****

**PLA Board of Directors Meeting**

**May 5, 2023**

**Virtual**

**Present:** Sonia Alcantara-Antoine, PLA President-elect; Clara Bohrer; Stephanie Chase; Michael Colford; Melanie Huggins, PLA Past-President*;* Mary Ellen Icaza; Dr. Maria McCauley, PLA President; Dr. Brandy McNeil; Dara Schmidt; Erica Freudenberger; Candice Mack

**Guests:** Larry Neal, ALA Executive Board Liaison

**PLA Staff:** Katina Jones, Mary Hirsh, Mary Davis Fournier, Samantha Lopez, Steven Hofmann, Melissa Faubel-Johnson

1. Welcome and Introductions, *Dr. Maria Taesil Hudson McCauley, President*

McCauley called the meeting to order with thanks for everyone’s board service coming off National Library week.

1. EDISJ work, *Sonia Alcantara-Antoine, PLA President-elect*

Members of the board shared how they stay motivated in the face of challenges and setbacks.

1. Adoption of the meeting agenda

Bohrer requested minutes 2023.28 to be pulled. Chase requested conference report 2023.34 be pulled.

1. **Action Item:** Adoption of the agenda

With the above changes, the agenda was adopted.

**Consent Agenda Document Number**

1. Organizational Excellence and Governance
   1. Draft February 2023 Board Minutes 2023.28
   2. Results of 2023 PLA Election 2023.29
2. PLA Combined Initiatives Report 2023.30
3. PLA Combined Operations Report 2023.31
4. PLA Combined Partnerships Report 2023.32
5. Continuing Education (CE) Update
   1. CE Status Report 2023.33
   2. PLA 2026 and 2028 Conference Planning 2023.34

**Action/Discussion/Decision Items Document Number**

1. Organizational Excellence and Governance
   1. Draft February 2023 Board Minutes 2023.28
   2. Results of 2023 PLA Election 2023.29

Clara Bohrer requested the February 2023 Board Minutes 2023.28 be corrected to note that staff, with a consultant, are working on the Gates Transition Plan, not the B&F committee. The B&F committee will be engaged at a later date.

The February 2023 Board Minutes were approved as corrected.

1. Continuing Education (CE) Update
   1. CE Status Report 2023.33
   2. PLA 2026 and 2028 Conference Planning 2023.34

Regarding PLA 2026 and 2028 Conference Planning 2023.24, the board discussed the anti-trans legislation recently passed by the Utah state legislature, and Utah’s status as a travel ban state for California state employees. Discussion of selecting a meeting location with legislation contrary to organizational values in place. Also suggested looking at the site selection policy, which was last updated in 1999, and examining the Core Values and Conference Sites Guidelines which were last updated in 2016.

Davis Fournier acknowledged the challenges of site selection and shared that member consistently express enthusiasm and gratitude for PLA selecting to their states and raising visibility. She indicated sites are chosen based on extensive research, a competitive bidding process, coordination with other ALA units and ALA Conference Services, and adherence to PLA policy and guidelines. Before a site is selected it must first gain approval from the state library association, which often stands down their own state conference during the PLA conference year.

Davis Fournier clarified the process: that site selection is an operational decision by PLA staff. Staff then bring the selected sites, along with the state chapter endorsements to the PLA Board for review and recommendation; The PLA Board recommends the selected sites to ALA Executive board for approval. The ALA Executive Director signs off on all significant contracts and agreements related to the conference.

Chase put forth a motion to approve Minneapolis, MN, as the site for the PLA 2026 Conference, Wednesday, March 18 – Friday, March 20, 2026, and place the Policy on National Conference Site Selection document on the PLA Board June 2023 agenda for discussion and review.

A robust discussion followed, with an expressed desire for deeper, more nuanced conversation to explore the tension between supporting members and library workers in all states and choosing a presence in states with laws that may be in conflict with PLA organizational values. It is also important to understand the financial impact on PLA, as the conference generates revenue that sustains the unit in non-conference years.

Motion: Approve Minneapolis, MN, as the site for the PLA 2026 Conference, Wednesday, March 18 – Friday, March 20, 2026, and place the Policy on National Conference Site Selection document on the PLA Board June 2023 agenda for discussion and review.

Moved by Chase. Freudenberger seconded. Motion failed with 3 yeas, 6 nos, 1 abstention.

Motion: Accept the staff’s recommendation for the 2026 and 2028 sites as selected (MSP and SLC) and that the board review and revise site selection policy.

