

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Report of the Nominating Committee for the 2019 ALA Election

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

For information purposes; no action required

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Alexandra Rivera, Chair, Nominating Committee for the 2019 ALA Election
Jason K. Alston
Melissa Cardenas-Dow
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DATE: October 18, 2018

Executive Summary:

The Nominating Committee for the 2019 American Library Association Election completed its charge of developing a slate of candidates to stand for the positions of ALA President-elect, ALA Treasurer, and ALA Councilor at Large during the ALA 2019 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 and Treasurer were identified through the Committee's recruitment efforts that garnered self-nominations as well as one anonymous nomination. 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 for Treasurer were identified and both accepted the nomination. At the last minute one candidate withdrew and the Nominating Committee determined, in consultation with ALA parliamentarian Eli Mina, to stand only one candidate for Treasurer. The 2019 Nominating Committee is honored to put forward a final slate of highly qualified candidates comprised of two (2) candidates for ALA President-elect and one (1) candidate for Treasurer and seventy-two (72) Councilor-at-Large candidates (51 needed).

Background:

The committee began its work on February 10, 2018 in Denver at the ALA Midwinter meeting. We were joined by Michelle Jeske, Chair, Nominating Committee for the 2018 ALA Election who provided a general overview of the process the 2018 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 she developed. The committee had an in-depth discussion and made several recommendations to update the manual.

The committee consulted on the best way to undertake our work and maintain confidentiality in light of the fact that ALA Connect was in the process of an upgrade. We chose to use Google applications for our work and Drop Box to house any confidential materials with an understanding that all files will be moved/archived in ALA Connect once available.

The committee discussed how to proceed with our work 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 set up a process to contact all potential candidates listed in the manual and to provide updates on our progress.

Work of the Committee

The committee met the last Monday of each month between March and July using Zoom. Virtual meetings were coordinated by JoAnne Kempf. During our first virtual meeting on March 26, 2018, we reviewed the attributes for President-Elect, Treasurer, and Councilor-at-Large to ensure these traits were foremost in our minds as we made contact with potential nominees. Based on past experience, the committee chose to focus first on seeking nominations for the President-elect and Treasurer. 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 divided up those few with whom we did not have a relationship. As we made contact 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 open nomination process, which opened on April 11. We discussed the importance of utilizing different communication modes including social media. JoAnne was asked to reach out to ALA Marketing who developed excellent high quality graphics. These were made available in May 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.

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

By Annual we had a number of President-elect nominations to review but only one (1) completed Treasurer nomination form and only seventeen (17) nominees for Councilor-at Large. The nominations process was scheduled to close on July 11 and the committee voted to extend the deadline to August 3, 2018. In the interim JoAnne kindly offered to reach 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. Alex offered to develop a feedback form based on the defined attributes defined in the Nominating Committee Manual. The form was created using GoogleForms for the President and Treasurer positions and was shared with the committee on July 28. The committee reviewed and refined the feedback form at the July 30 virtual meeting. Also, JoAnne shared that we had 47 Councilor-at-Large candidates. The committee felt confident that we would have the required 51 nominees by the closing deadline. We agreed that we would not eliminate any candidates but instead permit all nominees to stand for election. We scheduled our final meeting for August 9, 2018 and agreed to complete the nomination feedback forms by August 6, 2018 to provide Alex time to create the reports for our final discussion/decision.

Our August 9 meeting was spent reviewing the reports and robustly deliberating before making our final decisions as to whom to stand as candidates for the President-elect and Treasurer.

On August 10 both President-elect nominees had accepted their candidacy as had one of the Treasurer nominees. The second Treasurer nominee had requested time to consult with additional individuals before giving their final decision. Their final decision came on August 16; however, the second Treasurer nominee withdrew their name from consideration.

The Nominating Committee was contacted immediately; we discussed the option of re-opening the nomination process which had closed three weeks earlier or to stand just one candidate for Treasurer. After an in in-depth discuss and in consultation with Eli Mina, ALA Parliamentarian, the committee determined that it would stand one candidate for Treasurer since there is always the opportunity for others to run by petition.

Here is a profile of the final slate of candidates:

Note: In past reports a gender breakdown was provided based on a binary gender understanding of the candidates. Because this data was not reported and in respect for those who do not conform to a binary construct of gender, this breakdown is not provided for this report.

Type of Library	2019 (75 candidates)	2018 (62 candidates)
Academic Libraries	37	15
Public Libraries	21	21
School Libraries	6	10
Other (special, government, trustees, etc.)	11	16

Geographic Distribution	2019	2018
Northeast	24	13
Southeast	19	20
Midwest	17	17
West	15	12

Observations and Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for future consideration:

- Continue to refine and utilize the ALA Nominating Committee manual
- Strongly emphasize the importance of confidentiality to the nominees to help ensure adherence to the clearly defined nominating/election process
- 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
- Consider undertaking an assessment of representation in our governance structure to ensure that we are truly including the broadest array of membership in our leadership ranks
- Develop a transparent succession plan to foster leaders from across the organization to actively participate within the Association's governance structure
- Work with AASL and chapters to encourage more school librarians to run for office
- Assess and address possible structural barriers (fiscal, organizational support, scheduling, etc.) to memberships' service in our governance structure.

The Nominating Committee for the 2019 election was a very effective and thoughtful group of professionals. All worked collaboratively to develop a slate of qualified candidates to stand for the 2019 ALA Election for President-elect, Treasurer, and Councilor-at-Large. We wish to thank Loida Garcia-Febo, 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 and thank her for her knowledge, humor, grace, and responsiveness to the needs of this committee.