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**Board of Directors—2019 Midwinter Meeting**

**Saturday, January 26, 2019**

Westin Seattle Hotel, Seattle, WA

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

**Approved Absences:** Carrie Plymire

**PLA Staff/Consultants:** Barb Macikas, Executive Director; Scott Allen, Deputy Director; Larra Clark, PLA/OITP Deputy Director; Mary Hirsh, Deputy Director; Kathleen Hughes, Manager, Publications; Angela Maycock, Manager, Continuing Education; Emily Plagman, Project Manager

**Guests:** Clara Bohrer, PLA Budget and Finance Committee; Tobin Conley and Jim Gibson, DelCor; Kathi Kromer and Kenton Oliver, ALA Washington Office and Committee on Legislation; Vailey Oehlke and Felton Thomas, ALA Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE)

*Discussions which resulted in items for staff or member leader follow up are indicated by an asterisk (\*). Follow-up items are listed at the end of the document.*

1. **Welcome and Introductions**, *LeConge Ziesenhenne*.
2. **By consent, approved** the adoption of the meeting agenda.
3. **By consent, approved** the 2018 Fall Board Meeting Draft Actions (2019.24).
4. **By consent, approved** the consent agenda as presented.

**Consent Items Document Number**

*Organizational Excellence and Governance*

* 1. Draft 2018 Fall Board Actions 2019.24
  2. 2018 Fall Board Follow Up List 2019.25
  3. PLA 2019 Election Slate 2019.26
  4. Proposed Fiscal Officer Position Description 2019.27
  5. Membership 2019.28
  6. Communications 2019.29
  7. Tribute to Gates Foundation 2019.30a&b
  8. Other Organizational Excellence Initiatives (Staffing, Technology) 2019.31

*Leadership*

* 1. Leadership Initiatives Report 2019.32

*Transformation*

* 1. Continuing Education Report 2019.33
  2. Publications and Products 2019.34
  3. Other Transformation Initiatives 2019.35

