ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE:  (including the 2014 Conference Program Coordinating Team)

This report covers activities in the ALA Conference Committee group on ALA Connect, at the 2014 Midwinter Meeting, and at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference

- On review of documents from ALA Conference Services, recommended two future sites for approval by the ALA Executive Board at their Fall 2013 meeting: San Antonio (Midwinter, 2022) and New Orleans (Midwinter 2023 and Annual 2027).
- Reviewed the draft Statement on Conference Conduct, proposed for use beginning Midwinter 2014. At Annual 2014, received staff feedback on use of the Statement.
- Received and reviewed survey results from the 2012 and 2013 ALA Annual Conference.
- Received and reviewed ALA Annual Conference – Background for Discussion (2013-2014 EBD #12.8), for subsequent committee discussion.
- Reviewed the proposed skeleton schedule for the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting and 2015 ALA Annual Conference, for approval by the ALA Executive Board during the 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting.
- Received updates from ALA staff on the 2014 Midwinter Meeting and 2014 ALA Annual Conference, including statistics, any outstanding issues, initial feedback on changes.
- Received an update from ALA staff on the (aborted) attempt to implement an integrated proposal-to-final-program system to eliminate costly and error-prone repetitive data entry at different stages. Use of “off-the-shelf” software is proposed; the initial implementation crashed ALA’s process complexity. Over the next six months, that process complexity will be addressed and a new RFP developed, with plans for implementation in time to support the 2016 Annual Conference program, beginning with initial proposals for jury selection in 2015. (Still in process as of AC2014.)
- Reviewed a list of potential Auditorium Series speakers and recommended preferred speakers to ALA Conference Services (2014 CPCT – on ALA Connect).
- Selected Conversation Starters and Ignite! sessions (January 2014 open call, following by public voting, then 2014 CPCT final selection). (2014 CPCT – on ALA Connect)
- Based on 2012 and 2013 survey results and other data, discussed future directions for ALA conferences. (ALA Conference Committee and 2014 CPCT)
  - Based on data reviewed, there was consensus that focus, simplification and increased clarity were desirable.
Considered limiting number of programs to be presented at AC; consider whether every subgroup MUST present a program as that is sometimes their only reason for being.

Considered holding some program slots for joint or collaborative programs that would be required to have 2 or more groups involved in planning and presentation.

Based on feedback, there must be attention to session times, session formats, session quality, alignment and timeliness.

A key objective should be an integrated conference experience.

ALA’s distinctive position is the “big tent,” crossing type-of-library, type-of-activity and special interest boundaries. There was extensive discussion on issues relating to both unified identify (“big ALA”) and individual group identity (division, round table, other group).

Specifically address the time-contention issue. One possibility would be to considered repeating high-demand sessions. (2014 CPCT)

Encourage collaboration in programming. (2014 CPCT)

Consider making video clips available in advance to encourage attendance and session participation. (2014 CPCT)

Require subject headings and tags. (2014 CPCT)

Build a “tag cloud” for each conference, as a way to illustrate focus. (2014 CPCT)

At the 2014 Annual Conference, reviewed a Council resolution on programs at the Midwinter Meeting, referred from the ALA Budget Analysis and Review Committee.

Reviewed a background document (MW Program Discussion – publicly posted on the committee’s ALA Connect site).

Invited Jennifer Boettcher (RUSA Councilor and proposer) to the meeting to clarify intent and to participate in the discussion.

Explored various options. Discussion indicated little support for any significant expansion of the Midwinter Meeting footprint, i.e., there is no desire for a second annual. The policy as it exists allows for “limited” programming, with authorization of the ALA Executive Board. That authority has, for instance, been utilized to add a limited number of “Auditorium” programs to Midwinter. The ALA Conference Committee will continue this discussion over the coming months, with the intent to respond to the ALA Budget Committee prior to their Fall 2014 Meeting, so that BARC can, in turn, respond to the ALA Council.

Related to the discussion of programming at Midwinter, there was a discussion of Discussion/Interest/Member Initiative Group content – at both Midwinter and Annual. Discussion focused on the tug become agility/currency and planning/communication. There was general consensus that the content provided by these groups is valuable, but still no consensus on an effective resolution to the question of how to best manage the conflict between agility/currency and planning/communication.
Next Meetings:

- Work will continue in ALA Connect (both ALA Conference Committee and the 2015 Conference Program Coordinating Team).
- The next scheduled face-to-face meetings will be at the 2015 Midwinter Meeting in Chicago.

**Face-to-face meeting participants (MW2014):**

ALA Conference Committee: Jan Sanders (chair), Walter Betts (Chapter Councilor), Sara Kelly Johns (Executive Board), Kawanna Bright (Round Table Coordinating Assembly), Therese Bigelow (At-Large), Mary Ghikas (staff), Marissa Kossakowski (staff), Jenny Levine (staff).

Barry Trott (CPCT, RUSA), Jeffrey Bowen (CPCT, LLAMA), Mary Hastler (CPCT, PLA and YALSA), Julie Kane (CPCT, ALCTS), Jason Kucsma (CPCT, ASCLA), Delora Shapiro (CPCT, LITA), Charles Kratz (CPCT, Round Tables), Jan Sanders (ALA Conference Committee), Mary Ghikas (staff), Marissa Kossakowski (staff).

**Face-to-face meeting participants (AC2014):**

ALA Conference Committee: Jan Sanders (chair); Walter Betts (Chapter Councilor/2014-2015 Chair); Kawanna Bright (RTCA); Willie Miller (Divisions), Aaron Dobbs (incoming member, Divisions); Jay Askuvich (ERT); Jennifer Boettcher (Councilor, invited guest); George Abbott (guest); Charles Wilt (ALA staff); Paul Graller (Manager, ALA Conference Services); Mary Ghikas (staff liaison).

CPCT participants: Ken Stewart (AASL, and incoming member of standing committee); Richard Kong (PLA); Julie Kane (ALCTS); Barry Trott (RUSA); Jeffrey Bowen (LLAMA); Pete Reehling (Round Tables); Debra Shapiro (LITA), Ruth Vondracek (ACRL); Nikki Winslow (Round Tables).