Moved by Huggins. Bohrer seconded. Motion passed with 9 yeas, 2 nos.

1. PLA President Update, *Dr. Maria Taesil Hudson McCauley* no document

McCauley recapped the four areas of focus in her time as president: ambassador role, presentations and interviews, board work, writing articles. She holds monthly meetings with the executive committee. Engaged in meeting with public library councilors. McCauley attended the recent JCLC conference in Florida and enjoyed the opportunity to hear diverse voices. PLA also staffed a booth at JCLC. McCauley has done several fly-ins to DC: a legislative fly-in and a kick-off with PLA Google project on International Fact Check Day. She was also interviewed by AARP, Wall Street Journal, and participated in the first PLA presidential candidate forum.

1. PLA President-elect Update, *Sonia Alcántara-Antoine* no document

Alcántara-Antoine attended the Library Journal public library safety summit, which was a small gathering for a very comprehensive deep dive into safety and security issues. She stated that it was valuable for PLA to continue to invest in that area.

1. PLA Liaison to ALA Executive Board Update, *Larry Neal* no document

Neal indicated that conference site selection conversation comes up repeatedly on the Executive Board and they have worked with ALA Conference Services on a selection criteria document that will address this an issue association wide. Neal shared that the EB is pleased with IT direction and new analytics dashboard that will roll out later in the year. Neal is finishing his term on the Executive Board. He plans to put forth several recommendations for board effectiveness to present at the next EB meeting related to strategy, information presentation, and board effectiveness. Searches are open for key positions, including PPA and OIF deputy; the recent ALA Bylaws change adds two new board positions. There is an open call for endowment trustees. Neal will be joining PLA’s B&F committee, excited to still be with us.

1. PLA Executive Director Report, *Mary* *Davis Fournier* no document

Thanked the board for candid discussion at this meeting which has resulted in definitive steps for staff to support the board’s review of existing policy and guidelines at a future board meeting. PLA recently received two grants to further support DigitalLearn. AT&T awarded an additional $2.6 million to extend DigitalLearn work, including pass-through funding to support local adoption. A new grant of $162,500 was received from Heartland Forward to develop three new DigitalLearn modules to further support PLA goals. This grant is significant in that it supports development of PLA priority learning modules that are unsupported by AT&T funding.

ALA shared membership survey results at Spring Executive Board meeting. PLA staff are reviewing results, will be presenting analysis at the PLA June Board meeting. Melissa Walling, ALA Membership Director has been invited to speak to the board as well. 2024 conference proposals closed Monday. 562 proposals received.

Bohrer recognized Fournier for introducing a practice of building unrestricted funds for the Friends of PLA into private grant budgets as a strategic mechanism to build sustainability.

1. Intellectual Freedom Update, *Kent Oliver, Deborah Caldwell-Stone,*

*Alan Inouye* no document

Discussion of the record high number of challenges in 2023.

Not much news out of Congress, but indications are Parents Bill of Rights and Right to Read Act are going in a positive direction. ALA has broadened and shifted focus and efforts. Looking at strategic messaging and communications, increasing collaboration and coordination.

Caldwell Stone said ALA is currently tracking 147 bills in state legislatures that are averse to libraries and library users, including making it a crime to provide constitutionally protected materials, criminalization of content, full de-funding, replacement of elected boards, and local censorship laws. ALA has successfully worked locally and state-wide; supported Missouri to fight legislative defunding; just this morning MO passed a bill that restored all library funding. ALA OIF has also worked with groups in TX, LA.

ALA is finding success working locally in partnership with state chapters. United Against Book Bans campaign is a major component. There will be a celebration at the ALA Annual Conference, acknowledging the hard work of many. [Right to Read Rally](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-rally-for-the-right-to-read-uniting-for-libraries-intellectual-freedom-tickets-624640946887?aff=erelexpmlt)

Alcántara-Antoine asked about TX SB900 which would require book ratings.

Caldwell Stone shared that TLA is leading advocacy efforts against this, ALA working with allies in publishing. OIF has also been in touch with NYLA and SALS for PD/CE on values to counter potential of library workers self-censoring to stave off challenges.