*Advocacy and Awareness*

* 1. Other Advocacy and Awareness Initiatives (Awards) 2019.36

*Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice*

* 1. EDISJ Initiatives Report 2019.37

**Action/Discussion/Decision Items**

1. **Interim Board Actions**, *All* (2019.21, 2019.22, 2019.23). In November 2018, the PLA Board of Directors approved three partnership requests via email. It was presented and **approved** that PLA will enter into a new project partnership with Microsoft Philanthropies, which will provide hardware, training and other tools primarily to rural libraries to help community members build skills for educational and employment success and so they can benefit from access to high speed internet as a result of Microsoft Airband partnerships. It was also presented and **approved** that PLA will enter into a new project partnership with the ALA Washington Office and Google. This new project will provide mini-grants to public libraries in all 50 states to support community events and digital literacy training focused on workforce and small business development using Google tools, as well as PLA and local library resources. Finally, it was presented and **approved** that PLA will enter into a new project partnership with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) All of Us National Program, which seeks to help public libraries increase health literacy, address inequities that have prevented underserved groups from fully participating in critical health research, and strengthen community partnerships with healthcare while promoting the All of Us Research Program (All of Us), a historic effort to accelerate health research and medical breakthroughs to enable individualized prevention, treatment, and care.
2. **Introductions of ALA Presidential and PLA Board Candidates** (no document). The following candidates were present and introduced: Lance Werner (ALA President); Andrew Pace and Maggie Ferrell (ALA Treasurer); Michelle Jeske (PLA President); PLA Directors at Large: Meaghan O’Connor, Amita Lonial, and Toby Greenwalt (PLA Directors-at-large). Candidates Julius Jefferson (ALA President), Manya Shorr (PLA President), and Jason Kucsma (PLA Director at Large) were mentioned but not present.
3. **PLA President’s Report**, *LeConge Ziesenhenne* (no document). LeConge Ziesenhenne reported that ALA divisions submitted Steven Yates, Jim Neal and Gina Milsap as candidates for the ALA Executive Director selection committee. Millsap will serve as an alternate in the event Yates or Neal are unable to participate. The search will start in February, wrap up in June, and the new Executive Director is anticipated to begin work in the fall of 2019. Le Conge Ziesenhenne noted that she’s spoken to many media outlets and signed on to many advocacy letters to support library efforts in their communities. Members expressed interest in seeing those letters.\* Members were reminded that PLA is hosting ALA Councilors for a breakfast on Monday morning during the Midwinter Meeting. LeConge Ziesenhenne also pointed out that Google Translate was added to Project Outcome to facilitate surveys in new languages.
4. **ALA Board Talking Points** (onsite). The board talking points were referenced, and there was no discussion. Three units (LITA, ALCTS, LLAMA) intend to merge. However, the vote on this merger was tabled during the 2019 Midwinter Meeting.
5. **Report from ALA Tech Consultants, DelCor**, *Conley, Gibson* (2019.38). Delcor works with associations and other nonprofits to cover where technology and mission coalesce. In conducting ALA’s technology assessment, Delcor examined four areas: the suite of programs and tools being used; data management; social media; and technology management policies and protocols. Highlights of their report included a bias toward onsite data management, “legacy” hardware in need of retirement, and a need for better coordination, collaboration and communication between ITTS and other ALA units. They uncovered multiple data management strategies and data sources, as well as many staff performing similar functions across the organization, all without coordination. They recommended that organizations like ALA should have technology staff at the highest level, therefore a new Chief Information Officer position will be created, initially filled by consultant Jim Gibson on a one-year interim basis, who will report to Mary Ghikas. Board members expressed some concern about how changes in membership will affect PLA and the public library community of practice, and they were also interested in learning more about how the needs of different groups within ALA will get prioritized.
6. **Report from Budget and Finance Committee Chair**, *Bohrer* (2019.39-44). Bohrer noted that at this point in the FY19 fiscal year, PLA is generally on target with revenue and expenses. PLA is in a “spend down” year, which will take the operating reserves from $3.8 million to $3.1 million. This amount is significantly higher than the approximately $750,000 PLA is required to maintain,\* so the potential of spending down the reserves was again discussed. The Budget and Finance Committee will discuss and make recommendations for the board’s spring meeting.\* The interest on PLA’s two major Gates Foundation grants is being handled differently. While PLA will receive interest on the $10.8 million legacy grant, ALA will retain interest off the $2.9 million general operating grant awarded in 2017. Upon recommendation of the Gates Foundation, and following board discussion, the board recommended that PLA spend down the general operating grant first, and by doing so extend the term of the legacy grant.\* The long term investment (LTI) was also briefly discussed. It was noted that ALA should be paying any loans from the LTI back to PLA with interest. General interest revenue from the LTI will likely be about $50,000 as usual, and members suggested it be used to support the Inclusive Internship Initiative. Board members voiced support for PLA’s increased fundraising efforts as key to sustainability, but they also noted the need to better justify the efforts to raise money from members when the money is not immediately needed due to the operating reserves and LTI interest.\* Finally, PLA’s support of the ALA Development Office, policy corps, and other areas was noted.
7. **PLA Board Meeting at Future Midwinters**, *Macikas* (2019.45a-e). Despite new no conflict times planned for the ALA 2020 Midwinter Meeting, units are not being asked to change board meeting times. In fact, ALA scheduled its own meetings (e.g., SCOE on Saturday) against the no-conflict time period. In 2021, however, the plan is that unit business meetings must be Friday or Tuesday afternoon, so that Saturday through Monday is reserved for continuing education (CE) and events such as youth media award presentations. While the board generally supported the idea that the Midwinter Meeting would transition to focus on the youth book and media awards and focused CE such as leadership, there was concern that lack of strong education and marketing departments in ALA will prohibit success. The board also briefly discussed whether PLA committees would continue to meet at Midwinter, noting other options such as virtual meetings, before or after the PLA conference, during a potential new spring symposium, and other times. Ultimately, the potential success of revised ALA’s Midwinter Meeting may depend on decisions at the division level about whether we should embrace the educational content by submitting program ideas and then promoting programming as PLA’s, and encourage our committees to attend and convene, or whether we use other opportunities to present PLA-developed programs and convene our volunteer leadership.\*
