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**PLA Board of Directors Meeting**

**Virtual Meeting – 11:00am-2:00pm Central, January 13, 2023**

**Present:** Sonia Alcántara-Antoine, PLA President-elect; Stephanie Chase, ALA Division Councilor; Michael Colford, PLA Director-at-Large; Erica Freudenberger, PLA Director-at-Large; Melanie Huggins, PLA Past President; Mary Ellen Icaza, PLA Director-at-Large; Candice Mack, PLA Director-at-Large; Maria McCauley, PLA President; Dr. Brandy McNeil, PLA Director-at-Large; Larry Neal, Executive Board Liaison; Dara Schmidt, Director-at-Large.

**Absent:** Clara Bohrer, Fiscal Officer

**PLA Staff:** Mary Davis Fournier, Executive Director; Larra Clark, Deputy Director; Mary Hirsh, Deputy Director; Katina Jones, Program Manager, Evaluation and Assessment; Eliana Kleiman, Communications Associate; Samantha Lopez, Manager, Marketing and Membership; Angela Maycock, Manager, Continuing Education; Megan Stewart, Program Officer

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

McCauley notes that EDISJ work is tabled until next meeting.

2.      **EDISJ work,** *Sonia Alcántara-Antoine, PLA President-elect*

Tabled until next meeting.

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

By consent, the board approved the adoption of the meeting agenda.

**Consent Agenda Document Number**

1. *Organizational Excellence and Governance*
   1. Draft October 2022 Board Minutes 2023.14
2. PLA Membership Report 2023.15

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

1. PLA President Update, *McCauley* no document

McCauley overviewed the PLA committee chair orientation and expressed gratitude for committee chairs. McCauley, Tracie Hall, and Roosevelt family recently shared a meal together. McCauley met with ALA President Pelayo-Lozada to touch base on letter to FBI and communications around library safety. McCauley thanked Larra Clark and PLA for informative media training with Lashay Communications that helped equip her for recent media requests. Praise for PLA webinar “Spotlight on Safety” in November which drew many participants; over 2,700 registrants and 1,000 attendees and collaboration with ULC and ARSL.

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

Alcántara-Antoine shared about events and conferences she attended recently. Participated in ULC annual forum, directors’ summit at Pratt Library, and was tapped to serve on advisory board for Library Journal’s next summit on library safety in April. Participated in media training with Maria, Larra, and Lashay.

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

Davis Fournier welcomed feedback for “Spotlight on Safety” event and mentioned that PLA is working on possible similar events in the future, as needed. In the chat, praise is expressed for Angela as a facilitator and Chase suggests having a federal civil rights speaker in future conversation.

Davis Fournier updated activity beginning for 2024 PLA National Conference, including a site visit and calls with Ohio Library Council. A new conference vendor, CVENT will provide support previously covered by multiple vendors, with the goal of alleviating staff time coordinating data and details between them.

Davis Fournier noted that starting in January, PLA launched PLA Insider, re-vamped newsletter delivering twice a month. Production and distribution of the January/February Public Libraries magazine have been stepped up so that members receive the publication at the beginning of the cycle. Davis Fournier presents slide deck introducing PLA staff members.

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

Neal stated that ALA Executive Board is re-evaluating executive review process to provide more meaningful feedback and timeline for executive directors. ALA Executive Director Hall’s contract is up next month, so these discussions are underway currently. The board has expressed desire and priority to have a Senior Associate Executive Director for ALA. The Executive Board has requested more frequent updates on filling of key positions.

Huggins inquired about the Operating Agreement work and the previously mentioned plan for smaller working groups. Davis Fournier responded that three groups are functioning: A group working on everything but budget and finance related matters headed by Andrew Pace; A budget and finance process group, the Operating Agreement Task Force, headed by the ALA Treasurer, Peter Hepburn and ALA CEO, Dina Tsourdinas. The charge is to explore the budgeting process models and work on recommendations based on Task Force recommendations. This is large group comprised of member leaders, directors, fiscal officers, and some staff from all divisions, including Davis Fournier. Within that group, there is sub-working group concerned with process development. Both groups chaired by Hepburn and Tsourdinas. Small group has met regularly, but not with the larger group. With a next step of bringing in an external consultant to facilitate the process, the subgroup work is currently paused. The ambitious timeline aims to get recommendations in place by ALA Annual Conference in June 2023.

1. FY23Q1 Strategic Plan Update, *Davis Fournier* 2023.16

Following the October meeting and reviewing goals/priorities within strategic plan, the next step is to determine priorities for this year and use that as frame for staff to create goals. For instance, EDISJ is being applied to all work via staff checklist and mindfully bringing all staff members into different levels of PLA’s work. PLA will prioritize working through analysis and process first in order to be positioned to move to the next priorities of creating systems and structural level changes related to EDISJ. Davis Fournier thanked PLA Deputy Director Mary Hirsh for her help guiding this work.

McCauley inquired whether this is a new process. Mary Hirsh responds that this is a more integrated, deliberate, and measured approach to advancing goals than what PLA has done in previous years.

