

COUNCIL FORUM III - Notes

Friday, January 21, 2022

6:00-8:00 PM Central (7:00 Eastern, 5:30 Mountain, 4:30 Pacific)

Facilitators: Rhonda Gould, Jacquelyn Bryant, Gail Tobin

Notetaker: Gail Tobin

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Miranda Bennett – CD 44: Membership Committee Action Item

- Miranda went over the talking points and gave background on the simplified membership dues model for personal members in FY24 and increase in the salary threshold for non-salaried membership from \$30,000 to \$45,000 for FY23. She noted this is being brought forward now because a great deal of background work needs to be done for the new model.
- The proposal received overall support and positive feedback from councilors.
- Comment that the current salary threshold is outdated. Members are on the honor system when selecting their category.
- Does it get revised as inflation rises, or does it stay the same? The committee is not proposing new rates, but they will get raised with the CPI.
- Going from \$30,000 to \$45,000 seems like a big jump. Any talk of phasing in over several years? The committee felt it has been this way for so long and is so out of date it was best to just do it. There are not a lot of people in this category and we can reevaluate if there is an unanticipated negative impact on membership.
- The hope is people will read the descriptions and self-select the category they fit.
- Student members can join at the student rate and renew at that rate for up to 5 years.
- Comment that the change will help lower paid librarians and simplifying will make it better for members. ALA needs to communicate that we want you to be a member and we will find a way to make it work.
- Comment that cost-of-living differences will eliminate some of the offset. True, but we need to simplify and there is no easy answer to address this nuance.
- Comment that some associations have just one rate across the board.
- Suggestion to add support staff as a category to make it clearer.
- How is life membership affected by this? It is not affected.
- Is this revenue neutral? We are not proposing new dues. We have to enable ALA staff to put the infrastructure in place to make it work.

Eli Mina – Update on governance issues progress

- Eli, Amy Lapin and Patty Wong met to discuss next steps/where do we go from here. Council III is shaping up to be a very busy meeting.

- They recommend moving the discussion to a meeting in February devoted to governance structure. To do this Amy will need to make a motion at Council III to postpone the discussion to a February Council meeting.
- Eli suggested using TAP (taking ALA Pulse – part 1), which needs to be done regularly, to drive the agenda.
- How to actionize the culture addressed in part 2? Eli suggested council can evaluate itself. He can provide sample evaluations. Then council can work on improving without changing structure. He also suggested councilor orientations and exit interviews.
- The size of council can be looked at as well as the board proposal and election by council vs membership with a goal to write bylaws reflecting the direction we want to go.
- Eli also suggested postponing Jennifer’s resolution to the February meeting until after a full discussion can be held.
- Concern that the biggest question is whether council remains the governing body. When will we talk about that? Eli stated at the February Council meeting.
- Several councilors do not want to table the issue again.
- Jennifer Boettcher suggested her resolution be revised to just one item: Council as the governing body and have a structure discussion at the February meeting.
- Concern by several councilors that we need more time for discussion. Many councilors had comments that were not heard yet. Eli commented that we waited 5 years to get to this point and can wait a month more to allow for full debate. Councilors can speak against the motion to postpone and then vote if they want to postpone to February or not. It depends on time at the Council III meeting. Ultimately, Council will make the decision.
- Recommendation to for Council to meet monthly going forward.
- What happens to TAG if we postpone the discussion? It implicitly extends the work of the committee since it’s work is not completed.
- There was support from several councilors to simplify Jennifer’s resolution to just Council as the governing body.
- Concern that we also need to pass something indicating Council needs to change. It will send the wrong message to membership if we only pass that Council remains the governing body. We can add “in concept” ideas to the resolution to make changes.
- We want to be careful not to equate unwillingness to give up policy making with unwillingness to change. We need checks and balances and can change without giving up policy making.
- Support for the concept of checks and balances and council as policy making body. We need a foundational statement of what Council is: represents the membership and makes policy. How that’s done is the next step. Jennifer’s resolution is the first step, then go forward and make the changes we need to make to make it work better.
- Concern that moving the discussion to February seems intended to sway the 60% who want to retain Council. Those who are working may not be able to attend.
- Concern that it is harder on Councilors with work/personal obligations to extend meeting times than to schedule a meeting in advance.
- Concern that there are so many issues and we are going in the wrong direction. We need to retain the governing body and to be thinking about the larger goal and the equity part.

Focus on being anti-racist and a smaller body. We don't want change for change's sake, we want deep foundational change. Need a full, longer discussion to do it right in February.

- Concern that Jennifer's resolution is duplicating effort. If part C is voted down Council will remain the governing body. If Council wants to vote on part C on Monday we can.
- Discomfort with this meeting and this discussion should be held in the Council meeting. Wordsmithing resolutions is crossing the line of Forum's purpose.

Jennifer Boettcher- Revised - Resolutions related to Structure, Composition, Purpose, and Meetings of ALA Council

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Nbma2jF3H_X2Xq4wqEQMOZihEr1Gi1g0g_1CHohrguM/edit?usp=sharing

CD 53: Resolution Calling on the US Executive Branch to Drop Espionage Act Charges Against Julian Assange

- Were there Federal charges against him? Tara responded yes, there is a federal hacking charge, but feels it's baseless and was intended to "throw the book" at him to aid in prosecuting him for disseminating documents. SRRT changed the title so it no longer says drop all charges.