Narratives
*Council Forum Survey*
**May 21st 2018, 2:10 pm PDT**

**Q6 - Feel free to share your thoughts about revisiting the scheduling of Council Forums.**

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| Feel free to share your thoughts about revisiting the scheduling of Council Forums. |
| We should consider new time slots for the upcoming forums at future midwinters and annuals. Revising the times for this annual is too soon, particularly since many people have likely made their schedules already. |
| Since people are already there in the council chamber in the morning, I am not quite sure the morning session will make any different. We might as well go into an official council session with real vote. The evening forum usually give people a heads up of what is forth coming about what will be on the agenda of the following day as well as allowing the mover of the resolution a chance to refine the resolution more before submitting to council. |
| I think ALA Council should hold monthly or bi-monthly meetings just like all other ALA committees do now. The way that council only work at face to face meetings twice a year probably out lived itself in today's connected world. If the Council does meeting regularly, then we don't need all the time allocated at the conferences. We could just have two three hour meetings and use the first hour for forum discussion. |
| Thank you for moving forward with this discussion. I suspect that in this case, as in all things, Lydgate was right: “You can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can’t please all of the people all of the time.” Certainly, thank you for trying to make the forum set-up more equitable. |
| I am glad this is being revisited. I like the forums but rarely attend because my brain is winding down at 8:30 in the evening. Also, the evenings are my best time for networking with non-council members. I feel guilt for not attending, but for me it is not where I want to be that late in the evening. |
| Council Forums have been a good way to integrate new council members; yes they are a schedule issue but with 180 or so active members there will always be conflicts. I've come to the view that much of what is done in forum actually should be done in council. Council Forum have been doing what some legislative bodies call first and second readings of pending resolutions and then giving those resolutions back to committees for revision. The other discussions of council tend to be problem solving but again it would be best to have those on council floor, particularly when they pertain to budgeting, membership, and leadership issues. |
| I really like the idea of a brief overview before each council. I know that it is generally early, but since we already have to be there in the morning, this is easier for me opposed to the night sessions. Having council bookend the days makes for incredibly long conference days, and I pretty much can never do both. |
| I would also be fine with a mix of morning and night time forums. |
| I'd like to keep with the published schedule for Annual. I'm definitely a night person so the morning schedule does not appeal to me. I'm not sure if the Monday afternoon schedule would conflict with other commitments. The beauty of the evening schedule is that there is seldom a conflict. |
| The morning meetings should work well for my schedule in general. As a Division Councilor I do have other board meetings to attend at ALA, and need to be mindful of location and travel times during the day. |
| Too many prior commitments to change. |
| Late nights and early mornings are rough-- I like the options of some afternoons-- I know people are busy, but sometimes there are those pockets of downtime with nothing to do in the late afternoon-- and it would be nice to utilize that time! |
| I have marked my preferred times, which vary from the originally scheduled times. That said, I think that it may be best to wait until Midwinter to make changes as many councilors may have already set their schedules for Annual 2018. I know I have. |
| I am not a morning person, and if the council forums were moved to the early morning as suggested, it is unlikely that I will attend. I have attended all the evening forums. |
| Thanks for putting this together. |
| No evening meetings, please. |
| I'm new to Council, but overall, I would VASTLY prefer morning times. |
| I have some concern that holding the Council Forum in the morning directly before Council will give the appearance and take on the flavor of an extended Council meeting. Holding them back to back could have the effect of either making the Forum more formal or the Council meeting less formal. I think this would be a deleterious effect on one or both meetings. |
| I mainly skip Forum because of the time. I'd rather spend my evenings networking - which is what conference is for. It's also really cliquish, with the same 30-40 people attending every time. Changing the time will encourage broader participation from across Council. |
| I'd love to see us try mornings. |
| I hardly ever go to council forum because I am either exhausted and want sleep, or want to see friends I only get to see at ALA. |
| I think changing the time is more about form than function of the forums. I see forums as an opportunity for councilors to work through issues and build consensus on resolutions that will be voted upon in council. Having them early in the morning doesn't give enough time for someone to revise a resolution before bringing it to council right away. Having the discussion just before council just doesn't fulfill the purpose/function of forums. These long discussions will revert back into council meetings that will drag on. |
