

**TO:** ALA Executive Board

**SUBJECT:** ALA Membership Meeting Recommendation and Hybrid Membership Meeting Rules

**BOARD REQUEST:** Board Action

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

Miranda Bennett, Chair, ALA Membership Committee

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Melissa Walling, Staff Liaison, ALA Membership Committee, mwalling@ala.org

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

To convene one annual hybrid Membership Meeting at Annual Conference dedicated to ALA reports and resolutions and guided by the rules and guidelines for the ALA hybrid Membership Meeting. ALA to also convene at least one virtual ALA Connect Live event to showcase the work of the association and tackle hot topics.

**DATE:** March 24, 2023

**BACKGROUND:**

**TAG Recommendation:** On Saturday, June 25, 2022 the ALA Council APPROVED, as amended, ALA CD#36, the Transforming ALA Governance (TAG)

6. Direct, the ALA Executive Board and the ALA Membership Committee to consider and recommend ways to make the ALA Membership meetings more meaningful and relevant to all members of the ALA including a mechanism for recommending the issues presented by membership be discussed by Council in an effective manner.

**Recommendation:**

Recommendation on the ALA Membership Meeting:

- ALA to convene one annual hybrid Membership Meeting at Annual Conference dedicated to ALA reports and resolutions.
  - The Membership Meeting is an opportunity for members interested in ALA policy making and governance to engage in the direction setting of the association through the resolution process.
  - The resolution process is the mechanism for membership to recommend issues to be discussed by Council.
- ALA to host one virtual ALA Connect Live event to showcase the work of the association and tackle hot topics to the profession.
  - This ALA Connect Live program is an opportunity for all members to convene around issues important to the profession and demonstrate the value of ALA to the profession.
  - The timing of this event can be flexible based on the needs of our members and the association calendar. The 2023 program should be held in the Fall to promote the opportunities for ALA volunteerism and introduce the ALA President to the membership earlier in their term.

- ALA Presidents can host multiple ALA Connect Live events during their presidential year.

**Potential Idea for Increasing Member Engagement Beyond the Membership Meeting:**

ALA Connect, ALA’s online membership community, is another tool for ongoing membership engagement and conversation.

- ALA leaders can proactively post the reports given at governance meetings to invite discussion and questions from all members.
- ALA can deploy elements such as Ask Me Anything Sessions – An “Ask Me Anything,” would give members the opportunity to ask questions and learn from a fellow community member or applicable staff or library field expert.
- ALA can seed specific topics for discussion and deliberation in the ALA Member Community to create a platform for discussion and dialogue.

**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. The VMM was initiated in 2013 to engage members not attending Annual Conference.

The Membership Meeting has two primary components - ALA updates and member resolutions. 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 timelines for the member resolution process.

The ALA Membership Committee (and previously the Committee on Membership Meetings) brainstorms hot topics or uses pulse survey to determine what agenda items are timely and relevant for members. However, the resolution process always takes precedent over other agenda items within the membership meeting. In recent history, agendas have had to be adjusted after the resolution deadline to reduce the time for these other content items or eliminate them completely from the agenda.

Since the inception of ALA’s transforming governance strategies, ALA has improved its year round virtual engagement with members through launching the ALA Connect Live series. This has operationalized year-round engagement with members outside of the once annual membership meeting which has minimized the importance of the standalone membership meeting as the opportunity for members to connect with ALA leadership.

**Benchmarking: Association Landscape:**

Most associations do not hold a distinct membership meeting at their conference. Membership meetings are typically incorporated into the opening general sessions of the Annual Conference or done via zoom prior to the Annual conference. Most associations also do not allow for member resolutions, which is an additional complexity for ALA. ALA’s parliamentary works with only two other clients who allow for member resolutions and they are smaller and less complex.

If we are prioritizing member engagement, association benchmarking shows us that the top ways to increase engagement are through increasing online opportunities for discussion and idea sharing and increasing email communications to members about topics of relevance.

**Historical Registration Data:**

Virtual Membership Meeting	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Attendance										
Registrants	1117	791	1036	853	696	594	610	637	518	720

*Attendance is not tracked at our in-person membership meetings*

**Informative Highlights from the Evaluation Surveys**

**VMM 22** - "I really enjoyed the section of the membership meeting dealing book banning and challenges to intellectual freedom. I hope there are more discussion on these topics in future membership meetings."

"I like that we were given the opportunity to vote on a resolution for ALA's support with student loan debt forgiveness! I'm happy it passed!!!"

"It is nice for the rank and file membership to be able to attend these meetings via Zoom."

"I'm a new member and enjoyed my first ALA Membership Meeting :)"

**VMM21** "Space for member participation and questions would have been helpful. Education around how members can utilize their time in the meeting through resolutions and other mechanisms should be encouraged."

"It would be great to have more membership participation - the reporting was good, but more opportunity for gathering member feedback and priorities would be great."

"While highly informative, the meeting lacked discussion that is specifically about why we should renew our memberships. As a middle-manager, I also want to take away something practical that I can share with my colleagues that will encourage them to join the ALA, or renew their ALA memberships. This meeting did not provide these practicalities, which could have been done at multiple times during the two hours."

"There needs to be more time for the membership to ask questions and get answers. ALA should be prepared to update members on all ongoing work. There's a lot of work going into restructuring and the membership should know about it."