8. **Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE)**, *Oehlke, Thomas* (onsite). The board expressed interest in the discussions and ultimate recommendations of the SCOE because the effectiveness of ALA is related to PLA success. The SCOE began convening in October 2018. Reports on their work including potential models for a revamped ALA were circulated. The SCOE will elicit ideas and consensus from the membership now, up to and at the ALA Annual Conference, and potentially after Annual Conference. The board had various questions and also expressed a concern about the loss of staff positions.
9. **PLA Strategic Plan Review**, *Macikas, all* (2019.46). A status report which attempted to align core PLA work with the revised strategic plan goals was briefly reviewed. Members appreciated the format and simplicity of the report. It was suggested the goals and this report be used to determine how to invest PLA’s reserve and interest funds, both to accelerate existing activity and to address gaps that are revealed as PLA’s work is aligned with the strategic plan goals.
10. **Plans for PLA 75th Anniversary**, *all* (2019.47). Board members reviewed the draft plan for some activities to celebrate PLA’s 75th anniversary, which include fundraising, development of a new web site, collecting member stories to engage them in the activity, creating a special issue of Public Libraries or another publication, and holding events at ALA Annual Conference and the PLA 2020 Conference.
11. **Fund for the Future/Fundraising Discussion**, Allen (2019.48). LeConge Ziesenhenne voiced her support for PLA’s development of a more robust and varied fundraising program. She also announced that a charity golf outing will be held prior to the ALA Annual Conference once again, and funds raised will support PLA. Allen reviewed PLA’s many fundraising strategies: vendor support and sponsorships; individual giving including the founding donor effort as well as appeals to members-at-large, major gifts and planned giving; and pursuing corporate, foundation and government grants. Board input is needed around individual giving, including how to keep donors engaged and also how PLA might initiate planned and/or major giving work. One suggestion was to solicit library trustees for major or planned gifts. Members also reiterated their earlier concern that PLA work on justifying why we are asking for funds now, in terms of sustainability of PLA and the potential to continually do more, particularly around key issues. For 2019, four appeal cycles are planned, focusing on National Library Week, raising scholarship funds for the 75th anniversary campaign, Giving Tuesday in November, and the year-end appeal. After some questions about which appeals would be print versus email, board members were generally supportive of the increased appeals, noting that “you don’t get anything if you don’t ask.” They expressed interest in getting more data on PLA’s fundraising efforts,\* and also suggested strategies to engage donors and potential donors, such as testimonials, including program costs in our appeals, being very specific in what PLA will support, using Public Libraries magazine,\* and highlighting how PLA’s fundraising is improving equity, diversity and leadership in the field. Also, the Seattle Public Library Foundation’s (SPLF) efforts to provide additional tools and support to public libraries to do fundraising was noted. PLA staff are working with the ALA Development Office to assist in shaping and promoting SPLF’s work.
12. **ALA Washington Office Update**, *Kromer* (no document). Kromer and Oliver reported that the ALA Committee on Legislation has identified ongoing and new legislative priorities, including library funding through IMLS and other programs, equitable access to high speed internet, e-rate funding, net neutrality, the 2020 census, Facebook privacy issues, STEM education and coding, workforce development, and services to veterans. In 2018, ALA had five priority bills become law which was excellent, particularly given the general lack of bill movement in the last session. Kromer also reported on some Washington Office operational issues, such as the redesign of the web site, and plans to hold a “fly-in” in late February rather than a 2019 Legislative Day in May, given that the ALA Annual Conference will be in Washington, DC in June.
13. **PLA Immersive Experience, Next Steps, PLA 2020**, *Macikas, Johnson, all*(2019.49). Maycock reported that PLA surveyed members about their top three challenges which they wanted to see reflected in the PLA 2020 programming. As of Midwinter, results are trending toward topics that align with the immersive experience and PLA’s plans for Nashville: building inclusive and welcoming institutions, community dialogues, and community engagement. The PLA staff planning group will continue to digest the board’s experience in November 2018 and make plans for all conference attendees to support inclusion and equity during conference.
14. **PLA PD Theory of Change White Paper**, *Hirsh, all* (2019.50a-c). Discussion of this agenda item was postponed due to lack of time.
15. **Extension of the Task Force on EDI**, **ACTION,** *Kong, Allen, all* (2019.51). It was moved and **approved** to rename the PLA Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to the PLA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (EDISJ), and also to continue the Task Force for another two‐year term, from July 2019 to June 2021, with reappointments and new appointments to occur in the spring of 2019 by incoming President Ramiro Salazar.
16. **PLDS Status Update**, *Plagman, all* (on-site). The creation of the Measurement and Evaluation Committee (MEAC) to oversee performance measurement and the Public Library Data Survey (PLDS) was noted. Five years ago management of the PLDS survey was contracted to Counting Opinions (CO), which previously handled only the data collection component of PLDS. CO offered to handle all aspects including training, marketing, and other work. There has been no increase in sales, and when the CO contract came up, the MEAC decided to reexamine all data products for the field, putting the PLDS on hold until sometime in FY20. The data collection and survey underway now for FY19, will continue as planned.
17. **Review of Plans for PLA Breakfast with ALA Council**, *le Conge Ziesenhenne, all* (on-site). The board members discussed our strategy for the event and how to handle questions. Board members agreed to split up and circulate among Councilors at different tables.
18. **Review of the ALA Council Agenda**, *Chase, all* (2019.52). Chase reviewed issues pending for the ALA Council, including resolutions on transgender issues (which the PLA board agreed to support); sustainability (environmental) as a core value of ALA (the PLA board took no position); and library fines (the PLA board requested consideration of language changes so the resolution will better accepted among all library communities and to prevent media misinterpretation). The board suggested the issue of library fines might be appropriate for a session at the PLA 2020 Conference.\*
19. **New Business**, *all* (no document). Macikas reported that the spring 2019 Board meeting will be April 7-8, 2019 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. International travel may require special permissions for some board members, so PLA will assist by providing a travel letter.\*

