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**Board of Directors—2019 Annual Conference Meeting**

**June 22, 2019**

Grand Hyatt Washington, Banneker Room

ALA 2019 Annual Conference, Washington DC

**Present:** Monique le Conge Ziesenhenne, President; Pam Sandlian Smith, Past President; Directors at Large: Cindy Fesemyer, Michelle Jeske, Richard Kong, Tracy Strobel, Kelvin Watson, Carrie Willson; ALA Division Councilor: Stephanie Chase

**Approved Absences:** Ramiro Salazar, President-elect

**PLA Staff:** Barb Macikas, Executive Director; Scott Allen, Deputy Director; Nellie Barrett, Program Coordinator; Larra Clark, Deputy Director; Laurence Deutsch, Manager, Communications; Lian Drago, Program Officer; Mary Hirsh, Deputy Director; Steven Hofmann, Manager, Web Communications; Kathleen Hughes, Manager, Publications; Carly Lawrence, Catalo Intern; Samantha Lopez, Manager, Marketing and Membership; Angela Maycock, Manager, Continuing Education; Emily Plagman, Manager, Impact and Advocacy; Megan Stewart, Program Coordinator; Symone Villasenor, Project Manager; Leighann Wood, Program Manager

**Guests:** Carolyn Anthony, past PLA President and representative to International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Metropolitan Libraries Section; Clara Bohrer, Chair, PLA Budget and Finance Committee; Keith Brown, ALA Senior Financial Analyst; Nicolle Davies, ALA Policy Corps; Maggie Farrell, Chair, ALA Budget Analysis and Review Committee; Sari Feldman, past ALA President; Toby Greenwalt, incoming PLA Director at Large; Dorcas Hand, Chair, State Ecosystem Task Force; Corinne Hill, representative to IFLA Public Libraries Section; Alan Inouye, Senior Director, Public Policy and Government Relations, ALA Washington Office; Mark Leon, ALA Chief Financial Officer; Vailey Oehlke, past PLA President and ALA Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE); Lessa Kanani’opua Pelayo-Lozada, Chair, ALA Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE); Felton Thomas, past PLA President and ALA Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE).

*Follow-up items are listed at the end of the document.*

1. **Welcome and Introductions**, *Le Conge Ziesenhenne*.
2. **By consent, approved** the adoption of the meeting agenda.
3. **By consent, approved** the 2019 Spring Board Meeting Draft Actions (2019.74).
4. **By consent, approved** the consent agenda as presented.

**Consent Items Document Number**

*Governance*

* 1. Draft Minutes Spring Meeting and Follow-Up List 2019.74
  2. PLA President’s Report to ALA Council and EB 2019.75a-b
  3. Election results and newly appointed Fiscal Officer 2019.76
  4. ALA Executive Search Process Update 2019.77
  5. Board Member Responsibilities at PLA Conferences 2019.78

*Initiatives and Collaborations*

* 1. Health 2019.79
  2. 2020 Census Library Outreach and Education TF Update 2019.80
  3. Leadership Academy  2019.81
  4. Social Work 2019.82
  5. Digital Literacy 2019.83
  6. Data Initiatives 2019.84
  7. Projects in Development 2019.85

*Publications and Products*

* 1. Public Libraries Magazine, Publications, Products 2019.86

*Continuing Education*

* 1. Update on PLA Continuing Education 2019.87
  2. PLA 2020 Conference 2019.88

*PLA Operations*

* 1. Updates (Membership, Technology, Communications, Fundraising) 2019.89
  2. 75th Anniversary Plans and Talking Points 2019.90a-b

