopted the use of an external index to adjust division dues. In 2010, ACRL members voted to approve future dues adjustments not to exceed the percentage of change in the most current Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) www.commonfund.org/CommonfundInstitute/HEPI/Pages/default.aspx rounded to the nearest dollar. In 2011, PLA members voted to approve future dues adjustments based on the annual average increase in the national average Consumer Price Index (CPI) <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/> rounded to the nearest dollar. Because PLA had not raised dues since 1993, members also approved \$5 increases for four consecutive years beginning in September 2011. PLA dues adjustments based on increases in the CPI will begin in September 2015.

7. I understand that the costs of most things go up over time. How is ALA helping me make my membership affordable?

ALA offers numerous, helpful options for many types of members, including:

- Reduced rates for individuals who are unemployed or whose income is \$25,000 or less. If the new dues proposal is approved, this discounted rate will be available to individuals whose income is \$30,000 or less. In a difficult economy, this dues category helps those in career transition or those just beginning their careers.
- Discounted rates for students for up to five years to accommodate graduation schedules.
- Discounted joint ALA-Chapter membership programs for students, support staff, and trustees. These programs will continue in the new dues proposal.
- First and second year ALA membership discounts for new professionals. These discounts will continue in the new dues proposal.
- Discounted rates for library support staff members, retired members, international members, and trustees and friends. These discounts will continue in the new dues proposal.
- Installment plans for personal members with dues for ALA, divisions and round tables totaling more than \$135. Dues can be paid in two equal installments over the course of the year when renewing or joining online with a credit or debit card.
- Life Membership, offers personal members the opportunity to join now as a Life Member and save money in the process. Dues range from \$1,400 to \$2,000 depending on the member's age. More information is at www.ala.org/membership/specialmemberships/life.

8. Who needs to approve this dues adjustment proposal?

ALA members will vote on the dues proposal on the ALA ballot in spring 2013. Polls will open on March 19th and close on April 26th. The following groups have approved the dues adjustment proposal: the ALA Membership Committee, the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC), the ALA Executive Board, and ALA Council.

9. How will using the average national CPI change the dues rates?

Personal Member Dues Rates Adjusted by CPI						
		9/1/13	9/1/14	9/1/15	9/1/16	9/1/17
Dues change	Current Dues	CPI = 2.1%	CPI = 2.5%**	CPI = 2.5%**	CPI = 2.5%**	CPI = 2.5%**
Member Type		Actual 2012 CPI=2.1%	**10-year CPI average = 2.5%			
Student	33	34	35	36	37	38
Non salaried	46	47	48	49	50	51
Retired	46	47	48	49	50	51
Support Staff	46	47	48	49	50	51
Trustee	59	60	62	64	66	68
Friends	59	60	62	64	66	68
Associate	59	60	62	64	66	68
International	78	80	82	84	86	88
1st year	65	66	68	70	72	74
2nd year	98	100	103	106	109	112
3rd year+	130	133	136	140	144	148

10. Additional questions?

Your questions/comments are welcome. Please send them to Ron Jankowski, Director of Membership Development, rjankowski@ala.org.
