

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION
REPORT TO COUNCIL
Midwinter Meetings - Philadelphia, PA

The ALA Committee on Organization (COO) participated in three conference call meetings between the Annual Conference and Midwinter: September 26, December 2 and January 3. COO had two scheduled meetings at Midwinter: January 25 and January 26.

This report summarizes the key outcomes from these meetings.

1. Under the leadership of Paolo Gujilde, a revised COO Action Request Form was developed and was then approved by COO. The new ARF is attached. The goals of the change were to streamline the requested information, the make clear the recommended change, and to gather information on the how ALA groups are supporting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
2. Under the leadership of a work group chaired by Kim Copenhaver, COO reviewed the ALA Committee Information Update process. There has been a continuing decline in the number of committees submitting reports, and many committees are meeting and working increasingly outside Midwinter and Annual schedules. The report of the work group and the revised form are attached. Reports will be required to be deposited to the committee's ALA Connect space within one-month of the conclusion of the ALA Annual Conference.
3. The ALA Executive Board reviewed the SCOE report Forward Together at its Fall 2019 meeting. The COO was charged with the following: to review and analyze the proposed changes in Forward Together in the context of ALA structure and organization. To determine what groups might be affected by the recommendations and assess how and when changes might be phased into the ALA structure. To provide an update to the ALA Executive Board by its spring 2020 meeting. COO has reviewed the Forward Together SCOE report and outlined a process to proceed with this charge. COO has also met with the Constitution and By-Laws Committee to talk about coordinating our work.
4. In light of this charge, COO considered its work over the next year, and agreed to issue the following statement:

The Committee on Organization has been charged by the ALA Executive Board to review and analyze the proposed changes in ALA structure and organization as presented in the report of the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE). Therefore, given the prospect of various organization changes over the next several years, we propose a moratorium on housekeeping and other small changes that might be forwarded to COO through the 2020 Annual Conference. This would not apply to important and strategic changes that might be presented.

5. COO met with Kerry Ward to discuss the continuing work by ALCTS, LITA, and LLAMA to form a new division: Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures. The goals of this work and the timeline for prospective implementation was reviewed.

6. COO received and discussed the following proposal: Recommend that the Council Forum be made an official subcommittee of the ALA Orientation Committee. The Orientation Committee would provide education about the parameters of Forum, give sustainable facilitation and provide oversight.

The full Action Request Form is attached.

COO endorses this change and moves approval by Council.

COMMITTEE CHARGE: To advise and assist regarding structural and organizational concerns in ALA. To recommend to council the establishment or discontinuance of divisions, round tables, membership initiative groups, ALA committees, assemblies and joint committees, as the needs of the association may require. To define the functions of these units, subject to the approval of council. To recommend to council the establishment, including the name and size, of other standing committees to consider matters of the association that require continuity of attention by the members. To recommend to executive board the appropriate unit to appoint official representatives to outside organizations. To receive notification of the formation of interdivisional committees.

Committee Members (2020-2021)

James G. Neal, Chair
Latrice Booker
Matthew P. Ciszek
Kim Copenhaver
Megan Drake
Selina Gomez-Beloz
Paolo P. Gujilde
Michelle Hahn
Lucy B. Holman
Kevin Reynolds
Dr. Jules Shore
William E. Sudduth, III
Jeffery Sundquist
Adam Chang, Intern
Dr. Dee Anna Phares, Committee Associate

Attachments:

COO Action Request Form (revised)
Committee Information Update (report and revised form) Appendix A
COO Action Request Form and Report on Council Forum

**Committee On Organization
Action Request Form**

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Re:

Action Request (See types of requests in COO Guidelines; Note: Informational only requests does not need COO approval, however, action request form is needed for documentation):

- Establish (e.g. *new MIG*) Discontinue (e.g. *end of MIG*) Renew (e.g. *renewal of MIG*)
- Name Change (e.g. *changing name of Round Table*; Note: Informational Only)
- Define/Change/Clarify (e.g. *function, committee structure, etc.*)
- Request to Move (e.g. *moving from MIG to Round Table*)

Committee/Units Affected/Contact Name/Email:

Background: Provide any background information on program/issue under consideration, including why is this action necessary.

Proposal: Provide detailed information on proposed action requested.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Provide brief information on how your group, including this proposed action supports ALA's values on EDI (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity>).