**Action/Discussion/Decision Items**

1. **PLA President Update**, *le Conge Ziesenhenne* (no document). Condolences were expressed to Ramiro Salazar, who will not be attending due to the passing of his mother. Le Conge Ziesenhenne also noted the document (2019.78) outlining board member responsibilities at PLA conferences, which was appreciated by all.
2. **AASL/ACRL/PLA Possible Collaboration Meeting**, *le Conge Ziesenhenne* (no document). Le Conge Ziesenhenne reported on a meeting between PLA and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL). The meeting was initiated by AASL and included current, incoming and past presidents and division executive directors. The group agreed working together could be productive and identified some areas, for instance needs assessments, where it might be most beneficial to collaborate. No decisions were made and AASL will follow up with the group.
3. **Financial Reports**, *Bohrer, Macikas* (2019.91a-e, 2019.92 revised, 2019.93, 2019.94). **ACTIONS.** 
   1. Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19): Bohrer reported on the status of the FY19 budget, noting it includes total revenue of $3.2 million with expenses of $3.95 million, for a net loss of $749,540. The fund balance is projected to be $3.1 million at the close of FY19, which is well above the approximately $750,000 PLA is expected to maintain. As of April 2019, fewer trainings than anticipated, along with slowed Every Child Ready to Read sales, have reduced income, however expenses are also down significantly, preventing a larger net loss. Overhead to ALA is also down due to lower revenues being collected.
   2. Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20): The second draft of the FY20 budget was reviewed, including planned spend down investments discussed by the PLA board at its spring meeting, to support: sustainability consultant; growth of equity and leadership training: communications support to help libraries promote themselves; and a speaker/facilitator training initiative. The Budget and Finance Committee reviewed these investments and recommended increasing the sustainability consultant funding to $100,000 and doubling the other investment amounts. This will decrease net revenue for FY20 from $329,883 to $219,883. It was moved, seconded and **approved** that the PLA Board accept the recommendation of PLA Budget and Finance Committee to approve the FY20 budget as presented, with the understanding that PLA has the option to revise the budget until September 16, 2019, when ALA locks the budgets ahead of the ALA board meetings in October. Even with the decrease in net revenue, PLA will still maintain a significant fund balance of close to $3M.
   3. Long Term Investment (LTI) Interest: Given that PLA is investing some of its fund balance into new and expanded initiatives, the interest income from the LTI is not needed for such purposes. The Budget and Finance Committee recommends feeding the FY19 interest income back into the LTI. PLA can also transfer money from the fund balance to the LTI. ALA limits such transactions to $50,000 during a fiscal year. If a division wants to transfer higher amounts, they can, but ALA requires two years before they will execute the transaction. The board agreed PLA should transfer the maximum possible in FY19 and recommended future transfers of greater amounts. It was moved, seconded and **approved** that PLA will return the FY19 interest income to the LTI, and it was moved, seconded and **approved** that PLA will invest an additional $50,000 from its fund balance into the LTI in FY19.
4. **ALA Overhead Review**, *Leon, Brown* (2019.95). Mark Leon, ALA CFO, and Keith Brown, ALA Senior Financial Analyst, made a presentation on how ALA overhead is calculated and what portion of overhead is allocated to traditional administrative costs (typically support services) versus what ALA is allocating to mission-based activity. The formula ALA uses was explained. Determinants for the rate are revenues from Conference Services (which does not include division conferences) and Publishing. When those units do poorly, the rate goes up. With high overhead rates on CE, divisions like PLA are discouraged from launching new programs and innovating because after paying overhead, they may not make any profit or even lose money. Leon and Brown confirmed ALA’s intent was to revisit overhead regularly, however this has not occurred. It was noted that the BARC/Division meetings held at ALA conferences exist for this purpose but have not previously addressed the issue.

Leon confirmed that requests from the divisions related to overhead and the operating agreement have created a sense of urgency, and he expressed his support for reviewing overhead calculations and opening up the operating agreement. The Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) is focused on ALA structure and not finances or staffing. However, financial modeling will occur between the Annual Conference and October 2019, the results of which will be presented to ALA Council at the 2020 Midwinter Meeting. Leon and outgoing ALA Treasurer Susan Hildreth have discussed that a review of the operating agreement should occur between the 2020 Midwinter Meeting and any final vote on SCOE recommendations, and should not be conducted by the SCOE implementation committee but by ALA staff, the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) and division member leadership.

To address the perception that the overhead rate (currently 26.5%) is too high, Leon shared the effective overhead rate for PLA when calculated over time. A spreadsheet showing PLA’s contributions to overhead as a percentage of its revenue for the last 10 years was circulated. This document showed the effective annual rate to be closer to 17%, however it did not include grant overhead and expenses, and included significant errors. It was also pointed out that PLA pays the full rate – not an effective rate averaged over time – on revenue for continuing education or other products, so the value of calculating an effective rate was questioned.