1. Fiscal Officer Report, *Clara Bohrer, Davis Fournier, all*
   1. FY22 Final Close August 2022 Budget Reports 2023.17a-e
   2. FY22 Final Close August 2022 Narrative 2023.18

Davis Fournier reviewed FY22 end results and budget narrative. Davis Fournier provided context that ALA asked for high, low, and mid version of budget during pandemic. PLA ended up with a budget and conference budget on the “mid” level. PLA did not meet net revenue goal at 2022 PLA conference, despite a profitable conference. Expenses were more than expected and we did not have as many vendors as budgeted, both due to pandemic conditions.

Satisfactory outcome for our two-year budgeting cycle that in the non-conference year, PLA easily covered its budgeted deficit with the conference year revenue. Davis Fournier is working on FY24 budget; initial draft is almost finished. Revenue actuals from the 2022 PLA conference will be used as the baseline for this budget.

ALA delays due to transition of budgeting platform to the cloud. Will likely need a special agenda board meeting in late February to approve budget. Doodle poll for meeting will be sent to board forthwith.

ALA Finance department has delivered fiscal report on-time for the first time in Davis Fournier’s memory. CEO Tsourdinas hopes to approve budgets before the start of the fiscal year.

Colford inquired about the sponsorship models for conference. Davis Fournier responded that she is working with PLA Conference Manager and a consultant to analyze, review and revise sponsorship prospectus. Currently the tiers are relatively low, with the highest level at $20,000. Most of ALA’s large systems sponsors are universities and institutional members. Colford suggested that libraries like Boston Public be invited to sponsorship opportunities for the conference.

Chase noted previous experience on a different board collaborating with local non-profits and groups that prioritize systemically marginalized people in the community. Chase noted possibility of changed expectations of in-person engagement, and if there is interest in that for a future conference. Chase also asked about possibility of program book being digital-only to save on expenses. Also noted the ending of the Inclusive Internship Initiative program.

Brief discussion of Inclusive Internship Initiative program followed. Inclusive Internship Initiative program is no longer eligible for federal funding, but we are looking for other sources of funding.

Brief discussion of value of past PLA collaborations with PLA conference host city social justice groups; preparedness for communications regarding opportunities.

1. Review of Upcoming Council Actions and Bylaw Changes, *Stephanie Chase* 2023.19a-b

Chase provided context that for several years, all the PLA member councilors have convened in advance of ALA meetings to gain awareness of PLA stances and also foster confidence in speaking out at Council. Frequent feedback is that attendees are looking to PLA for strong guidance. Discussion of revision of bylaws. Council agreed to retain and revise bylaws. Chase asked board for feedback revisions in document.

Chase pointed to ALA Executive Board will still be elected from council instead of direct elections. Interest in having a more representative Executive Board by having positions reserved for those that meet certain criteria. Chase welcomed thoughts about the composition overviewed on pages 4-5 of document. Chase stated that the challenge is moving this forward while the documents are not finished. The timeline needs to be revised; we can put the draft on hold while collecting comments. This has been in process for years. Chase asked for PLA Board to review the document and send her comments.

The next step will be to share PLA positions with public library councilors in advance of LLX.

Chase is concluding role as division councilor in June 2023 but is running for upcoming executive board.

1. PLA Election Candidate Update and Nomination Committee

Recommendations*, Erica Freudenberger* no document

Freudenberger is stepping in for Nominating Committee Chair, Michelle Jeske, who could not attend this meeting. EDISJ values are embedded in processes for petition candidate and nominations. Committee evaluated how processes need to be changed to support EDISJ goals. Normally, candidates would be introduced during this January meeting. Timeline delayed due to interest from possible petition candidate. Introduction of candidates will move to special February board meeting, which falls after the conclusion of the petition confirmation process. Freudenberger welcomes input and thoughts about the memo.

Brief discussion called for thoughtfulness regarding implementation of change in process, including a flat slate which may favor larger/notable libraries; feeling that a successful change would be the opportunity for people to come forward who aren’t as connected; importance of a clear plan that articulates skills wanted for each board role so that people who self-nominate can be mindful about PLA’s needs; earlier recruitment needed.

Huggins expressed faith in nomination committee to align with strategic goals, but overall takeaway is the need to amend the bylaws, so that the bylaws don’t undo/hinder the work of the nomination committee.

Chase commented that if we wish to attract more people from small/rural libraries, non-directors, and budget limitations, we need to address travel barrier.

McCauley presents process question to Freudenberger: should there be a separate working group to work through process in the bylaws? Huggins suggests an ad-hoc governance committee. Chase motions for ad-hoc governance committee to address recommendations brought up by nominating committee in their memo. Alcantara-Antoine seconds the motion. Motion passes.

1. Board Media Training & Communications Update, *Larra Clark* 2023.20a-b

Clark recapped Jeff Leshay’s media training. Leshay has provided this training to ALA pre-pandemic. Clark saw need to bring this training back because PLA receives the most media requests outside of ALA with a large range of questions, especially in this political moment. In thinking about libraries as public places, media training is important for all library directors and board members. Next steps to schedule date for this training, aiming to schedule it before June.

Brief discussion regarding opportunity to offer something like this as a revenue-generating professional development opportunity for members.

Clark shared Google drive with a first draft of talking points and media resources. Hoping to actively add to this, welcomes feedback on what people would like to see here. Clark also plans to draft updated talking points in advance of LLX.

1. New Business, *all* no document

None.

Meeting Adjourned 1:58 p.m.