Guidelines for Preparation of Resolutions for Hybrid Council Meetings

The following guidelines are addressed to individuals and units preparing resolutions to come before the Council.

The ALA Policy Manual A.4.2.3 states: "A resolution is a main motion, phrased formally with (a) Whereas clauses, stating the background and reasons for a proposed policy, advocacy position, or action, followed by (b) Resolved clauses in numbered order (stating the proposed policy, advocacy position, or action)."

CONTENT:

1. A resolution must be completed so that, upon passage, it becomes a clear and formal expression of the opinion or will of the assembly.

2. Resolutions including memorials, tributes, and testimonials, must show the initiating unit, mover, and seconder and provide specific contact information from submitting parties. A resolution without a sponsor will not be presented.

3. The resolution should address a specific topic or issue, use concise direct language, conform to proper grammar, and present an affirmative identifiable action.

4. The terms used in a resolution should be readily understandable or have specific definitions.

5. The intent, objective, or goal of a resolution should be clear, purposeful, and present an affirmative identifiable action in language that is concise, unambiguous, and complete.

6. Resolutions should address a specific topic or issue and clearly support ALA's Strategic Plan, its mission, and/or core values.

7. All WHEREAS clauses that relate to an ALA policy must include a parenthetical notation of the title of the policy and the section where it can be found in the ALA Policy Manual.

8. If the resolution calls for specific action or program with a timetable, the timetable shall be clear and achievable.

9. Resolved clauses at the end of a resolution gain clarity, brevity, and are easier to read by following the resolution methodology of Congress and other deliberative bodies. The suggested wording states the resolved phrase only once: "now, therefore, be it; Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members: …" after which each separate resolved is stated directly in numbered order.

10. All Resolved clauses within a resolution should use the singular present indicative form of the verb (e.g., "Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members: (1) supports…; (2) provides…; and (3) [last resolved] urges…"). Here the singular present indicatives 'supports', 'provides', and 'urges' are used.

11. All whereas clauses must be a complete sentence followed by a semicolon, the penultimate clause receives a semicolon followed by 'and,' while the semicolon in the last clause is followed by the phrase 'now therefore be it'.

12. Whereas clauses may not contain active links or URLs to cited information such as articles or web pages. However, a numerical footnote designation may be included in a Whereas clause, and a corresponding References list may be added after the mover and seconder information toward the bottom of the document.

The deadline for submitting resolutions for virtual meetings is 48 hours prior to the calling to order of a virtual Council meeting. If there are fewer than 48 hours between the adjournment of a Council meeting and the calling to order of the subsequent meeting(s), resolutions may be submitted within 90 minutes following adjournment of Council I or II.

PROCESS:

1. All Council members are urged to submit a resolution or resolutions for consideration at virtual or in-person Council meetings. resolutions must be sent to the ALA Resolutions Committee for review and must be accompanied by a completed ALA Resolution E-Form: http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/resolutionwebform

Before completing the Resolution E-Form, please be sure to:

a) Log in with your ALA membership. This will enable you to upload a file to the form without problems.
b) Fill in the date, your name and email address, and the title of the resolution (item 1) and attach your MS Word document (item 1a), then continue and fill in the additional form fields before submitting the Resolution. Please take care to fill in all form fields as this background information indicating endorsements, potential impact of the resolution, and its intended audience is very important to the Resolutions Committee.

2. Councilors are strongly encouraged to submit draft resolution ideas to the ALA Council Community in ALA Connect to inform the body of upcoming resolutions and to solicit feedback.

3. A resolution which has fiscal implications must be submitted to the Executive Director Dan Montgomery dmontgomery@ala.org and the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC chair, Ed Garcia edlibrary401@gmail.com from the Resolutions Committee at least (1) week before it is to be considered by Council. Committee resolutions with fiscal implications must also be submitted in advance to the Executive Director and to BARC. BARC will report to Council on the fiscal implications in accordance with ALA Policy A.4.2.2.

4. ALA & Council Standing Committees are not required to submit their resolutions to the Resolutions Committee. Typically, resolutions from these bodies are included in their committee reports before Council as Action Items. However, they are encouraged to follow the form and content guidelines and share their resolutions with Council in advance via ALA Connect and during the Virtual Council forum so that members can thoughtfully engage in discussion on the virtual Council floor.

5. Memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials must be submitted by either a voting member of Council or an ALA Committee chair and are submitted to the Resolutions Committee but are not reviewed by the Committee unless requested.

They are presented to Council at the beginning of the final Council session:

a) If copies are to be sent to other parties, the maker of the resolution shall provide names and addresses.
b) At the virtual or in-person Council session, the presiding officer will read the names of persons/organizations recognized by a formal resolution while the names are displayed. Copies of each resolution will be available on the Council web page.
c) American Libraries will carry an annual memorial page listing those members who have died since the preparation of the previous Conference Program.

Samples of memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials can be found here:
http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/resolution_guidelines

6. The Executive Director shall disseminate all adopted resolutions to identify and pertinent parties. Dissemination should occur as soon as possible and not to exceed one month without explanation by the Executive Director to Council.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN AMENDMENT TO A RESOLUTION DURING A VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEETING

To suggest an amendment for a resolution on the floor, use the online form found at:
http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/motionwebform

Appendix

Sample Resolution

May 2023

RESOLUTION ON MONETARY LIBRARY FINES AS A FORM OF SOCIAL INEQUITY

Whereas the first policy objective listed in ALA Policy B.8.10 (Library Services to the Poor) as approved by ALA Council on January 27, 2019, states that the American Library Association shall implement these objectives by "Promoting the removal of barriers to library and information services, particularly fees, and overdue charges";

Whereas ALA Policy B.4.2 (Free Access to Information) "asserts that the charging of fees and levies for information services, including those services utilizing the latest information technology, is discriminatory in publicly supported institutions providing library and information services";

Whereas in Economic Barriers to Information Access, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, ALA states "All library policies and procedures, particularly those involving fines, fees, or other user charges, should be scrutinized for potential barriers to access"; and

Whereas monetary fines ultimately do not serve the core mission of the modern library; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members

1. adds a statement to the Policy Manual that establishes that "The American Library Association asserts that imposition of monetary library fines creates a barrier to the provision of library and information services";
2. urges libraries to scrutinize their practices of imposing fines on library patrons and actively move towards eliminating them; and
3. urges governing bodies of libraries to strengthen funding support for libraries, so they are not dependent on monetary fines as a necessary source of revenue.

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Seconder: Rex Libris, Councilor At-Large, rlibris@resolutions.org