Ultimately, the PLA board summarized its concerns into some key points. ALA needs to urgently address how internal services to divisions are poor and negatively impact division work; how the overhead rate and poor service to divisions discourage innovation and creation of new revenue-generating initiatives; and how these factors negatively impact members, threatening their support of ALA through dues and other participation. Further, while PLA supported the investment budget and the intent to improve advocacy, fundraising, and information technology, there are now concerns about execution and an urgent need for metrics to show the return on and impact of those investments. Finally, lack of trust and communication are at the root of these challenges between the parent and its divisions, and the new ALA executive director will need to work diligently to address those issues and create a more productive culture.

1. **ALA Executive Board Liaison Report**, *Pelayo-Lozada* (2019.95a). Pelayo-Lozada highlighted items from the leadership talking points distributed for the 2019 Annual Conference. These included updates on the proposed real estate transaction and move of the ALA headquarters, the membership and communication studies conducted by Avenue M, internal changes based on the information technology assessment with Delcor, the executive director search, and efforts to create stronger connections with chapters and state associations to advance advocacy. Board members commented on the lack of public library representation on the executive director search committee. They also asked if the ALA dues structure and conference fees are being reevaluated, for instance to be scaled to better support members who pay their own way rather than receive employer support. Pelayo-Lozada also chairs the SCOE, so an update was provided on that group’s work and the proposed plan to eliminate Council and establish new groups (Nominating and Leadership Development Committee, Policy Development Committee, and Finance and Audit Committee) among other changes. It was surmised that divisions will continue to exist, although some may merge. Member input as well as the significant investment in divisions supports their continuation.
2. **ALA SCOE Update**, *Oehlke, Thomas* (2019.96a-b). Oehlke and Thomas are members of the SCOE and confirmed that ALA divisions will continue to have elections, countering a recent rumor. They reported on SCOE deliberations and the intent to make ALA more effective and efficient in the face of declining resources and increasing member needs. The intent to disband ALA Council, noted above, and challenges to securing the approval of Council itself were discussed. Members suggested the need for campaigning, electing new Councilors in 2020 who agree with SCOE’s recommendations, and promoting that ALA is not simply eliminating Council but replacing it with other opportunities for involvement and leadership. There is no alternate plan should Council reject the recommendations of SCOE, but many other SCOE recommendations will occur regardless and will have positive impacts for ALA, for instance proposed changes to ALA roundtables.
3. **ALA Policy Corps Update**, *Clark* (2019.97). Clark reviewed the intent of the Policy Corps, which is to build ALA’s policy advocacy capacity, particularly given that many of ALA’s core advocates are retiring and/or overused. To date, 22 people have participated in two cohorts. She acknowledged the support of multiple divisions (PLA, ACRL, AASL, and United for Libraries). The ALA Washington Office has requested funding from ALA and will be conducting private fundraising to sustain the effort. The expansion of advocates through the Policy Corps doesn’t change or reduce the role of ALA division presidents and other leaders active in advocacy.
4. **ALA State Ecosystem Task Force** report, *Hand*. Hand provided an update on [the State Ecosystem Task Force](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/state-ecosystem-initiative) of the ALA Committee on Library Advocacy, which seeks to build stronger coalitions between state chapters, school affiliates and academic chapters at the state level and with ALA. An example of advocacy efforts in Texas, which helped school librarians benefit from planned salary increases, was noted. The Task Force is trying to coordinate on key priorities for the library community as a whole. PLA board members were encouraged to provide input to help shape direction of the State Ecosystem Initiative.
5. **ALA Washington Office/Publisher Relations**, *Feldman, Inouye* (no document). Feldman and Inouye reviewed their work with the five major publishers around access to e-books and audiobooks. The publishers’ strategies to prohibit library purchases during, for instance, a 3-5 month window after publishing, and to limit licensing to a defined period, increases publishers revenue (at least they believe such) but challenges libraries to make those books available to users. Specific examples of actions by Macmillan’s Tor imprint, Blackstone Audio and others were discussed. Arguments ALA might use to influence publisher decisions were reviewed. Many librarians consider access to publications an equity issue for their communities. Libraries can also help promote reading, expanding the number of people who read regularly (currently 25% do not read a book in a year). This may increase sales for publishers. The argument that libraries may assist with “discovery,” increasing back catalog sales to libraries and consumers, may or may not be supported by publisher data. Efforts of groups such as the Panorama Project (which is trying to understand the impact of library holdings on book discovery, author brand development, and sales) and the Book Industry Study Group have begun to yield helpful information for this effort though much remains to be done.

