

VRT Executive Board Meeting and Membership Meeting

ALA 2015, San Francisco

Monday, June 29, 2015, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Mosccone Convention Center 124 (N)

Present: Anthony Anderson, Brian Boling, Lorraine Wochna, Debra Mandel, Laura Jenemann, Philip Hallman, Matthew Windsor, Andrew Horbal, Deborah Benrubi, Monique Threatt, Maureen Cropper, Rachel King, Michael Miller, Scott Spicer, Danielle Alderson
Lowell Lybarger, Nell Chenault, Mary Wall, Laine Thielstrom, Howard Besser, Steve Milewski, Michele McKenzie, Michael Arden

Chair Laura Jenemann welcomed all the attendees and called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and introduced Jim Neal.

Welcome from Jim Neal, ALA Executive Board Liaison

The meeting began with a report from Jim Neal—VRT's ALA Executive Board Liaison with communication updates. It is his duty to share Board talking points with the various Round Tables and interest groups and to bring issues back to the board.

Jim reported that registration for the conference was excellent--approximately 3,000 attendees north of what Las Vegas did. He pointed out that it is an expensive conference city so all are curious how that will work out in the final analysis. Overall, membership continues to go down. Student membership is down. Students attending library programs is down.

Public library trustees have collaborated to set up friends groups--2,600 members added due to this initiative. The ALA budget is solid. Publishing has been reduced.

ALA will focus on three issues:

Advocacy

Information Policy

Professional Leadership Development

These priorities will be looked at for the next three to five years.

Equity and inclusion issues are important for members. In selecting Orlando for ALA 2016, the Florida gun laws were of concern but the decision was made to deal with it through education

ALA staffing issue-new chief financial officer. Mark Lyon

Director of new public awareness office is being hired

New development director needed as well.

ALA has had success with fund and grant raising.

Office of intellectual freedom will be retiring. Goal is to have a person on board for mid-winter.

Librarian of Congress vacancy has drawn attention from membership.

Choosing a librarian and sensitivity to diversity are key issues. Identifying three to five people to recommend will take place.

Term limits will be taken up. Feeling is that no one should serve permanently
The Director of IFLA will be vacated and ALA will suggest a replacement.

Discussion:

Who is working on the list of the names to recommend?

Can Jim be added as contact on website?

Laura—Official Roll Call and attendee introductions began at 8:53 am.

Laura began by indicating that she would like to have a very special thank you to Danielle Alderson of ALA for all the work she has done in making everything go so smoothly. She is not able to be here until later at which time a gift from some of the VRT members will be presented to her.

Laura asked to approve minutes. Second was made and they were approved.
Andy requested that when minutes are uploaded that Andy be given a heads up.

Member Reports

A. Treasurer—Brian Boling

Brian reported that as of May 2015, the balance is \$27,840 balance. Last year it was \$24,000. VRT is roughly breaking even. Brian has stepped in until a new person can be appointed.

B. Website—Andy Horbal

Andy reported that clutter has been removed and that the only thing left is essential information. There shouldn't be any broken links or out of date information. If anyone does see anything, let Andy know. Andy wants to move from functional to effective. His role is to carry out VRT vision.

Discussion

Question raised: Nell is working on an extended history to celebrate the 25th anniversary preparation. Perhaps this information can be linked or placed on the VRT page?

Andy does not have access to Wiki so that's a problem.

Where do we stop? There is a large thicket of links, how much more do we do?

Recommendation from Andy—leave it be.

Are we cool with that? Consensus from group was yes.

Scott pointed out that that is an ALA question and that Danielle can help with that.

Brian suggested waiting until the Fall when a new system will be in place.

Debra—can we link to the meeting presentations?

Howard and Andy both suggested that that be done on an individual level.

Andy—links can be made but available only to ALA members.

Howard—encourage speakers to make the links available.

Linking to what's up there is a good start.

Scott—do we want to have open access to these materials? Unless you are an ALA member, you can't get access.

Debbie and Howard are in favor. Howard suggested that there is a revenue loss and some would suggest that we should not make them available, but he is still in favor.

Institutional memory is lost without them—Scott

Program co-chair will send contact information to update to the site and make all contact information current.

Scott--It is important that work flow, procedures, structure that can withstand year after year program chair changes.

C. Membership—Matthew Windsor

Matthew noted that membership is up overall 4%. The only round table to be up.

New membership up 90%

Membership chair for ALA is happy with numbers.

Membership Task force:

VRT 101 process will be easier to conduct to bring new members on board and welcoming.

They suggest that all groups have some kind of publication (Journal). This would be a money making venture and a publication opportunity. It could come out once a year and possibly attract academic members. It would be an online publication that would be hosted by the ALA.

Matthew will have a presence at the Small and Rural Libraries and PLA conferences.

Debbie—She heard that vendor membership is down. Nell pointed out that the vendors attended the meetings in the past and now are not so involved.