**VMM20** "The membership informational session was great, but, because there were no resolutions, the membership meeting was just a duplication. Next time, maybe combine both into the membership meeting and leave enough time for questions? And also reconsider the deadline for member resolutions."

"I'm so glad to hear all the things that ALA is planning to ensure the future of ALA."

"We needed more time for the information session. There were questions relevant to the speakers' topics that went unanswered. (There were also general questions about employment and getting involved in ALA that were not relevant to the topics at hand, but that I hope will be answered by someone.)"

"I disengaged with ALA (let my membership lapse) for a time and have re-engaged. I attended this meeting to learn about governance."

## **RULES & GUIDELINES FOR ALA HYBRID MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

The following rules will be for adopted for the hybrid ALA Membership Meeting. When adopted these rules will govern the conduct of the meeting.

### **MEETING FOCUS & AGENDA**

- (1) With potentially more than 500 ALA Members in attendance, the logistical constraints will be substantial. The meeting must focus on action-oriented items to move the Association and the library profession forward.
- (2) Changes to the agenda are usually made by general consent, and the agenda is then voted by a voice vote.
- (3) Meeting time must be treated as a precious commodity, to ensure that time is logically allocated based on the significance of the issues at hand.
- (4) Housekeeping items such as announcements, updates, or items for informal consideration shall be considered permissible additions to the end of the final meeting's Agenda.
- (5) Meetings will be adjourned at the published time unless the membership, by unanimous consent or a majority voice vote, decides to continue the Meeting.

### **ATTENDANCE**

- (6) Zoom Webinar registration is required for all Members, both virtual and in-person. Registration is open to all members and is not limited to those registered for ALA Annual Conference.
- (7) Members who wish to exercise their right to vote, must register for the Zoom webinar 1 week prior to the calling of the meeting to order. In addition, voting credentials will need to be tested in advance and any access issues need to be submitted to [governance@ala.org](mailto:governance@ala.org) 48 prior to the calling of the meeting to order.

### **RECOGNITION**

- (8) The Presiding Officer/Moderator will recognize speakers.

- (9) **Virtual Participation**

Members who wish to ask a question or state a comment including a "Point of Order" shall use only one method, the "Question & Answer" box.

To verbally speak, please insert the request in the Q&A. For example: "I would like to speak pro", "I would like to speak against", "I would like to speak", etc.

Members will be virtually muted other than when recognized.

The chat space will be disabled with the exception for participants to chat directly with the host/panelist for technical assistance.

- (10) **In-person Participation**

A Member wishing to speak shall approach a microphone and await recognition by the presiding officer.

### **MOTIONS**

- (11) Secondary motions (such as amend, refer, etc.) must be submitted via this link:  
<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/motionwebform>

### **RESOLUTIONS**

- (12) Draft resolutions must be provided to the ALA Resolutions Committee ([alaresolutions@ala.org](mailto:alaresolutions@ala.org)) and Council Secretariat (Marsha Burgess [mburgess@ala.org](mailto:mburgess@ala.org)) at least 48-hours prior to the calling of the meeting to order. All final resolutions must be submitted 24-hours prior to the calling of the meeting to order. It is strongly encouraged that resolutions be submitted well in advance of the 24-hour deadline.
  - i. No resolutions shall be presented at the meeting that have not been received through the Resolutions Process.

- ii. Only the “Resolved” clauses of a resolution will be displayed and read.
- (13) A resolution which has fiscal implications must be submitted in advance to the Executive Director (Tracie Hall [thall@ala.org](mailto:thall@ala.org)), the ALA Governance Office ([governance@ala.org](mailto:governance@ala.org)) and the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC chair) from the Resolutions Committee at least (1) week before it is to be considered. BARC will report on the fiscal implications in accordance with ALA Policy A.4.2.2.

**DEBATE**

- (14) All efforts will be made to engage all Members and their insights in deliberations. Diverse discussion methods should be employed, to enable as many members as possible to participate. Deliberations must be at a high level.
- (15) In the interest of good time management, minor amendments that do not alter the intent of a proposal must be delegated to the ALA Executive Director for processing.
- (16) Each speaker will be allowed to speak up to one minute. No speaker shall have the floor a second time on the same question until all who wish to speak have spoken. Speakers will be recognized first in person, then virtually, in a cadence determined by the presiding officer that ensures fairness (for example: Microphone 1, Microphone 2, Virtual, Virtual – repeating).
- (17) Members may end debate on a motion or resolution after a reasonable amount of time. Once debate is closed, a vote will be taken on the motion or resolution.

**VOTES**

- (18) All votes will be conducted electronically via the voting link provided by the ALA Governance Office.
  - i. Members shall bring an electronic device to vote. Voting selections made following the close of that period will not be recorded. Votes will be tabulated based on the number of valid votes received.
  - ii. Members who want to exercise their right to vote, must Zoom register for the Membership Meeting 1 week prior to the calling of the meeting to order and validate their voting credentials 48 hours prior to the calling of the meeting to order. Limited support will be provided to those who have difficulty voting during the Membership Meeting due to resource constraints. Members who have not done this will forfeit their voting privileges for this meeting.
  - iii. Members should generally make its recommendations by consensus. If needed, parliamentary procedure can be employed to resolve differences of opinion by a majority vote.

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THESE RULES SHALL GOVERN. By general consent, if there be no objections, or by a two-thirds vote, any rule may be suspended.