

Committee on Membership Meetings
Final Report, Annual Conference 2015

July 24, 2015

Charge: To plan the agenda for the membership meetings specified in ALA policy A.7.4.10; to identify potential discussion topics for the membership meetings; to educate the membership about the purposes of the membership meeting and the opportunities it offers members; to identify and recommend incentives for attendance; to advise staff on logistics for membership meetings; to oversee publicity plans for membership meetings; to assess the effectiveness of the membership meetings in addressing the ALA membership's needs; and to recommend changes in light of that assessment.

At the 2015 Annual Meeting in Chicago, the Committee on Membership Meetings met on Friday, June 26, 2015. The committee members present discussed a full agenda that included the following:

- De-briefing on the Virtual Membership Meeting held (VMM) on Wednesday, June 4, 2015. The 2015 VMM was distinguishable due to its shorter length (60 rather than 90 minutes), video streaming format, and for the first ever virtual presentation of a member resolution. ALA staff had shared with the committee the survey results from participants in the meeting. It was noted that registration and attendance were both higher than in the previous year, and respondents overwhelmingly praised the sound quality and video-streaming format as well as the shorter agenda items/reports of the meeting experience. Although there were some technical and procedural challenges with the introduction of the Sustainability Roundtable's virtual resolution, feedback from both the round table and other VMM participants remains highly positive, and ALA staff will undoubtedly learn from the experience and develop improvements in preparation for handling future virtual meeting resolutions. The earlier meeting time (1:30-2:30 PM CST) may have contributed to the higher attendance and reduced drop off ratio toward the end of the session.
- Last minute publicity and logistics for the membership meeting to be held on Saturday, June 27. Committee members were delegated to distribute flyers and walk through the conference facilities with signs advertising the event. The use of a sandwich board style sign by individuals was effective, but even more visible mobile signage such as a raised placard might be worthy of consideration for future meeting publicity. Other COMM members were assigned to hand out raffle tickets and track quorum at the event. A short article about the meeting was published in Cog Notes on the meeting date of June 27.
- Talking points from the Executive Board liaison, who was unable to attend the meeting, were shared prior via Email and summarized in person by a few attendees, although No questions about the talking points came forward during the meeting. Concerns about the inability to achieve a conflict free time slot for the in-person membership meeting were raised, and the conflict with Kitchen Table conversations at the same time as the in-person meeting was noted.

The membership meeting took place the following afternoon. Two resolutions (on the themes of Gun Violence and Systemic Racism in Libraries) from the membership were presented and led to lively debates with one resolution passed and one defeated by a narrow margin. Although the meeting's presiding officer ALA President Courtney Young had been provided with suggested discussion topics from COMM as well as prior member surveys if needed, the two membership resolutions encompassed the full hour of time allotted. While the meeting proceeded, members tracked quorum. At its peak,

attendance was at 118. By the final minutes of the meeting, there were 98 ALA members present for the drawing of two raffle tickets to award two free 2016 Annual Conference registrations.

The ongoing challenge for COMM and by extension ALA include meeting the 75 member quorum at the in-person meeting. Despite this perennial challenge, owing in recent years to the elimination of a no-conflict time of the ALA Membership Meeting, the necessity for continued member contributions via resolutions, dialogue, and steering the agenda is still a vital rationale for holding membership meetings. However, COMM does recommend continuous efficacy review of membership meeting time slots and consideration of possible No Conflict intervals to achieve fuller and more robust participation from Annual conference attendees.

Committee documents, including a draft of notes from the COMM meeting in San Francisco, are available in Connect at <http://connect.ala.org/node/64021>.

The committee had a very successful year, staging the historic virtual (inauguration of VMM member resolution) and in-person membership meetings. The committee met at Midwinter and at Annual and via conference calls in between. Members took advantage of the e-mail distribution list to share thoughts as well. Though each of us has had inevitable conflicts that sometimes made scheduling calls and meeting participation difficult, the committee as a whole worked well together.

Derek Mosely takes over as committee chair, and I look forward to the upcoming year, working with him and those committee members who are returning or joining. I extend hearty thanks for all their hard work and service to COMM and the Association for 2014-2015, and especially to our intrepid staff liaisons Lois Ann Gregory-Wood and Ron Jankowski.

On behalf of the committee members listed below,
Mike Marlin
Committee chair, 2014-2015

Committee on Membership Meetings:
Mike L. Marlin, chair
Katelyn Mary Angell
Dr. Carl A. Antonucci, Jr.
Dr. Lucy Santos Green
Peter D. Hepburn
Marita Barton Malone
Krista R. McKenzie
Derek Mosley
Jamie Renton
Monika Chavez (Intern)
Kelly M. Robinson (Intern)
Dr. John Allyn Moorman (ALA Executive Board Liaison)
Lois Ann Gregory-Wood (Staff Liaison)
Ron Jankowski (Staff Liaison)