

**Date:** October 12, 2022

**Prepared by:** ALA Staff including Conference Services, Executive Office, Governance and Membership in consultation with the ALA Parliamentarian.

**Council Refers to BARC:** ALA CD#59 Resolution on Continuing Virtual Access to ALA Membership Meetings

On Saturday, June 25, 2022, the ALA Council *REFERRED TO BARC*, the Resolution on Continuing Virtual Access to ALA Membership Meetings

*RESOLVED*, that the American Library Association on behalf of its members

shall provide virtual access to all Membership Meetings for ALA members, mirroring access provided for in-person attendees.

### **Membership Meeting Background:**

In recent history, ALA has offered both a Virtual Membership Meeting (VMM) and an in-person Membership Meeting. The in-person meeting is held in conjunction with Annual Conference per ALA Bylaws Article II.4. In 2022, ALA held its [Virtual Membership Meeting](#) on March 17, 2022 and the in person [Membership Meeting](#) on June 25, 2022. The VMM was initiated to engage with members not attending Annual Conference.

The Membership Meeting has two primary components - ALA updates and member resolutions. Members have four rights and privileges as part of this meeting:

- Right to Attend
- Right to Participate
- Right to Make a Motion
- Right to Vote

ALA defines any rules or processes to uphold these rights of our members. Currently, there are two Committees who support the Membership Meeting:

- The ALA Membership Committee plans and promotes the meeting;
- The ALA Resolutions Committee outlines the policies and timeline for the member resolution process.

### **Virtual Participation in ALA Membership Meeting:**

Virtual participation in the ALA Membership Meeting can occur either through 1.) a completely virtual meeting, like the current VMM or 2.) a hybrid experience in conjunction with the ALA Annual Conference.

The resources for each approach are different but both would use a voting tool.

1. *Completely Virtual* – All participants will join via Zoom and voting will be centralized in one place.
2. *Hybrid Experience* – In person opportunity for Annual Conference registrants with virtual participation online. Virtual participants will join via Zoom, following the model used for Council, and voting will be centralized in one place. Assuming that ALA Council is a hybrid experience, and that the Membership Meeting occurs in the same room as Council, there are no anticipated additional meeting costs per se; however, there will be additional staff and AV resources required to support the virtual participants.

## *Voting Tool*

The most complex element of virtual participation is voting. A real time voting tool will be required for both scenarios. These tools require pre-registration, validation of the eligibility to vote, training for members and tech support during the event. While additional research will be needed to confirm the ideal solution, one estimate from Election Buddy is \$1,197.

## *Staff Resources*

In addition to the financial expense, there will be significant staff time required to support virtual voting which will be:

- Member will need to pre-register for the event (no walk ins allowed)
- Staff will need to validate membership for all registrants
- Validated membership emails will be uploaded to software to receive voting credentials
- Training will be provided to members on how to vote
- Troubleshooting during membership meeting to get members voting credentials

The Governance Office currently uses a similar process for Council for more than 180 Councilors and based on past member attendance numbers from all member invited programs, we estimate approximately 2,000 members to attend the Membership Meeting and potentially up to 5,000. We estimate 10 staff may be required to troubleshoot and provide support.

## **Additional Considerations:**

- How many Membership Meetings should ALA hold? ALA currently holds a total of two: one (1) all Virtual Membership Meeting and one (1) in person Membership Meeting during Annual Conference. If we offered a hybrid option, should we migrate to only one Membership Meeting annually?
- If no resolutions are submitted, then the cost of staff resources and the voting tool would be an unused expense.
- Do the financial implications balance the return on investment?
- The time of the Membership Meeting during Annual Conference may need to be reconsidered since typically the meeting is at 10am on Saturday morning, a time not as conducive for virtual attendees.
- The amount of resource allocation will have a direct impact on the meeting environment; in both scenarios additional staffing and technological support will be necessary to deliver the best association and member experience. Given the many demands on current staffing at ALA Annual Conference, the added needs of a hybrid experience would require additional support.