

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Report of the Nominating Committee for the 2020 ALA Election

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

For information purposes; no action required

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Emmanuel Faulkner, Chair, Nominating Committee for the 2020 ALA Election
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DATE: September 25, 2019

Executive Summary:

The Nominating Committee for the 2020 American Library Association Election completed its charge of developing a slate of candidates to stand for the positions of ALA President-elect and ALA Councilor at Large during the ALA 2020 election. (See Appendix A). All members of the American Library Association were provided the opportunity to be considered for nomination through a targeted marketing campaign intended to develop a diverse pool of candidates. The call for nominations was greatly assisted by social media materials developed by ALA Marketing at the request of the Nominating Committee (See Appendix B). Candidates for the ALA President-elect were identified through the Committee's recruitment efforts that garnered self-nominations as well as one anonymous nominations. Additionally, we had a number of ALA members self-nominate for the Councilor-at-large positions. During the nominating and vetting process two (2) qualified candidates were identified for the President-elect position and both accepted the nomination. During this process one of the current members of Council withdrew from their position, and the committee agreed that there will be one additional slot that will be fulfilled at the next election. This additional position will have a two-year term instead of the normal three-year term. The 2020 Nominating Committee is honored to put forward a final slate of highly qualified candidates comprised of two (2) candidates for ALA President-elect and sixty-seven (67) Councilor-at-Large candidates (52 needed).

Background:

The committee began its work on January 26, 2019 in Seattle at the ALA Midwinter meeting. We were joined by Alexandra Rivera, Chair, Nominating Committee for the 2019 ALA Election who provided a general overview of the process the 2019 Nominating Committee undertook, and key takeaways and lessons learned. In addition, JoAnne Kempf, Director, ALA Governance Office provided a thorough and highly informative overview of the nomination and election process and introduced us to the comprehensive manual that was developed. At the initial meeting we were informed of Ms. Kempf's well deserved and upcoming retirement. The Office also introduced Sheryl Reyes as the point person once Ms. Kempf retired. During this process Ms. Reyes was blessed to step away from her duties to go on maternity leave. The Office allowed Marsha Burgess who stepped up and kept the committee moving in the right direction. The committee was well supported by the staff provided and we thank them immensely for their expertise. The committee had an in-depth discussion and made recommendations to assist in this process moving forward.

The committee was informed of the nominations website and that it would be the vehicle used to capture candidate information and that it would be used ultimately to keep information confidential. This platform was used to collect candidate information and to communicate with potential candidates if necessary.

The committee discussed how to proceed with our charge, and to leverage our professional affiliations and best utilize our networks to develop a broad representation of the association with special considerations for representation from national and state library organizations, interest groups, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and breadth of experience. We decided to have a series of campaigns to reach as many members of our great organization as possible. We decided on reaching out to all previous potential candidates listed in the manual and to provide updates on our progress. At the same time, we sent out emails to various groups and affiliations to which we belong to see if any member wanted to become active in the leadership of our organization.

Special note, Patricia Smith was originally a member of this committee, and close to the deadline of submissions, she recused her committee position and at the encouragement of colleagues, she officially submitted her name and information for the position of President-elect. The committee gave her words of well wishes and immediately changed the password of the website and removed her access from all information dealing with the work of the committee.

Work of the Committee

After our initial Midwinter meeting, the committee met at least monthly, and used Zoom as our Virtual Meeting location. These meetings were set up from our support during the third Wednesday of each month between March and June using Zoom. Virtual meetings were coordinated by the ALA Governance Office.

During our first virtual meeting on March 20, 2019, our pre-work included reviewing the manual and providing updates on contacts of potential candidates for President-Elect and Councilor-at-Large. We understood our task and wanted to ensure that we used the traits for each position were our guidepost for selections.

We then divided the lists of potential nominees listed in the committee manual based on our individual relationships or professional affiliations we might have with them. We divvied up those with whom we did not have a relationship to personally contact and gauge their interest in leadership positions. As we made contacts, we updated the lists based on the nominees' interest in serving now, in the future, or not at all. These lists were very useful in our work and the Committee encourages continued maintenance and use of these lists.