Kent Oliver started working with ALA-PPA in January, engaging ALA Policy Corp in supporting UABB. Oliver read the purpose statement: *To develop and implement a strategic plan of advocacy for 2023 leveraging members of ALA’s Policy Corps focused on countering the proliferation of book and library challenges in the United States. This plan will influence public opinion, governmental decision making, support local libraries and librarians, and reinforce library values around the Freedom to Read and Constitutional protections.*

Policy Corps members are receiving additional training to prioritize and amplifying UABB messages targeted at local and state audiences, constructive engagement with elected officials, and speaking opportunities, editorial space in traditional and social media, and collaborating with other orgs. There is very close collaboration between OIF and PPA in carrying out this work.

McCauley asked how the PLA Board can support this work. Oliver indicated the group applied for PLA Conference Session, and 13 additional state/division conferences. Communication is most important. There is so much work, focusing is the biggest challenge, looks to local folks like the PLA board to help direct responses and communications.

Inouye is looking to increase coordination with ALA units. This initial Policy Corp cadre is a pilot, will look to PLA for possible candidates as the project expands. Existing partnership with PLA has been very helpful, Larra Clark shares time between units and is staff lead for Policy Corps. Public libraries are well represented.

1. PLA Fiscal Officer Update, *Clara Bohrer*
2. FY23 Second Quarter Financial Update
   1. FY23 Financial Narrative Report as of February 2023 2023.35
   2. FY23 Budget Report as of February 2023 2023.36a-d
3. Operating Agreement Working Group Update no document
4. FY24 Budget Revision Update no document

Bohrer directed attention to balance sheet, 2023.36a-d. For the operating budget, PLA is in a non-conference spend-down year, with a budgeted net loss of $415,000 offset by 2022 net revenue of over 800k. PLA is doing better than expected, with a positive variance of $113k. As of February, PLA has received an additional 1.78 million in grants that support our strategic goals. The long-term investment statement is now accurate and up to date. However, there is a discrepancy in the report: PLA was charged overhead on membership that are overhead exempt. The next report will show this has been fixed. The budget report template has been updated to compare like years to like years.

The board will need to hold a special meeting to review FY24 budget revision update. Finance requires a revised version by May 19. Staff have been directed to cut by 3%, Davis Fournier is working on aligning and Bohrer will review.

OAWG Update: The Operating Agreement has not been updated in over 30 years. The work group provided feedback on recommendations. Revisions now in hands of an implementation committee, work has stalled slightly. A consultant has been engaged to help move the process forward, Bohrer feels the process has been productive and transparent. The consultant has indicated that he is pulling language directly from letter PLA sent to the Executive Board in 2022 ([Board Document 2022.26)](https://connect.ala.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=1c380fee-0445-f0f5-196c-0bcaba6f6664) The final recommendations now scheduled for August but that could extend again. As soon as there is something concrete, Bohrer will bring it to this board to discuss and provide additional input. She would like to see the new financial formulas modeled into actual budgets to see the impacts.

1. PLA Committee Charge Proposals, *Katina Jones,*

*David Lee King, PLA Technology Committee Chair* **ACTION** 2023.37a&b

Katina Jones was invited to address the committee, proposing a change to MEAC charge as proposed in 2023.37a.

Motion revised to change language to “recommended committee composition”

Motion passed, unanimously.

David Lee King was invited to address the committee, proposing updates to the Technology committee charge as described in 2023.37b.

McNeil asked how the proposed competencies document differs from DL committee competencies. The two committees might want to explore any overlaps. DL committee competencies is not specific to library technology. The technology competencies will be focused on library staff competencies needed to succeed. McNeil invited King to attend an upcoming DL committee meeting to coordinate.

Sonia questioned whether a change to activities rather than the charge requires board approval?

Huggins wants to make sure committees are adding value in helping fulfill goals of strategic plan. Appreciates being in loop, even if board approval is not required. She asked if the board typically approves deliverable and outcomes. Bohrer indicated the board approves significant change to charges, but not looks at activity level.

Add committee reports as information point for June meeting, but board does not need to approve actions of committees.

King believes proposed activities fit the current charge and indicated the current committee members are enthusiastic about taking on the work.

The board was reminded that committees are standing committees of the board. Each has a staff liaison, emergent discussion of assigning board liaisons as well. PLA staff will hold committee orientation in the fall.

Huggins supports approving change so that board has more direct knowledge of committee work. Like board approving committee work plans

Alcántara-Antoine recommends a future review of all committee charges to ensure alignment between committees and strategic plan, with the possibility to streamline.

Motion passed, unanimously.

1. New Business, *all* no document

With no new business, meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm Central time