

Council Orientation

The ALA Resolution Process

January 25, 2020

INTRODUCTIONS / RECOGNITION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Recognition of Committee Members in Attendance

This 25-minute session will cover resolution form and content, submission guidelines, process based on resolution type, common sticking points that occur at Council, some interactive work presenting and debating a resolution on the floor, and where to go with questions.

FORM & CONTENT

The ALA Policy Manual A.4.2.3 states: “A resolution is a main motion, phrased formally with (a) Whereas clauses, stating the background and reasons for a proposed policy, advocacy position, or action, followed by (b) Resolved clauses in numbered order (stating the proposed policy, advocacy position, or action).”

Also, in the Policy Manual are 11 form and content guidelines to be used when preparing a resolution for presentation to ALA Council. The guidelines are available on the Resolutions Committee landing page and today we will follow them in the context of a hypothetical resolution entitled ‘Resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity’.

1. Resolutions should address a specific topic or issue and clearly support ALA’s Strategic Plan, its mission, and/or core values. In this example the title of the resolution clearly focuses on library fines in terms of social inequity.
2. Clauses that relate to an ALA policy must include a parenthetical notation of the title of the policy and the section where it can be found in the ALA Policy Manual. Note for example that the policy title -Library Services to the Poor and Free Access to Information- is directly related to the whereas clause as required by these guidelines.
3. The intent, objective, or goal of a resolution should be clear, purposeful, and present an affirmative identifiable action in language that is concise, unambiguous, and complete. The sample resolution here clearly defines the unequal effects library fines impose on patrons and lays out a plan for remediation.
4. The terms used in this resolution are readily understood and have specific definitions.
5. Language of this sample is concise, conforms to proper grammar, is professional, and representative of ALA to elected officials and other outside entities. In other words, it is as factual as possible and avoids unclear or “inflammatory” language.

6. If the resolution calls for a specific action or program with a timetable, the timetable shall be clear and achievable. In this sample resolution there is no timetable.

7. All whereas clauses must be a complete sentence followed by a semicolon, the penultimate clause receives a semicolon followed by 'and,' while the semicolon in the last clause is followed by the phrase 'now therefore be it'.

8. Resolved clauses at the end of a resolution gain in clarity, brevity, and are easier to read by following the resolution methodology of Congress and other deliberative bodies. The suggested wording states the resolved phrase only once: "now, therefore, be it; Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members: ..." after which each separate resolved is stated directly in numbered order.

9. In some cases the number of resolved clauses will mirror the number of whereas clauses to address each specific concern. Alternately one Resolved clause can combine the intent of several Whereas clauses.

10. All Resolved clauses within a resolution should use the singular present indicative form of the verb (e.g., "Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members: (1) supports...; (2) provides...; and (3) [last resolved] urges..."). Here the singular present indicatives 'supports', 'provides', and 'urges' are used.

11. And lastly, Resolutions including memorials, tributes, and testimonials, must show the initiating unit, mover, and seconder and provide specific contact information from submitting parties. A resolution without a sponsor will not be presented.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: ALA RESOLUTION E-FORM

All resolutions submitted by Council members must be sent to the ALA Resolutions Committee for review and must be accompanied by a completed ALA Resolution E-Form.

The ALA Resolution and E-Form Submission page is available at the Resolutions Committee landing page on the ALA website.

Before completing the Resolution E-Form, please be sure to:

- Log in with your ALA membership. This will enable you to upload a file to the form without problems. If you would like you can read through the Guidelines for Preparation of Resolutions.
- If you are at conference and require assistance with this process, you can visit the Resolutions Committee table at their scheduled times (see separate PDF/handout) either at the ALA Council Chamber or online via Zoom during our Online Office Hours. More about that later.
- Fill in the date, your name and email address, and the title of the resolution (item 1) and attach your MS Word document (item 1a), then continue on and fill in the additional form fields before submitting the Resolution. Please take care to fill in all form fields as this background information indicating endorsements, potential impact of the resolution, and its intended audience is very important to the Resolutions Committee.

AMENDMENTS: HOW TO SUBMIT AN AMENDMENT TO A RESOLUTION DURING COUNCIL, MEMBERSHIP, or VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

(Time permitting we will practice this later)

As a member or Councilor of ALA your thoughts and actions matter! To suggest an amendment for a resolution on the floor, fill out a paper amendment form or use the online form, but remember you must have a seconder for your amendment. The forms may be submitted to the projectionist in one of the following ways:

Paper copy: Print motion forms (available at the end of each aisle in the Council chamber) must be printed legibly, signed by the mover and the seconder. After your motion form has been completed, the mover must deliver it to the projectionist. The mover will then go to a microphone to introduce the motion when called upon by the presiding officer.

