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**Board of Directors—Spring 2020 Meeting**

**June 17, 2020**

Virtual

**Present:** Ramiro Salazar, President; Monique le Conge Ziesenhenne, Past President; Michelle Jeske, President Elect; Directors-at-large: Cindy Fesemyer, Toby Greenwalt, Amita Lonial, Kelvin Watson, Carrie Willson; ALA Division Councilor: Stephanie Chase; Fiscal Officer: Clara Bohrer

**Excused Absence:** Directors-at-large: Pam Sandlian Smith

**PLA Staff:** Barb Macikas, Executive Director; Scott Allen, Deputy Director; Mary Hirsh, Deputy Director; Steven Hofmann, Manager, Web Communications; Melissa Faubel Johnson, Meeting and Special Events Planner; Emily Plagman, Manager, Impact and Advocacy

**Guests:** Brandy McNeil, incoming PLA Director-at-large; Dara Schmidt, incoming PLA Director-at-large

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

1. **Welcome and Introductions**, *Salazar*.
2. **By consent, approved** the adoption of the meeting agenda with the addition of the new agenda item from the Task Force on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice (2020.75).
3. **By consent, approved** the 2020 May Board Meeting Actions (2020.66).
4. **By consent, approved** the consent agenda as presented.

**Consent Items Document Number**

* 1. PLA President’s Report to ALA Council and Executive Board 2020.67
  2. PLA Resolution in Memory of Charles Brown 2020.68

**Action/Discussion/Decision Items**

1. **Reflections and PLA President Update,** *Salazar* (no document). Salazar reflected on his term, noting challenges related to e-books, the COVID-19 crisis, and recent police actions and racial discrimination. He thanked Jeske for assuming the PLA presidency and thanked the board and staff for their work and support.
2. **PLA President-elect Update,** *Jeske* (no document). Jeske thanked Salazar and expressed her hope for the future. Her first column for Public Libraries magazine will address the intersections between COVID-19, the financial situation of libraries, and racial inequities. Given the significant work PLA needs to do to address the challenges libraries and librarians are currently facing, she suggested the board discuss how they can share leadership and encouraged members with interest in certain areas to speak up.
3. **Financial Reports**, *Bohrer, Macikas* (2020.69). ALA has not produced any fiscal year 2020 (FY20) reports since those covering January 2020, so no FY20 budget update was provided. Outsourcing finances earlier this year has created new challenges, and ALA leadership is discussing this arrangement. Allen reviewed adjustments to the PLA FY21 budget made during the last revision cycle, which included reducing expenses in both Administration and the Gates Legacy project due to staff furloughs and reducing dues projections by 30% per ALA’s suggestion. Bohrer also reported on the ALA Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC). Divisions will have representatives (two members and one staff) on the forthcoming group to review the Operating Agreement, and applications are being accepted. ALA’s liquidity is still an issue, and some revenue centers (publishing, membership, conferences) are expected be well below revenue targets. In addition to those three primary revenue centers, ALA plans to advance its fundraising efforts and enhance revenue-generating continuing education programs including virtual workshops. ALA applied for $2 million in funding from federal relief programs but only received $150,000, further challenging the FY21 budget.
4. **PLA 2020 Conference Final Report,** *Faubel Johnson* (2020.70). Faubel Johnson noted financial reports are still not available from ALA, so only PLA staff estimates of revenue are available. PLA does expect to exceed net revenue projections, however, due to strong revenue, and no significant unanticipated expenses were identified. Exhibit sales were strong, with about 30 more companies than 2018, and exhibitor survey feedback was very positive.
5. **PLA C-19 Planning Framework Status**, *Hirsh* (2020.71). Hirsh reported that staff met to discuss goals for assembling recovery resources and to integrate racial equity and social justice content into these plans. Staff convened with PLA’s external equity and leadership experts (Mia Henry and Adam Goodman respectively) and began planning new peer-led programming. Staff is also considering how to position existing and emerging PLA programs as recovery resources for libraries and communities. Rather than develop lists and catalogs of existing resources, staff expects to focus on effective communication about what exists and how to access it. Finally, PLA created some editable advocacy templates for libraries which are online and will be promoted through PLA e-news.
6. **PLA-ALA C-19 response and ALA IMLS proposal**, *Plagman* (2020.72 a-c). Plagman presented results of the May 2020 survey of libraries. Staff are analyzing over 500 reopening plans submitted along with survey responses. Many library staff have asked for standard plans from PLA and ALA. PLA may post a few sample plans as well as information on standard plan elements. Results related to the financial status of libraries and plans for staffing changes were also reviewed. Another survey may be conducted in fall of 2020. It was noted that ALA does not have research staff so leading this work fell to PLA, and the staff time to conduct it has been significant.
7. **ALA Update—Sustainability, Operating Agreement, Forward Together** (no document). Macikas has circulated the draft joint letter, which asks for a joint meeting between ALA and divisions. The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) agreed to sign on. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) was in support but suggested the letter include a stronger “ask.” The new combined group, CORE, has declined to sign on. Macikas will revise the letter based on feedback from the board and will recirculate it to PLA board and the boards of other divisions that had expressed support. In terms of a stronger request, members suggested asking for a pledge or commitment, for instance, to avoid staff furloughs and undertake strategic budgeting, and/or for increased transparency. The inability to have accurate and timely financial reports noted above, however, is a fundamental barrier to transparency. A meeting between PLA and the ALA President, Treasurer and Executive Director was also suggested, as was a membership “town hall,” because members who are aware of the budget situation and staff furloughs are angry, and ALA needs to be accountable to them. At the end of the discussion, it was agreed to ask for a meeting between ALA leadership and PLA.
8. **Review of the ALA Council Agenda**, *Chase* (no document). It was reiterated that board members should let Chase know when a memorial resolution includes a strong connection to PLA or public libraries. Chase noted specific resolutions of interest to public libraries that will be discussed, including resolutions on police violence, library security policies, and on protecting privacy and security in Coronavirus-related library policy. A resolution entitled “Financial Autonomy and Collaboration among ALA Management, Divisions and Roundtables” would limit ALA’s transfer of a unit’s fund balance to 50%, which would also temporary and repaid. Chase will circulate specific content from the Council agenda materials, along with her questions for the PLA board, to get input before the Council meetings.
9. **E-books, ALA Digital Content Working Group (DCWG) Update**, *Watson* (2020.74). Watson reported that the DCWB met recently. The DCWG is planning a joint statement to represent public, school and academic libraries, addressing fair use and other issues. The statement and additional conversations with publishers may happen this fall. The PLA board can support this effort by maintaining awareness, potentially commenting on suggested publishing models if they are circulated, and being advocates as DCWG recommendations roll out.
10. **Task Force on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice (EDISJ),** *Greenwalt, Lonial* (2020.74). **ACTION.** The EDISJ Task Force drafted a statement, including actions steps for libraries and for PLA, to email to the membership. The board commended the statement, suggested minor revisions to focus it on public libraries and to acknowledge the EDISJ Task Force’s work, and to acknowledge a forthcoming ALA statement, assuming it is approved and released following the ALA Council meetings. PLA’s ability per ALA policy to put out its own statements despite the recent push to have ALA speak with “one voice” was noted. It was moved and **APPROVED** that PLA would support the EDISJ Task Force statement with revisions to the introductory language and reflecting the ALA statement. The capacity of the Task Force to meet the needs of PLA and the public library field was discussed. Lonial and Greenwalt explained that early work of the EDISJ Task Force met the field where they were, in terms of defining terms and then normalizing and operationalizing discussions of racial inequity. This was accomplished primarily through the Equity Starts with Us trainings, which took all the time the volunteer Task Force could give. Activity in 2020 has created more urgency and moved libraries to take more substantive action. Supporting those needs will exceed what the 20-member volunteer Task Force can accomplish. The suggestion has also come up within the Task Force that its membership should consist entirely of people who are black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), and white PLA members can continue to support the work as non-members.
11. **Service Recognition of Board Members** (no document). The board recognized and thanked outgoing board members Pam Sandlian Smith, Monique le Conge Ziesenhenne, and Carrie Willson. Melanie Huggins was welcomed as president-elect, and Brandy McNeil and Dara Schmidt were welcomed as directors-at-large, with terms starting July 1, 2020. On July 1, 2020, Salazar becomes immediate past president, and Jeske assumes the role of president for 2020-2021.
12. **Future Board Meeting Dates through October**, *Macikas* (2020.73). The PLA board is scheduled to meet virtually on July 17 from 1:00‐3:00pm Central, on August 17 from 2:00-4:00pm Central, and on September 18 from 1:00-3:00pm Central. An in-person meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2020. It was reported that the August 17 meeting cannot occur due to scheduled ALA staff furloughs, so it was canceled.
13. **New Business/Adjourn**. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 1:00pm Central. The next PLA board meeting will be held virtually on July 17, 2020.

