

TO: ALA Council

RE: Dues Adjustment Proposal

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

To review and approve the personal member dues adjustment proposal and direct the Constitution and Bylaws Committee to review the proposed changes to Bylaws Article I, Section 2

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Kay Cassell, ALA Membership Committee chair, kcassell@rutgers.edu

CONTACT PERSONS:

Cathleen Bourdon, AED, Communications and Member Relations, cbourdon@ala.org
Ron Jankowski, Director, Membership Development, rjankowski@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:

1. That ALA Council approves the proposed revision of Bylaws Article I, Section 2

a. Current wording:

Article I, Section 2. Categories and Dues. Categories within each classification of membership in the Association may be established by the Council upon recommendation by the Executive Board. Dues for personal members shall be set by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members. Dues for Chapter Members, Organization Members, and Corporate Members shall be set by Council upon recommendation of the Executive Board. Members falling into two or more categories of membership shall pay the highest applicable dues and shall receive corresponding privileges. The membership year for any member of the Association and its divisions and round tables shall be twelve consecutive months effective the first day of the month following receipt of dues payment.

b. Proposed revision: (Text to be deleted has been struck through; new text is in brackets.)

Article I, Section 2. Categories and Dues. ~~Categories within each classification of membership in the Association may be established by the Council upon recommendation by the Executive Board. Dues for personal members shall be set by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members.~~
[Dues for personal members shall increase based on the annual increase in the national average Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous calendar year, rounded to the nearest

dollar. Any increase beyond the above provision shall be proposed by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members.] Dues for Chapter Members, Organization Members, and Corporate Members shall be set by Council upon recommendation of the Executive Board. (Note: See [ALA Policy 12.](#)) Members falling into two or more categories of membership shall pay the highest applicable dues and shall receive corresponding privileges. The membership year for any member of the Association and its divisions and round tables shall be twelve consecutive months effective the first day of the month following receipt of dues payment.

2. That ALA Council directs the Constitution and Bylaws Committee to review the proposed revision of Bylaws Article I, Section 2 and report back before the close of Council III of the 2013 Midwinter Meeting.

DATE: December 3, 2012

BACKGROUND:

At the 2012 Midwinter meeting, the ALA Membership Committee discussed various strategies for making future adjustments to the personal member dues rates. The goal of any future adjustments would be the development of sustainable revenue to support ALA programs and services. The Midwinter discussion focused on the approaches that ACRL and PLA members have approved – basing future dues adjustments on increases in an external index. 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) <http://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.

At the 2012 Annual Conference, two approaches for adjusting dues were discussed with the ALA Membership Committee, the ALA Membership Promotion Task Force, the Budget Analysis and Review Committee, and the Finance and Audit Subcommittee of the ALA Executive Board. The first approach would have raised dues by \$10 (proportionally less for certain classes of personal members) in the first year and then tie dues adjustments to increases in the CPI in subsequent years. The second approach would begin indexing dues adjustments to the CPI in the first and then subsequent years. Based on the discussions at the 2012 Annual Conference, the proposal was revised and the approach with the initial \$10 increase was eliminated. The Q&A document was also revised to address concerns expressed about the need for the dues increase, what ALA has done to reduce expenses, and ways to make dues affordable for new graduates who are unemployed or underemployed.

Dues Adjustment Proposal

Revise the wording about personal member dues in Bylaws Article I, Section 2 which currently reads: “Dues for personal members shall be set by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members,” to the following wording: “Dues for personal members shall increase based on the annual increase in the national average Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous calendar year, rounded to the nearest dollar. Any increase beyond the above provision shall be proposed by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members.”

Approval of the Dues Adjustment Proposal

The Membership Committee held a conference call on September 6, 2012 to discuss the revised proposal. Clara Bohrer (BARC chair), Dora Ho (ALA Board Liaison), and Keith Michael Fiels (ALA Executive Director) also joined the call. After discussion, it was moved, seconded, and voted:

That the ALA Membership Committee approves the dues adjustment proposal and forwards it to BARC and the ALA Executive Board for their review and approval.

The Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) reviewed the dues adjustment proposal on September 27, 2012. After discussion, it was moved, seconded and voted:

That BARC approves the dues adjustment proposal and forwards it to the ALA Executive Board for their review and approval.

The ALA Executive Board reviewed the dues adjustment proposal on October 27, 2012. Upon the recommendation of the Finance and Audit Subcommittee, it was moved, seconded and voted:

That the Board approves the proposal to adjust personal member dues and directs the Membership Committee to forward the recommendation to ALA Council for their consideration during the 2013 ALA Midwinter Meeting.

Attachment: Q&A: ALA Personal Member Dues Adjustment Proposal

Q&A: ALA Personal Member Dues Adjustment Proposal

1. What is the new dues proposal?

The proposal recommends using the national average Consumer Price Index (CPI) <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/> to make future adjustments to ALA personal member dues amounts. If the Consumer Price Index goes up, your dues would go up by that percentage. If there is no change or a decrease in the CPI, your dues would stay the same. Under this approach, your dues could go up between \$1 and \$4 annually, based on your membership type. If the proposal is approved by members, it would take effect on September 1, 2013. The ALA Membership Committee is charged to assess needs and make recommendations concerning membership dues and will be responsible for monitoring the use of the Consumer Price Index to adjust dues.

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 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 discount programs:** Expanding member discount 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

When the Consumer Price Index goes up, your dues will go up by that percentage. 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)

<http://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.

6. 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, offering personal members the opportunity to join now as a Life Member and save money in the process. The dues range from \$1,400 to \$2,000 depending on the member's current age. See more information at <http://www.ala.org/membership/specialmemberships/life>.

7. Who needs to approve this dues proposal?

ALA members must approve the dues proposal as a Bylaws revision. Before the question appears on the ALA ballot, it must be approved by the following member groups: the ALA Membership Committee, the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC), the ALA Executive Board, and ALA Council. The Membership Committee, BARC and the ALA Executive Board have approved the proposal. If approved by Council during the 2013 Midwinter Meeting, ALA members will vote on the dues proposal on the ALA ballot in spring 2013.

8. What do the ALA Bylaws currently say about personal member dues and how will the proposed revision read?

Currently Bylaws Article I, Section 2 reads: Dues for personal members shall be set by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members.

The proposed revision will read: Dues for personal members shall increase based on the annual increase in the national average Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous calendar year, rounded to the nearest dollar. Any increase beyond the above provision shall be proposed by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members.

9. More questions?

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

Personal Member Dues Rates Adjusted by CPI				
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16
Dues change	Current Dues	CPI = 2.2%*	CPI = 2.5%**	CPI = 2.5%**
Member Type		*2012 CPI=2.2%	**10-year CPI average = 2.5%	
1st year	65	66	68	70
2nd year	98	100	103	106
3rd year+	130	133	136	140
Non salaried	46	47	48	49
Support Staff	46	47	48	49
Retired	46	47	48	49
Student	33	34	35	36
Trustee	59	60	62	64
International	78	80	82	84
Friends	59	60	62	64
Associate	59	60	62	64