

**TO:** LITA Board of Directors

**TOPIC:** LITA at Midwinter

**ACTION / INFORMATION / REPORT:** INFORMATION

**SUBMITTED BY:** Aaron Dobbs, LITA Councilor

**DATE:** March 29, 2019

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## **SUMMARY**

The Board asked questions at Midwinter 2019 & I offered to contact people I know on the ALA Conference Committee. This is a report of the conversation. There is also a separate but related file with LITA MW attendance data from the previous several years supplied by Conference Services or ALA Membership.

## **BACKGROUND**

**LITA Board asked & I summarized LITA Board interest; I got the following reply:**

*AD: "LITA Board has been talking (uh oh... I know right?!) and has been seriously considering reducing the LITA MW Meeting footprint to essentially zero. No sessions, discussions, programming, pre-confs, etc.*

*"Here are some questions from the Board for which I couldn't find answers:*

- *Would this reduction in force be problematic for MW planning, headcount, etc.?*
- *Is there a way to get LITA member registration numbers for the last 5-7 MW Meetings?*
- *Is there an easy way to get a tally of LITA-assigned spaces for the last 5-7 MW Meetings?*
- *Are there policies that specify that a division must have a certain amount of participation at MW?*

ALA Conference Services and ALA ITTS were able to provide statistics for past number of meetings and LITA attendance (see additional Board documents).

**One respondent, the Chair of ALA Conference Committee, replied (with slight edits for clarity) as follows:**

CCC: "In terms of your last question, there is no policy written anywhere that any division is required to attend/meet at Midwinter. There is no policy that indicates that any committee must meet at Midwinter from any level within the Association (although Council may be different, but you would know more about that than I). Although I have come to find out there are some RTs that have it in their by-laws that their Board and some of their committees must meet at Midwinter, but it is their choice to put that in by-laws. Nothing is requiring them to do so. It is up to the unit or

committee to determine if they want to take the opportunity to meet at Midwinter. I believe there may be something in the operating agreement that ALA must provide space at no charge at conferences for divisions should they wish to meet and pay division staff to attend the conferences.

Our hope as we move forward with the new 'winter event' is to maintain some type of 'governance event' associated with it, particularly the highest level of our governance (Council, Exec Board, Division Board, RT Boards) providing an opportunity to meet together around key issues facing the Association. I would hope that LITA would want to be a part of that process. I know the mothership would want LITA to remain involved. Ultimately, we plan to ask all groups to decide whether a f2f meeting make sense for them at Midwinter. It may not for many, particularly committees. The mothership does *[AD emphasis added]* see much value in Boards meeting particularly for cross-discussions opportunities.

Also for the new winter event, we hope LITA members will respond to the call for proposals. I believe they will. The focus of the type of programming the Future for the Center of Libraries is producing lends well to LITA expertise. This gives members another opportunity to present. We know this is important to members from academia. In addition, I am sure that the Center will be reaching out to LITA for potential programs they plan to curate.

I personally think the Midwinter event focusing on challenges to the profession/libraries and the future would greatly benefit with LITA's involvement. You bring the content expertise that I know will be desirable. I would hope that LITA would maintain some type of footprint at the new winter event, as I would hope all the divisions would do."

#### **ACTION REQUESTED**

Review this information & continue evaluating LITA options around Midwinter programming.