

ALA Council 2004 Midwinter Meeting Updates and Actions

Updates

ALA/APA – The ALA Allied Professional Association has released the first issue of *Library Worklife: HR E-News for Today's Leaders*. This will be a quarterly electronic newsletter. A full-time ALA-APA Director, Jenifer Grady, began work in December 2003. Significant progress has been made toward the creation of the Certified Public Library Administrator certification program.

ALA Web Site – Major enhancements to the ALA Web Site will be introduced during the week of January 19, 2004. The most noticeable enhancements will be shorter URLs and a “Cite This Page” feature. New additions to the site include: candidate bios for the 2004 election, the *ALA Handbook of Organization*, and a “Continuing Education Clearinghouse.” The Great Web Sites for Kids site will be reborn as a searchable database. The LIS program directory will also become a searchable database.

Ballot Initiatives - ALA members will be asked to vote on an amendment to the ALA Constitution and an amendment to the ALA Bylaws. The constitutional amendment has to do with procedures for filling a mid-term vacancy in the position of ALA Treasurer. The bylaws amendment has to do with the new membership category and dues rate for support staff described below.

Budget and Finances – ALA ended FY2003 in the black. The 2003 Annual Conference in Toronto was financially successful due to careful planning and significant cost reductions. ALA received \$10,650,000 from the sale of Huron Plaza. (ALA continues to own free and clear the portion of Huron Plaza that houses staff). Approximately \$5.3 million will be paid in taxes. \$1 million from the net proceeds will be allocated to the Spectrum Endowment Fund. The remainder will go to the Future Fund of the Long-Term Investment. The estate of William C. Morris has funded two new endowment funds with \$183,418 each for YALSA and ALSC. The Executive Board has authorized the investigation of possibly purchasing real estate in the Washington, DC area for use by the Washington Office.

Conference Registration – As of Monday, January 12, 2004 total registration for the 2004 Midwinter Meeting in San Diego was 10,788 compared with a total registration for the 2003 Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia of 13,664.

Core Values - The ALA Core Values Task Force II has identified ten value domains based on a textual analysis of association documents. They are: access, collaboration, diversity, education, intellectual freedom, preservation, privacy, professionalism, public good, and service. The task force will present a final core values statement at the 2004 Annual Conference.

Electronic Balloting – ALA will initiate electronic voting in Spring 2004. The Association has tested 50,000 email addresses. Members whose email addresses did not work (about 5,000) will receive paper ballots. Members with valid email addresses will receive an electronic notice on March 15, 2004 directing them to request either a paper or electronic ballot. The election deadline is April 26, 2004. Candidates will be notified by and results will be reported on May 3, 2004.

Health Insurance - The ALA Membership Committee reported that the new member health insurance program will be rolled out in Spring 2004. The initial roll out has been delayed because the first provider, Near North Group was sold. ALA has identified Marsh & McLennan Companies as the new provider.

School Libraries and Librarians – As part of the Resolution on School Libraries and Librarians adopted by Council at the 2003 Annual Conference, ALA is providing state-level training sessions for school library advocates.

Actions

ALA Motto – Council defeated a resolution to rescind the ALA Motto, “The best reading, for the largest number, at the least cost,” originally formulated in 1892.

Election Endorsements – Council defeated a resolution on ALA Election Endorsement and Use of Funds. The resolution attempted to codify current election, campaign, and endorsement practices. ALA Executive Board will issue revised campaign guidelines soon.

Clark Atlanta – Council adopted a resolution opposing the closing of Clark Atlanta University School of Library and Information Studies. The resolution notes Clark Atlanta’s significant contribution to the diversity of the library profession and establishes a task force to determine the strategies and procedures necessary to ensure that ALA is better positioned to detect warning signs of similar closures and take appropriate preventive actions.

Cuba - Council adopted the *International Relations Committee and Intellectual Freedom Committee’s Report on Cuba*. The report summarizes ALA’s many policies related to human rights and freedom of expression and supports IFLA’s actions related to Cuba. A copy of this report is on the ALA webpage at <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=News&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=53695>

Government Information – Council accepted the report of the Committee on Legislation and the attached document entitled *Key Principles on Government Information*, which affirms, restates, and gathers together existing ALA principles. This is an important Association document drafted by the Government Documents Round Table. It should be available on the ALA webpage soon.

Legal Counsel – Members of council were furious to learn Jenner & Block, the legal firm that ALA employs for legal counsel, has accepted divine Inc. as a client. The Executive Board has not had time to clarify details of the relationship. Council considered a resolution to establish policy on the retention of legal counsel and referred the resolution to the Budget Analysis and Review Committee.

Legislation – Congress reauthorized LSTA last fall. The Committee on Legislation and the ALA Washington Office expressed appreciation for the efforts of library advocates and encourages them to send thank you letters to members of Congress. National Library Legislative Day is scheduled for May 3 and 4, 2004 in Washington, D.C. Council adopted four resolutions moved by the Committee on Legislation:

1. Resolution in Opposition to H.R. 3261, Database and Collections of Information Misappropriations Act;
2. Resolution on Proposed Amendments to the USA PATRIOT Act;

3. Resolution Commending the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouses for Their Service to the Education Community, the Library Community, and the Public;
4. Resolution Commending the Government Printing Office and the National Archives and Records Administration.

Programmatic Priorities – Council approved FY2005 programmatic priorities for ALA to include: diversity, education and continuous learning, equity of access, intellectual freedom, and 21st Century literacy.

Support Staff Member Category – Council approved the formation of a new membership category for library support staff with a dues rate of \$35. ALA membership will be asked to approve this new membership category and dues rate on the 2004 ALA Elections Ballot. Council asked the ALA Membership Committee to investigate a graduated dues scale based on salary for the future.

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