Lorraine volunteered to connect with the National Media Market.

D. Notables-(Laura presenting for Wendy who is unable to attend)

Laura told the group that 24 nominees are already on their slate so far (good for July)

E. Digital Media Group (Ben is not here and no report)

F. Multimedia Discussion Group—(Laura presenting on behalf of Shelly)

Laura indicated that Shelly reported to her that her session in December was a bust. She would like to reassess and rethink the group. She posed questions but did not get the kind of response she was hoping for.

Debra said that the questions she was asking required a lot of time to respond to in an online forum. Debra is hoping she can reach out so that she won't bail. Scott said he would help too. Mo is willing to help too.

Discussion:

Steve—he is taking over for Mo for an ACRL group. He doesn't want to overlap or conflict with the multimedia discussion group.

Scott—one thing that he wants to be sure is that we don't schedule things against one another in terms of timing.

Neil—there is a programming coordinator with ALA and we should be in touch with that person and make sure we have a rep.

Perhaps this is a good question for Danielle?

G. Program Committee—Deborah Benrubi & Debra Mandel

The group began by congratulating the two committee chairs on the great success of their program!

Deborah and Debra discussed how having co-chairs was very valuable and aided their process.. Also, they noted that having someone in the city on the ground was a big plus and that might be something future committees try to replicate if possible.

They also discussed how having a proposal system was valuable in determining the right mix of program offerings. They started out with a pitch system and were happy with the response; the only program that they rejected was one offered by a single vendor. They went back and expanded it. Committee members were in charge of the panels. They created a mini bureaucracy but it was effective. They are happy to share documents with others for the future. They also started an evaluation process so they could get feedback for the future.

Attendance was great!! AMIA at ALA had a very good turnout.

Scott Spicer reported that his panel had at least 150 people; none had less than 20 people.

AMIA at ALA—the only snafu initially had to do with the various technical requirements and union obligations associated with holding a program on site. The decision was made to go off site but it worked out very well.

Discussion:

Debbie—it's a great idea to get requests for proposals and the programmer was responsible for the presentation. It did add a level of communication challenge.

A few less programs might make that easier.

A real scramble to get vendors to help out with money. Some way to get money lined up earlier so that the budget is clearer at an earlier level would be helpful.

Debbie also thought having someone local for programming is a great thing.

Whenever we go off site, it does raise some problems and concerns. AMIA is thrilled with the pre-conference. They are talking of doing something at mid-winter.

Standing room only for the 9th street event.

Howard—some of the suggestions are great but city dependent. Orlando has another series of challenges. What we do in the future is dependent on the city.

Debra asked that a strong shout out be sent to communications group.

Laura—No Gala in Orlando. Any help she can provide, please let her know.. She would like to see VRT be given more push at AMIA events.

Debbie—pre-conference exceeded our expectations. There is some money left over. But some people did not get reimbursed.

Howard—ALA will not allow you to cut a check for another organization.

Debbie—really happy with the program that involved children.

H. Gala—Monique

Went well. Very happy with the guest speakers, Rick Prelinger & Dawn Logsdon

Started planning in 2013. Requesting that this be a two year event rather than an annual.

Largest fundraising this year thanks to Brian. Eight vendors gave cash and others gave gifts.

Howard—don't downplay—it was a roaring success!! The group agreed unanimously that she should be very proud. It was a sellout. Suggestion was made that this be a ticketed event.

Proposal was made concerning the ALA Film Program—we need a liaison for that.

I. Communications committee—Rachel

Rachel began by thanking Maureen for all her work. She has been a key organizer.

She also thanked Andy too for his hard work as well.

Over the last year, thanks to Laura, she reported that the committee has started to reach out to other organizations. Programming partnerships and sending out brochures to others have been ways of doing this. This has forced the committee to update the brochure and streamline the purpose of the group.

She would like us all to think of some of our other contacts. Are there other outlets that are not tapped into yet? What other listserv can we send this to?

What other connections or knowledge can we share with? Sister organizations or responsive committees is one way to think about this.

Discussion:

Nell—we might want to ask this at the member list level. State level organizations is a way to reach out.

Lorraine—how is the Facebook presence?

Monique—would it be helpful to send communication for our state media organization?

Nell—business cards might be useful especially when talking with vendors

Laura—facebook is active and twitter is now more involved too

J. Nominations committee—Anthony

Anthony reported that Michele McKenzie was elected and a rousing cheer was expressed by the group. He did express concern that there is only one candidate running for chair elect and wondered if this is a long range concern?. Others added that the numbers have dwindled over the years. Leadership drain is happening. Less media resource librarians. Funding is a problem for many. Michele mentioned that she didn't know the group existed in spite of working in the field. The group feeling is that we have to make the effort to bring people to us. Perhaps PLA outreach would be helpful.