Electronic copy: Motion forms must be completed as outlined at: <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/motionwebform>. After an e-motion form has been completed, the mover must notify the projectionist. After processing the e-motion form, the projectionist will let the mover know when the motion is ready for presentation. The mover will then go to a microphone to introduce the motion when called upon by the presiding officer.

PROCESS BASED ON RESOLUTION TYPE

A resolution to ALA Council may originate in one of several bodies, including the annual Membership or Virtual Membership meetings, the APA Council meeting (which meets only at ALA Midwinter), ALA & Council Standing Committees, and by ALA Council members for consideration by Council at ALA Annual and Midwinter meetings. Do all resolutions follow the same process? It turns out they do not. So, let's see what happens to them based on type.

MEMBER RESOLUTIONS

Unlike resolutions submitted directly from ALA committees and elected Councilors, resolutions from ALA membership must be approved at a membership meeting.

Any member of the American Library Association may prepare and submit for consideration resolutions at the annual membership meeting or the annual virtual membership meeting held online several weeks before the annual membership meeting.

Resolutions must be submitted for review by the Council Resolutions Committee at least six hours prior to the convening of the membership meeting to allow time for reproduction and distribution. Members assembled at any membership meeting may waive the submission time requirements by a majority vote.

All resolutions approved by the membership will be presented to the next meeting of Council by the chair of the Resolutions Committee. The chair will indicate which membership resolutions are clearly policy matters. The presiding officer of Council will call for Council's guidance on the disposition of each membership item in turn.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS, TRIBUTES, and TESTIMONIALS

Some of the most common forms of ALA Resolutions are memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials.

Memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials must be submitted by either a voting member of Council or an ALA Committee chair and are submitted to the Resolutions Committee but are not reviewed by the Committee unless requested.

They are presented to Council at the beginning of the Council III at each Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference and to the Membership at the beginning of the Annual Membership Meeting:

- a. If copies are to be sent to other parties, the maker of the resolution shall provide names and addresses. This is most efficiently done via the Resolutions E-Form.
- b. At the Council session, the Presiding officer will read the names of persons/organizations recognized by a formal resolution while the names are displayed on the screen. Copies of each resolution will be available at the information table.
- c. The American Libraries magazine will carry an annual memorial page listing those members who have died since the preparation of the previous Conference Program.

For samples of memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials visit the Resolutions Committee landing page at:

http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/resolution_guidelines.

COUNCILOR RESOLUTIONS

All Council members are urged to submit a resolution or resolutions prior to the Annual Conference or Midwinter Council meetings by communicating the resolution and its contextual information to the chair of the Resolutions Committee through the ALA Resolution E-Form. Councilors are also encouraged to submit draft resolution ideas to the ALA Council listserv to inform the body of upcoming resolutions and to solicit feedback.

At ALA Conferences resolutions must be submitted 24 hours prior to presentation to Council to allow time for reproduction and distribution. This is known as the 24-hour Rule.

If there are fewer than 24 hours between the adjournment of Council II and the convening hour of Council III, resolutions may be submitted within 90 minutes following adjournment of Council II.

Councilors writing resolutions are encouraged to exercise due diligence in terms of investigating and articulating their resolution's impact on fiscal, committee/unit, or policy matters. The Resolutions committee is obliged to submit resolutions with fiscal implications to the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) and may make non-binding suggestions to refer resolutions affecting policy, by-laws, legislation, intellectual freedom, or other core issues to their respective committees.

The Executive Director shall disseminate all adopted resolutions to identified and pertinent parties. Dissemination should occur as soon as possible and not to exceed one month without explanation by the Executive Director to Council.

ALA & COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES

ALA & Council Standing Committees are not required to submit their resolutions to the Resolutions Committee. Typically, resolutions from these bodies are included in their committee reports before Council as Action Items. However, they are encouraged to follow the form and content guidelines and share their resolutions with Council in advance via the Council listserv and during Council forum so that members can thoughtfully engage in discussion on the Council floor.

TOP 10 ISSUES THAT CONFUSE COUNCIL

1. 24 Hour Rule: At ALA Conferences, resolutions must be submitted 24 hours prior to presentation to Council to allow time for reproduction and distribution. This is known as the 24-hour Rule.

If there are fewer than 24 hours between the adjournment of Council II and the convening hour of Council III, resolutions may be submitted within 90 minutes following adjournment of Council II.