Submit form and accompanying document(s) to: Marsha P. Burgess (mburgess@ala.org) and Sheryl Reyes (sreyes@ala.org), ALA COO Staff Liaison

**Committee On Organization
Action Request Form**

Date: 1/21/2020

Re: Council Forum moving under the oversight of the Orientation Committee

Action Request (See types of requests in COO Guidelines; Note: Informational only requests does not need COO approval, however, action request form is needed for documentation):

- Establish (e.g. *new MIG*) Discontinue (e.g. *end of MIG*) Renew (e.g. *renewal of MIG*)
- Name Change (e.g. *changing name of Round Table*; Note: Informational Only)
- Define/Change/Clarify (e.g. *function, committee structure, etc.*)
- Request to Move (e.g. *moving from MIG to Round Table*)

Committee/Units Affected/Contact Name/Email:

- Council Forum/Susan Jennings/Susan.Jennings@Chattanoogastate.edu
- Orientation Committee/Rodney Lippard/RodneyL@usca.edu

Background: Provide any background information on program/issue under consideration, including why is this action necessary.

After the 2019 Midwinter Meeting in Seattle in which there was an unfortunate occurrence during Council Forum, President Loida Garcia-Febo appointed a working group to look at the viability and continuation of ALA Council's unofficial forum Meetings. Council forum grew as an organic offshoot of official Council proceedings. This informal gathering offers the opportunity for Councilors to ask questions about parliamentary procedure and for more information on issues brought before council. This gathering was initiated to "save the time" of council meetings in order to effectively expedite ALA business. While a great idea, this arrangement built barriers to those unable to attend these meetings. And, as in the case of the 2019 Midwinter incident, Council Forum proved to be an unsafe space for Councilors.

The Council Forum Working Group (CFWG) asked, "In this era of electronically disseminating documents, resolutions, and the like, and the immediate feedback that can be provided by this type of communication, we wonder 'Has council forum outlived its usefulness?'" If the answer to this question is "no," what will we do instead? How do we fulfill the needs of councilors who want to get more information and have more fluid discussions with other councilors without the structure of Robert's Rules of Order?

Questions We Considered:

What goal does it serve for council?

Are there other means to serve this purpose and achieve these goals?

Is it “too organic” as an unofficial meeting of council with no rules of decorum or communication structures in place?

Throughout the process, the CFWG was committed to focus on Openness, Inclusivity, Safety, and promoting full and equal participation.

Proposal: Provide detailed information on proposed action requested.

Since the report given at ALA Annual Conference 2019 (CD #44), The Council Forum Working Group (CFWG) analyzed the results from an open survey conducted with Councilors. The survey was opened on May 15, 2019 and closed on May 25, 2019. Ninety-five councilors responded to the survey. The following recommendations are a result of the survey analysis by the working group and input from ALA Councilors through the open-ended questions in the survey.

Recommendations: We recommend that Council Forum be made an official subcommittee of the ALA Orientation Committee. The Orientation Committee would provide education about the parameters of Forum, give sustainable facilitation, and provide oversight.

The CFWG makes the following recommendations as to the establishment of this subcommittee:

1. Guidelines and procedures for Council Forum discussions, moderation, and decorum should be clearly defined. This should include a clear outline of the scope of Forum’s purview (e.g. Why it exists, what it can and cannot address).
2. All Councilors should be informed of discussion topics for upcoming fora. Essence notes should be recorded and disseminated.
3. Council Forum should be scheduled to meet the needs of Councilors and should not be planned for times that would conflict with key events.
4. At least one executive board member should be in attendance for each Council Forum.
5. Council Forum should be held in a room that provides accessibility, comfort, and a convenient location.
6. Opportunities for online forums between conferences should be offered and optionally use online forum for in-service training and development for all councilors. (e.g. Deetta Jones)
7. Ensure Council itself is less intimidating by providing sufficient training, mentoring, onboarding, socializing opportunities and team building activities.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Provide brief information on how your group, including this proposed action supports ALA’s values on EDI (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity>).

By providing oversight to what has been deemed a valuable tool to Council, the Orientation Committee can provide the structure that Council Forum sorely needs. This proposal provides:

- oversight to ensure that all voices are heard equally and without prejudice in a safe, open environment,
- trained facilitators to ensure that all voices are heard,

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- interpreters/sound equipment/captioning to provide equal access to those that have hearing challenges, and,
- notes to be disseminated to those that cannot attend.

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