The April meeting was focused on reviewing our progress and discussing how best to publicize the nomination process, which opened on April 11. We discussed the importance of utilizing different communication modes including social media. Sheryl was asked to reach out to ALA Marketing who developed excellent high-quality graphics. These were made available in June and were used by the committee members and also included on ALA's website. Many members commented that the call for nominations that included these graphics were eye-catching and well done. They were included in *Cognotes* during our Annual Convention.

Our next meeting was in-person at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington. In the interim we continued to make contact with potential President-elect and Councilor-at-Large nominees from the lists and reviewing those individuals who had completed the candidate forms in the ALA Nominations System. In addition, Sheryl kept us apprised as individuals completed their forms.

At Annual Conference we had two (2) President-elect nominations to review and only seventeen (17) nominees for Councilor-at-Large. The nomination process was scheduled to close on July 10 and the committee voted to extend the deadline to July 31, 2019. Throughout this time we reached out to interested Councilor-at-Large nominees who had begun but not completed their nomination forms. The committee then reviewed the nominees that we had received to date and agreed to continue seeking nominations.

The committee was in search of a way to dive deeper into knowing a bit more about the President-elect candidates than what was provided in the biographical form. With guidance from previous chairs of this committee, several options were discussed, and a short video discussing the Traits and Attributes of President-elect candidates, section 8a in the manual, and issues the organization will be faced in the coming years, section 6 in the manual, was agreed upon. Once the nomination window closed, we informed President-elect candidates that completed their application of this option., indicating that it was an option, and not a requirement. As the face of our organization, it would not be uncommon for a media outlet to request an interview with our President on a current topic. There was a two-week turn around period for video submissions, with a deadline date of August 21, 2019. The video submissions were to be mailed to the nomination email list, so committee members would receive them at the same time. Video submissions were made; however, the nomination mailbox did not forward the submissions to the committee. We reached out to confirm their submission packet and were informed that eight (8) of the nine (9) candidates completed the video submission. We reached out to them and requested that the video be sent to the chair. The chair then disseminated the videos to the committee.

A secure spreadsheet was created using GoogleSheets for the President-elect position and was shared with the committee. All submission packets were reviewed and rated individually, then the committee had an in-depth discussion and debate on the top five (5) candidates.

The committee reviewed the candidates for Council and decided unless we were aware of an egregious offense against the traits and qualification of a member of Council, all completed applications would be placed before the membership to vote upon. In mid-September both President-elect nominees accepted their candidacy and the individuals who will be running for council were also notified of their candidacy.

Here is a profile of the final slate of candidates:

Type of Library	2020 (66 candidates)	2019 (75 candidates)
Academic Libraries	37	37
Public Libraries	24	21
School Libraries	3	6
Other (special, government, trustees, etc.)	2	11
Geographic Distribution	2020	2019
Northeast	30	24
Southeast	16	19
Midwest	10	17
West	9	15

Observations and Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for future consideration:

- Continue to refine and utilize the ALA Nominating Committee manual
- Develop a strategic marketing plan to help foster greater participation of membership in the nominating/elections process
- Utilize the ALA marketing materials developed (Appendix B) or request new ones be developed
- Work with AASL and chapters to encourage more school librarians to run for office
- Consider including a video submission portion for President-elect nominations
- Share an electronic version of the ALA Nominating Committee manual
- Add features to the Nominating web site that include:
 - Timestamp
 - Ability to delete blank submissions
 - Download in editable format

The Nominating Committee for the 2020 election was a very effective and thoughtful group of professionals. All worked collaboratively to develop a slate of qualified candidates to stand for the 2020 ALA Election for President-elect, and Councilor-at-Large. We wish to thank Wanda Brown, ALA President, for bringing this diverse array of ALA membership together for this once in a lifetime opportunity to serve in this important capacity. We also wish to share our deep gratitude for the hard work and support of JoAnne Kempf, Sheryl Reyes, and Marsha Burgess and thank them for their knowledge, and responsiveness to the needs of this committee.