Potential strategies to increase attention and encourage publishers to make better decisions for libraries were discussed. ALA might activate grassroots members, encourage editorials and letters to the editor, and pursue legislation. Communication efforts are quicker than policy strategies, but may not have significant impact. Publishers are primarily concerned with sales, and the value of the library market is deemed as not significant, even if the largest library systems boycotted certain publishers and diverted their budgets elsewhere, which some are considering. Other pain points for publishers – such the move to eliminate overdue fines, which publishers see as a friction point between libraries and readers that might drive sales – were mentioned. Engaging the public was discussed, but they may be challenged to understand the issue and direct frustration at the library for not carrying material rather than the publisher. Consumer action, however, could potentially benefit a policy effort if one is pursued by ALA.

1. **PLA Board Virtual Voting Process**, *All* (2019.98). **ACTION.** PLA drafted the voting process policy after recognizing the new version of ALA Connect did not have a voting option. After review, members suggested removing the sentences “An exception will occur if, as a result of the motion passing, individual names will be signed to a public document, such as with a public press release or statement. In such cases, the vote to pass must be unanimous” and changing the header to that section to “Requirements for Passage.” It was moved, seconded and **approved** to accept the Virtual Voting Guidelines for the PLA Board of Directors as amended.
2. **PLA 2024 Site Selection,** *All* (2019.99). **ACTION.** It was moved, seconded and **approved** to hold the PLA 2024 Conference from Wednesday, April 3, 2024 to Saturday, April 6, 2024 in Columbus, OH. The ALA Board must approve the site and it is on their agenda for later in the conference.
3. **PLA Board Vacancy-Vote to Fill**, *All* (2019.100). **ACTION.** It was moved, seconded and **approved** that Pam Sandlian Smith will fill the one‐year vacancy on the PLA board, from July 2019 to June 2020, created by the election of Michelle Jeske to PLA 2019-2020 President-elect.
4. **IFLA Public Libraries Section Report**, *Hill* (no document). Hill reported that the IFLA Public Libraries Section will hold a Satellite Meeting in Rome, Italy on August 21-22, 2019 to explore the evolving concept of ‘library’ and its impact on library design. The Satellite is co-hosted with three other IFLA Sections: Academic and Research Libraries; Library Buildings and Equipment; and Metropolitan Libraries. The Public Libraries Section sponsors an award for a new or renovated library building, and Hill encouraged PLA to promote this award in order to increase applications from the U.S. The Section is also revising its public library standards, which have not been updated since 1994. Board members suggested Hill write a *Public Libraries* magazine article on being involved in IFLA.
5. **IFLA Metropolitan Libraries Section Report**, *Anthony* (2019.103). Anthony participated in an IFLA planning meeting in The Hague in early June, during which representatives of different IFLA sections were asked to develop ideas for collaborative projects with each other. This meeting ties into IFLA’s plans to undertake reorganization by identifying natural partnerships and potential consolidation. Anthony also noted the lack of attention that the United Nations General Assembly’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) receive in terms of U.S library services and programs. Most libraries in other countries refer to them to justify services and show impact. Members considered if PLA should advance awareness of and use of SDGs in the U.S. An article in *Public Libraries* magazine was suggested.
6. **Review of the ALA Council Agenda**, *Chase, All* (no document). Resolutions under consideration had been shared with PLA board members via email. Chase reported she intends to abstain on three resolutions unless input from PLA board members suggests otherwise (*Resolution in Support of the Right to Publish Leaked Documents and for the Dismissal of Charges Against Julian Assange; Resolution on CIA Recruitment at ALA Meetings; and Resolution in Defense of the Free Speech of Supporters of the Movement for Palestinian Rights*). She will support the *Resolution on Renaming the Melvil Dewey Medal*. She requested input on the interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights related to *Minors and Online Activity* and *User-Generated Content in Library Discovery Systems*.
7. **Review of plans for PLA-Council Breakfast**, *All* (2019.104). Macikas distributed the event overview and questions for Council members. She confirmed who would be present so PLA board members could be stationed at each table. Compared to the 2019 Midwinter Event, this event will focus more on what PLA does and less on PLA’s financial contributions to ALA.
8. **Plans for 2019-2020 Board meetings**, *Macikas* (2019.105).At its spring meeting, the board voted to meet in conjunction with the PLA 2020 Conference in February in Nashville, TN rather than at the ALA 2020 Midwinter Meeting in January in Philadelphia, PA. This decision was revisited, in light of potential SCOE business at the ALA 2020 Midwinter Meeting, and the recognition that a few board members would be required to be there anyway. Board members confirmed their intent to meet in Nashville, which will likely occur on Tuesday, February 25 from 1pm to 5pm.