2. Wordsmithing: When piecemeal wordsmithing bogs Council down, a member of Council can make a motion to "postpone the resolution temporarily". The Councilor can then state that the purpose of making the motion is to create an opportunity for the resolution's author, perhaps with assistance from other Councilors, to rewrite the motion, after which a motion to "Resume Consideration" may be introduced at the next Council meeting. Once Council votes in favor of the motion to resume consideration, a member of Council can then amend by substitution the revised motion.
3. Amendments: Used to 'fine tune' a motion to make it more acceptable to the group. The amendment must be related to the main motion's intent and cannot be phrased in a way that would defeat the main motion. Two amendments may be on the floor at one time: the first amendment modifies the main motion and the second amendment must relate to the first amendment. When an amendment is on the floor, only the amendment may be debated. The amendments are voted on in the reverse order in which they were made, as each amendment changes to some degree the intent of the main motion. As each

amendment is voted on, an additional primary or secondary amendment may be introduced. Requires a second, a debate, and a majority vote.

4. Point of Privilege: A matter that concerns the welfare of the group. Can be raised even when another person is speaking. No second, not debatable, no vote required, i.e. the Call for the orders of the day or a demand that the group return to the agenda, etc. Can be taken when another person is speaking, no second required, not debatable, no vote required.
5. Tributes and point of privilege: Occasionally Council members are allowed to speak to Memorials, Tributes, and Testimonials.
6. Policy Monitoring Committee: To monitor the accurate documentation and codification of ALA policy, as determined by formal action of council. To prepare additions or changes in the ALA policy manual following each Annual Conference and Midwinter Meeting, as may be required by motions and resolutions adopted by council and report to council the accomplishment of council's directive.
7. Motion to Refer: Directs that some other body will study the matter and report back.
8. BARC review: The Resolutions Committee must submit to the Executive Director (ED) and the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) all resolutions that the Resolutions Committee deems to have fiscal implications at least 24 hours before they appear on the Council agendas, so that BARC can provide fiscal information as required by ALA policy.
9. Point of Order: To bring to the group's attention that the rules are being violated. You don't need to be recognized prior to making a point of order. This is not really a motion but requires the moderator to make a ruling as to whether or not immediate consideration is proper.
10. Resolutions from Council vs. Committees: Unlike Council resolutions, Action Items or Resolutions within Committee Reports do not need a second. Some but not all Committees are required to report and introduce action Items or resolutions at Council meetings.

ROLE PLAYING WITH OUR ORIENTATION RESOLUTION

1. The Orientation sample Resolution was sent to the ALA Council list before this conference with particular emphasis for new Councilors.
2. During this part of the Orientation the Resolutions Committee Chair will solicit a volunteer Mover and act as Presiding Officer by introducing the sample resolution.
3. The sample resolution sponsor (volunteer) will be asked to please come to the podium and read the Resolved clause(s).
4. Council Secretariat will put the Resolved clauses on the projection screen.
5. The presiding officer will ask for a second (volunteer, please).
6. The presiding officer will ask if there is any discussion of the resolution.
7. Time permitting, a sample motion, either ad hoc or prepared in advance can be introduced through a print or electronic motion form.
8. With Eli Mina at the Orientation session we should be able to manage any kind of subsidiary motions using the printed or E-Form. When possible alert the Council Secretariat in advance!!
9. The presiding officer should encourage councilors to approach the mic to speak to the motion.
10. A Resolutions Committee member can ultimately call for the vote.
11. The presiding officer can conclude by mentioning help resources (see below).

NEED HELP WRITING A LIVE OR PRACTICE RESOLUTION OR WITH THE RESOLUTIONS PROCESS?

- **Resolutions Committee Location**

Location: Pennsylvania Convention Center, Terrace IV Ballroom

Online: Zoom Online (hours same as schedule below)

- **Office Hours and Meeting Schedule**

Saturday, January 25

•9:30 –11:00 am

•11:00 am - 12:30 pm

•1:30 - 2:30pm (Resolutions Committee Meeting, PCC, Terrace IV Ballroom)

Sunday, January 26

•1:00 - 2:30 pm

•2:30 - 4:00 pm

Monday, January 27

•1:00 - 2:30 pm

Information about the Zoom Online Office Hours Feature can also be found via:

http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/resolution_guidelines

Note: Eli Mina, ALA Parliamentarian, will also be available at the ALA Resolutions Table (Council Chambers) for consultation as his schedule permits.

- **Information about the resolution process**

An online training series for resolution preparation is available at:

http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/resolution_guidelines

Proposed resolutions can be submitted to the Resolutions Committee at:

alaresolutions@ala.org

Questions, comments and/or feedback re: the resolution process can be sent to:

ala-resolution-feedback-request@ala.org

For further clarification on the resolutions process, please refer to the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order.

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