| I prefer the daytime slots for forums, although I would not be against scheduling a variety of times - for instance one morning, one afternoon and one evening slot to accommodate councilors who can't make mornings or are night people. |
| I would prefer morning forum, as I am usually too tired at night to come. |
| Freeing up Saturday evening is my top preference, as there are multiple receptions and small group outings that evening (more than on Sunday night, for me). The few fora I have missed have been on the Saturday. |
| I thought there was going to be an option for the afternoon or immediately following council. I rarely attend Forum due to the late hour but I can't guarantee I will attend at the early hour either. |
| What about Sundays 6-7pm or 6:30-7:30PM in place of Sunday morning or Saturday evening prior? There are many Sun and Mon morning meetings and breakfasts that many councilors attend on their way to Council meetings. Or go back to two fora only - each 90 minutes since it seems that Sat and Sun evenings have often been repeats of same content, i.e. Sun earlier in evening (as I have outlined) and Mon late afternoon as proposed. Also, sitting in audience chairs in rows that cannot be easily taken apart and put back together will make a forum very uncomfortable. The open seating we have had at the late night fora is conducive to the informal nature of the forum. Having had caucus meetings in these uncomfortably arranged rows really bites for being able to hear people not to mention feeling cramped. Is someone proposing the use of microphones, because it will be even harder to hear in the Council chamber without them than it is in small hotel ballrooms which are already bad enough. I realize the matter of shuttles is dictating this conversation and thus I fear transportation necessity will steer the conversation and early morning fora will win out. Again, I want to stress that the fung shwe (sic) of the Council chamber is not conducive to a forum but don't know what else to suggest . |
| I'm concerned that a morning forum would be shorter and may not allow for the depth of conversation that we've had in the past. Forum is also a great place to workshop items to be brought before council. I'm concerned that workshopping them directly before council starts, may not give people enough time to make necessary changes. |
| Since I have meetings in the morning before Council, I prefer to meet at night. Too, when I come to the Council floor in the morning, I am ready to start the business of Council. I think the informality of Forum, as I have understood it during my past eight years of attendance, lends itself to the evenings. The idea that it is a formal, decision making body, has never been how I have seen it, so some of the reasons why this change is being advocated is not part of my thinking. I miss out on participating in several things during current Forum time, but will miss out on even more if it is changed to mornings. Having said all that, as a committed Councilor, I will fall in line with what makes the majority happy. |
| It is very difficult to plan to attend Forum when it is at night -- whether because it comes at the end of a very long conference day, I have other obligations, or just need to go to bed before 11! |
| I'm an early riser, so attending a meeting that doesn't get out until 10 p.m. or later is hard for me to deal with. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet in a forum setting just prior to the council session. |
| Midwinter was my first time through as a Councilor. Forums are valuable - I need the break between Forum and Council. Why not schedule the evening Forums from 8-9:30pm? Why does the Tuesday Council begin at 7:45? Thanks & looking forward to the results. |
| Attending Forum is OPTIONAL. |
| I’m confused. |
| I am a new councilor who generally has more energy and focus first thing in the morning. |
| I would be much more likely to attend the morning and late afternoon Council Fora than the evening ones. |
| Thanks for experimenting and trying new concepts. While I like either options and have firm feelings about the nostalgia about the late nights this broader conversation has given me much food for thought and reflects the profession where we tweak and try new things all the time. \*high five\* |
| Karen - Thanks for taking the lead and doing this! |
| I am a morning person -and tend to fall asleep earlier than most. It was my impression from the discussions, that the change would happen at midwinter? I like that the forums would be at the convention center, and booking the hotel would not matter as much to prevent walking or traveling later at night, possibly alone. |