PLA Board of Directors

Spring Meeting 2019

2019 Midwinter Meeting Board Meeting Follow Up List

Document no.: 2019.55b

**PLA Board of Directors 2019 Midwinter Meeting**

**January 26, 2019, Seattle, WA**

**Action Items/Discussions Requiring Follow Up**

*The following actions were drafted based on discussion at the 2019 Midwinter Meeting board meeting. Discussions in the board minutes that resulted in these follow-up items are indicated by an asterisk (\*).*

1. Staff will include community level library advocacy letters that the PLA President signs in future board agenda packets. (Deutsch, Stewart)

**STATUS: ACCOMPLISHED.** These will be included as part of the communications reports going forward.

1. Staff will research amount of required operating reserves to determine if formal policy exists and to update the figures to determine what the minimum amount for PLA should be. (Macikas, Allen)

**STATUS: IN PROCESS**

1. The PLA Budget and Finance Committee will make recommendations on how to spend down the PLA reserves for the board’s spring 2019 meeting. (Bohrer, Macikas)

**STATUS: IN PROCESS.** Proposals for spending down the funds will be discussed at the Spring 2019 board meeting.

1. Staff will charge legacy and other expenses to 3177 in FY19 and will budget to spend down 3177 in FY20 and beyond until the grant is spent down. (Macikas, Allen)

**STATUS: ACCOMPLISHED**

1. Staff will create some fact sheets about why we are raising money from members when we have other money to spend (Allen, Macikas)

**STATUS: NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED**

1. Staff will draft recommendations for how PLA supports or competes with the newly-revised Midwinter Meeting. (Macikas, Hirsh, Allen, Maycock)

**STATUS: NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED**

1. Staff will include status of donation requests including variation in response to print versus email appeals in future board reports. (Allen, Stewart)

**STATUS: NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED.** There have been no appeals since the 2019 Midwinter Meeting. This information will be included in future fundraising reports to the board.

1. Staff will include an appeal envelope in an issue of Public Libraries, ideally aligned with the 75th anniversary issue and requesting support for scholarships. (Hughes, Allen)

**STATUS: IN PROCESS**

1. Staff will consider how PLA might include CE content on the issue of library fines at PLA 2020. (Maycock)

**STATUS: IN PROCESS**

1. Staff will send board members a formal letter and draft agenda regarding the April board meeting, including costs, etc., so that they can get local approval to travel, if needed. (Stewart)

**STATUS: ACCOMPLISHED**