Other board meeting dates were confirmed. The fall board meeting will be held in Chicago. It will begin with a dinner on Sunday, October 20. The board meeting will be held 9am-3pm on Monday, October 21. The PLA board’s spring meeting will be held in conjunction with ALA Washington Office’s National Library Legislative Day, May 4-5. NLLD schedule is for the WO program to be held on May 4; Congressional visits will be scheduled for May 5. The PLA board meeting will be held the afternoon of May 3, noon-5 pm.

1. **Service Recognition of Outgoing Board Members**, *le Conge Ziesenhenne* (2019.106). Outgoing Directors at Large Richard Kong and Tracy Strobel were thanked for their excellent service, and a resolution was read to honor outgoing President-elect/President/Past President Pam Sandlian Smith. Monique le Conge Ziesenhenne was also thanked for her term as 2018-2019 PLA President.
2. **Adjourn**. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5pm. The next PLA board meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2019 in Chicago, IL, with an option dinner the evening of October 20, 2019.

**PLA Board of Directors 2019 Annual Conference Meeting**

**Action Items/Discussions Requiring Follow Up**

The following actions were drafted based on discussion at the 2019 Annual Conference board meeting.

1. **Financial Reports.**
   1. FY20 Budget. PLA will increase the sustainability consultant funding to $100,000 and double the other investment amounts during the next opening of the FY20 budget for revisions. (Macikas, Allen)
2. **Long Term Investment (LTI).** 
   1. FY19 Investments. PLA will notify Finance to reinvest the FY19 interest back into the LTI and to move another $50,000 from the fund balance to the LTI as part of FY19 closing procedures. (Macikas)
   2. Transfer of Funds into LTI. The Budget and Finance Committee will hold a virtual meeting before the fall 2019 PLA board meeting to develop a recommendation to the board about transferring funds from the fund balance into the LTI, with the goal of increasing the transfer by more than $50,000. (Bohrer, Macikas).
3. **ALA Overhead**
   1. Finance (Leon, Brown) will be asked to correct the 10-year analysis of PLA’s overhead payments, expenses, and effective overhead and resubmit to PLA for sharing with the board. (Bohrer, Macikas)
4. **Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE).** 
   1. The Budget and Finance Committee will prepare recommendations related to the financial health of ALA and PLA, for consideration during the planned, SCOE-related financial modeling process and the opening up of the operating agreement slated to occur in 2020. (Bohrer, Macikas)
5. **IFLA Section Reports**
   1. An article on being involved in IFLA will be written for *Public Libraries* magazine to address the “mystery” of being involved, including issues such as cost for potentially two international meetings annually, strategies to secure funds from friends groups or other sources, requirements of serving on IFLA committees, and how IFLA conferences and speaking duties differ from U.S. library conferences. (Hughes, Hill)
   2. PLA will promote the opportunity to apply for the IFLA/Systematic Public Library of the Year to members to encourage U.S. submissions. (Deutsch, Hill)
   3. An article on the United Nations General Assembly’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be published in *Public Libraries* magazine to promote them to U.S. public librarians. (Hughes, Anthony)