| Just a note that usually Forum 1 doesn't have a lot of discussion items since Council 1 hasn't happened yet. Forum 2 has more discussion points based on what happened in Council 1 and what's planned for Council 2, and Forum 3 has a lot of discussion based on what happened in both Council 1 and Council 2, and what is expected to be discussed in Council 3. Holding Forum 3, the one with the most content, at a time when it can be more easily extended for time is a good idea. Holding Forum just before Council Sessions means you absolutely cannot extend Forum time. Also, current Forum sessions are two hours long, so cutting them in half might be limiting. I attended a Forum session in Chicago where it took 20 minutes just for everyone to introduce themselves. On the other hand, having less time might encourage more general idea sharing and less "Council business" discussion. It also might encourage more people to show up since it's only an hour and not two hours. A two-hour meeting feels like more of a commitment than an hour. Also, I just looked for Forum times on the ALA site and in scheduler and could not find them in either place, which means general membership can't find them either. Maybe they could be added, as well as Council sessions, to the Schedule-at-a-Glance document (https://2018.alaannual.org/whats-happening/schedule-glance) which is linked in the "What's Happening" menu on the conference page (https://2018.alaannual.org/). |
| I am in favor of moving the forums to the morning. I also wouldn't mind an afternoon time for the forums. I do not like the evening forums. |
| There isn't a time that's going to work for everyone, but I think having a mix of times would hopefully make it more likely that a larger group of Councilors would choose to attend at least one Forum. I definitely think that a brief report from Forum would also be helpful. |
| I am actually new on Council and my first time attending was at MidWinter so basically I don't know what to decide on. It does seems to me that generally during the late night people are either meeting up with groups, or attending vendor receptions so it would make sense to go ahead and have these forums earlier in the morning like indicated and get it all over with. That way folks would have their whole day and evening after Council to participate in other things. I am still learning so I really don't know. |
| I don't actually mind Council at night, so it was hard to answer the above questions. I would be fine piloting the morning schedule though, and so selected the time i'd prefer of the morning options. There's no place to indicate that I would be fine with either the night time or trying the 7:30 version. |
| Note: ... Forum (originally Council Caucus) was seen as an informal way to discuss issues. When I first started going, it was small 20 or fewer people. It grew, outgrew the Council suite. But at the same time, it is not an official meeting...part of me says, schedule it and those who want to come will, those who don't or have conflicts won't come. I am returning to Council after a X year hiatus. I look forward to whatever the decision is. I will note, I currently have a standing event on Monday evening. If the current schedule is maintained for that session, I will make my own choice to not attend. Thanks for doing this and for asking. |
| Yay for getting organized and polling everyone reading :) |
| Although we cannot accommodate everyone, I feel we should change the time to allow those who cannot make evening council forums for whatever reasons. Change is good. |
| While I personally prefer the evenings due to conflicts in the morning, I'd be happy to see a more diverse set of options, such as a mix of morning and evening times. I also wonder about lunchtime fora - there are usually very few official events scheduled from 11:30-1:00, so this time would likely often be available for many people. We could make them brown-bag so people are aware they should plan to bring food and eat during that time. |
| It’s my last year in this term on Council. But the late night Council forums are very difficult for me. |
| I want to say thank you very much for putting this together. I do not want to pilot this in Annual, but in Midwinter. These events are already on the Scheduler and Rooms are booked. If this refers to future events, I would like to see Forum II offered 7:15am-8:15am with a 15 minute break before. |
| Love this idea -- evening forums are so difficult to attend and while I attend 75% of them, it is usually begrudgingly because I have to rush dinner or miss out on networking with colleagues to do so, when that is where I get the opinions that inform my decision making as a councilor. |
| I think we should either do away with forum or change the format so that it doesn't replace debate on the actual council floor which is whats been happening. Also we only need two forums |
| I am new to Council but have mixed feelings about the notion of the forums in the first place. We ask councilors to commit a lot of time with the regular meetings and the discussion in between as it is. I feel as though I am not fully upholding my duties / being left of of possible important discussion if I do not attend. If it's been a decade since we've been holding these how about trying a conference again without them? |
| Due to other commitments, I will not be able to attend all the Council and Forum sessions. |
| I'll have [a meeting] on Monday 1-4 so transition time would help. I'm all for the morning times and feel like New Orleans is a fine place to start. |
| I know that committee chairs bringing resolutions to Council often come as well. I wonder how this potential schedule change might affect them. Their docs get valuable workshopping from Forum attendees. Beyond that, I really don't have an opinion. I see value in the discussion, but am definitely not a morning person. But late night thinking is also a challenge. |
| I think this is a great idea and high time we explored different times. Thank you! |
| Implement this at Midwinter, not this forthcoming Annual. It's too late to make schedule changes. Who is authorized to make this decision anyway? |
| I love the idea of not doing these at night! Let's do this immediately. |