K. Legislation Committee--Marsha Stephenson

No report at this time

L. IFLA—Michael Miller

Michael is happy to have had the opportunity to do the IFLA/ALA session. It was not well attended unfortunately. Among the things that Michael reported on:

CCAAA—umbrella group for audio visual archive groups. Long standing relationship between these groups but it has severed a bit due to paying for memberships

IFLA had a meeting this past spring.

As convergence happens, librarians needs the expertise of the IFLA members.

Training programs and pre-professional sessions are needed.

Closing communication loops is hard with IFLA

Chairs are concerned in keeping in touch with these other technical organizations.

Open session workshops are in the works for South Africa. Cape Town Film Studio is a collaborator with the session.

Call for papers was just announced for the next session.

IFLA 2016 will be in Columbus, Ohio. Much of the program will be organized around bitframe.

M. Bylaws—Scott

Scott indicated that since there was a revision last year, there was nothing new this go round. He added that everything is still legal and pretty much working.

Old Business

Programs—assessment

A discussion began around the programming done by VRT during the conference. Scott mentioned that 150 people showed up to his program even when it was up against Gloria Steinem. Michelle gave a special thanks to Debbie Benrubi for her programming and for giving it a San Francisco flair. The programs were well received and generated lots of positive feedback.

Live at ALA—Mo

Mo discussed a willingness to want to be more involved with the ALA Film Program. A woman named Nora (last name unknown) is connected with it. Monique is willing to do the groundwork on this. If we have a permanent liaison, that would be helpful. Laura added that notable video for adults should be a connector to this and that VRT would be the liaison for a program. Previous year's notables might be a good subject for showing their work. A suggestion was made to Invite them to the Gala.

Brian—suggested talking about this at the next meeting in August.

Laura—will not be at next meeting due to a yoga retreat in Tuscany.

New Business

A. Making mid-winter attendance optional

Andy asked Laura to consider making the meeting optional.

It was pointed out that the bylaws indicate various occurrences that indicate that the committee needs to meet at mid-winter. These would need to be changed.

Discussion:

Can the meeting occur virtually like we do our monthly meetings? This may not be as obvious an option as it seems.

Howard—general idea is good but we would need to be careful with how we deal with it.

One thing to consider, though we have monthly meetings, we might set up a mid-year call.

Nell—there is some business that does need to occur at mid-winter, so that's a issue. Certain networking that occurs with other units of ALA does seem necessary.

Are there ALA standards that do not permit roundtables to discontinue mid-winter meetings? ALA has been encouraging committees to consider not having the same meetings but not necessarily roundtables.

Laura—does someone want to investigate this? Andy is willing to do this

Andy motions, Brian will investigate with Michele's assistance.

All in favor.

Andy's concern is that the requirement to attend removes himself from wanting to get involved. He simply cannot afford to attend two ALAs each year.

Howard—the business meetings are less attractive. We still have a meeting in order to update people as to what is going on, but we don't have the business side. The business side can be help at a mid-winter virtual meeting.

B. Filling Vacant Treasurer Position

Scott—most of the appointments come at annual.

Membership—Matthew will return as chair

Communications—Maureen will return as chair with Rachel

Program Committee—Debra will serve as committee along with Debbie as committee with Laine Thielstrom as chair and Steve will co-chair

Gala—Monique will be on the committee

Notables—are good

Bylaws—Scott will return

Laura—is suggesting Lowell take over the Treasurer duties.

All in favor.

Danielle entered around 11:42 am

The group presented a gift to Danielle in appreciation for all she has done and thanked her for her service.

C. Boston Midwinter planning—Debra

Debra discussed her proposal to have Northeastern University serve as a host for the upcoming Midwinter conference and to provide a tour and venue for an event and a dinner.

Discussion and various questions were asked. Would this have a formal program component?

Tour of their digital scholarship lab? What are they doing with their vhs collection? Media production? It was determined through conversation that it would need to do a tour rather than be a program due to mid-winter rules and can be followed by dinner. Further discussion raised the question of what day to do this on. Some were concerned that having it prior to the start of the conference would prevent some from attending due to extending their travel budgets.

A suggestion was made to offer a survey monkey to see if people will come on a Friday event.

Announcements

Andy and Scott are working on a research projects. They have looked at ARL sites (50 institutions) and are looking to see what these institutions are doing concerning equipment policies in the classroom. Approximately 60% look to have a plan to remove things. The people who are putting equipment into the classrooms are also planning to remove them as well so these decisions have collection development implications. Some people don't even know who their classroom management people are, Scott added.

Howard mentioned that filmmaker Dawn Logsdon is making a film on public libraries. Surprisingly, she can barely find footage of public libraries. Please contact her if you know of anything that might be available.

Scott mentioned that he needs help beefing up open access developing ontology. Needs to know what the genres are so they can be applied to the free resources.

Laura suggested that these kind of announcements be posted to tweets or to listserv.

Meeting adjourned.