

TO: ALA Council

RE:

- ACTION REQUESTED**
- INFORMATION**
- REPORT**

ACTION REQUESTED BY: *(if no action, please leave blank)*

CONTACT PERSON: Erin Barnthouse

STAFF LIAISON CONTACT: Heather Cho

DATE:
November 24, 2020

BACKGROUND:
Minutes of the Public Awareness Committee meeting held on August 25, 2020

Public Awareness Committee

Tuesday, August 25, 2020, 12-1 p.m. CT, via Zoom
Minutes

Attending members: Erin Barnthouse, chair; Milagros Maria Andrada-Tañega; Steve Black; Stephanie R. Freas; Dr. Michael Gutierrez; Katilyn Marie Miller; William Daniel Martino; Lauren Read; Lamonica Sanford; Elizabeth Thompson. **Staff:** Stephanie Hlywak, Heather Cho.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The committee approved the agenda for the meeting. The committee also approved the minutes from the Public Awareness Committee meeting at Midwinter 2020 in Philadelphia.

Discussion of Next Committee Meeting in 2021

The committee talked about scheduling a meeting during ALA's next Midwinter Meeting or sometime in early February. Staff will send a Doodle poll to the committee with some possible dates/times.

Reports from Public Awareness, Media Relations and Social Media

Members reviewed the written reports in advance of the meeting and there were a couple of questions:

- The circulation rate and the number of impressions both try to measure how many eyes have seen the content. It's not easy to compare the two because their formulas are different but the numbers are good to know and something staff should track.
- Celebrities are usually very supportive of libraries, so it isn't difficult for ALA to convince them to record video PSAs. Staff helps to draft the scripts and produce the PSAs. The PSAs are offered to libraries to use on their websites and social media as well as with local media. ALA is continually looking for ways to distribute and promote the PSAs to the public.

The reports also led to a few discussions:

- It was mentioned that some libraries are using Libraries Transform and that library staff like the customizable aspect of the materials such as being able to add statistics or quotes. Libraries have the option to choose whichever tools work for their communities and decide not to use others. Libraries help ALA push out messages through their communication channels. The Libraries Transform program has been extended through August 2021.
- When the pandemic struck in March, staff had to pivot National Library Week from its original campaign and instead focus on digital and virtual resources since many libraries had closed their physical buildings. It was important to show libraries being nimble and continuing to meet the needs of their communities during a crisis.
- The topic of Free Little Libraries was brought up, more as a philosophical question about what it means to be a library. The program does not have any affiliation or connection to ALA.

Discussion of National Library Week 2021

Ideas for possible themes were brought up including Libraries Respond and Libraries Lead. The

committee hopes the theme will help showcase how adaptable libraries have been during the pandemic as well as highlight digital content. The committee also discussed the importance of telling stories about the role libraries are playing in keeping their communities healthy and safe such as using makerspaces to create face shields for hospital workers or helping with contact tracing. It was mentioned that a library in Ohio used the tagline “This is Your Library” and it was very popular because it could be tailored with different images such as a tablet or cell phone. Everyone liked the idea of being able to customize artwork. Staff said they will work with ALA Graphics on any ideas for a poster and theme.

Discussion of Dates for National Library Week 2024

Members discussed the possible effects any holidays like Easter and Passover would have on potential dates. Other events including the Total Solar Eclipse, Earth Day and Tax Day were also brought up. It was noted that academic libraries would most likely prefer the week to be early in the month. The committee approved the dates of April 7-13, 2024 for National Library Week. It was mentioned that National Library Week 2021 would start on Sunday, April 4, which is Easter.

Meeting adjourned at 12:46 p.m. CT