**PLA Board of Directors 2020 June Meeting**

**Action Items/Discussions Requiring Follow Up**

The following actions were drafted based on discussion at the 2020 June board meeting.

1. Financial Reports
   1. Allen and Faubel Johnson will update both general and PLA Conference reports as soon as ALA release additional financial reports.
2. PLA C-19 Framework Status
   1. Staff (Hirsh, Allen, Lopez, others) will continue to plan how to communicate PLA resources to members to help their libraries and communities recover from COVID-19 and other challenges.
   2. Staff (Hirsh, Wood, others) will continue to plan activity to combine leadership and EDISJ principles.
3. ALA Update—Sustainability, Operating Agreement, Forward Together
   1. Macikas will revise the draft of the joint letter to include more specific ask(s), including that PLA leadership meet with the ALA President, Treasurer and Executive Director.
4. Review of ALA Council Agenda
   1. Chase will email the specific resolutions she is seeking input on to the PLA board, allowing time for comment in advance of the next ALA Council meeting.
5. Task Force on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice (EDISJ)
   1. Lonial and Greenwalt will update the Task Force on the board’s support of the letter and the need to update language about public libraries and the ALA statement.
   2. Staff (Macikas, Allen or Wood) will recirculate the EDISJ Task Force statement to the PLA board for final approval before distributing to PLA members.
6. Future Board Meeting Dates through October
   1. Macikas and Stewart will cancel the board meeting scheduled for August 17, 2020 due to closure of the ALA office that week.
   2. Macikas and Jeske will include discussion of the proposed October 2020 in-person meeting on the agenda for the July 2020 board meeting.