Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations  
Midwinter Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Dallas, Texas  
January 22, 2012

MINUTES

Board members present: Kathryn Suarez, Gail Griffin, Susan Schmidt, Gretchen Herman, Steve Laird, Rod Gauvin, Virginia Stanley, Peter Pearson, Marsha Bennett, Robin Hoklotubbe, Helen Wilbur, Ed McBride, Dora U. Sims, Gwendolyn B. Guster Welch, Rod Wagner, and Donna McDonald.

Staff: Sally G. Reed, Beth Nawalinski.

Visitors: Kathy Spindel, Gayle Graske, Deborah Doyle, Cherine Janzen, Scott P. Muir, Peggy Danhof, Cindy Friedemann, Charles D. Hanson, Don Roalkvam, Jane Rowland, Rose E. Mosley, Shirley A. Bruursema, Joan Ress Reeves, Ruth Newell

Welcome – President Donna McDonald called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed all present.

Pat Hogan (ALA Executive Board Liaison) remarks – Pat Hogan referred to the White House petition regarding school libraries inclusion in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) re-authorization and urged all to sign. Hogan said that 25,000 signatures are needed to get the petition to the President’s desk. Hogan commented on the ALA working group that is addressing digital content issues and noted a new American Libraries blog and Transforming Libraries website. Hogan mentioned the second ALA virtual meeting scheduled for June 5. She also noted that ALA acquired Neal-Schuman publishing. Donna McDonald thanked Pat Hogan for the ALA executive board update and also urged those present to sign the White House petition.

Donna McDonald welcomed and introduced new board members: Gretchen Herman, Steve Laird, Virginia Stanley (returning), Marsha Bennett, Dora Sims, and Gwendolyn Guster Welch.

Minutes (June 26, 2011) – It was noted that the minutes did not include the names of visitors present including visitors from Birmingham, Alabama. Sally Reed commented that the sign-in sheet was not found.

It was MOVED by Gail Griffin and SECONDED by Peter Pearson to approve the June 26, 2011, board meeting minutes. Motion APPROVED with notation that the meeting visitor list was missing and not reported.

Director’s Report – Sally Reed distributed committee interest sheets for appointments to be made by Gail Griffin.

Sally reported good news – the budget is on track. She said the best news comes from the suggestion that library trustees that are members of ALA but not ALTAFF be given complimentary memberships
with the hopes they would renew. Reed said ALTAFF has a 52% membership retention rate of trustee members who were given complimentary memberships and 230 new members. ALTAFF has a 22 percent membership increase in comparison to ALA’s 3% membership decrease. Reed said ALTAFF has the highest membership increase of all ALA divisions (applause!). Sally noted the membership challenge of trustees moving on and off boards and in contrast to librarians who join a division and remain with that division throughout their career. ALTAFF’s difference is the revolving door for trustees. It was suggested by the Budget Analysis & Review Committee (BARC, an Executive Board committee) that ALTAFF repeat the complimentary memberships every two or three years (recognizing the successful outcome this year). Sally said she believes this is a good idea.

Sally said that “not so great news” is our group membership category. The executive board has made an allowance that, for the next two years, groups (boards of trustees or friends) can join without having a personal membership. They can’t participate in meetings or be on the board but can receive services. This is comparable to the way FOLUSA used to work. The merger resulted in a 40% loss of our groups. Sally said she is working with the ALA Chapter Relations Committee and there is a resolution to bring new members and groups in with a joint membership. Sally said she is also working with the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) to promote memberships for friends groups and boards of trustees but also promote ALTAFF webinars – trustee academy and, coming up soon, engaging baby boomer volunteers. Sally said that if we change our name to “United for Libraries” we will have a better hook for friends groups. Reed said that there are a lot of friends groups and boards that won’t participate in ALA meetings but they can and will use the information and services provided by ALTAFF. There is potentially a huge voice for libraries.

Sally Reed said the second “not so good news” is that BARC has voted to cap our small division subsidy at $56,000 and that the subsidy will go away in FY 2014. FOLUSA didn’t have the ALA overhead expenses that ALTAFF now has. On the other side, ALTA (Association of Library Trustees and Advocates) had an $85,000 annual subsidy and contributed no revenue to the general fund. ALTAFF is penalized with overhead and a lower subsidy and contributes $51,000 to the general fund. ALA has benefited from the merger.

Sally said we are headed in the right direction and we’ve made strides toward addressing the deficit.

In response to a question about the variance on corporate contribution revenues, Reed said that those revenues are just coming in now and that there is a lag. By June, these revenues will be close to 100%. Income from events also lags. In comparison to last year, the division is ahead in revenue and behind in expenses. Reduced staff and reduction in rent are significant factors in decreased expenses.

It was suggested that corporate members approach BARC to address budget concerns. It was agreed by consensus that corporate members make contact with BARC and that Sally contact corporate members after conference to discuss how to make contact with BARC members.

Sally mentioned the webinars for baby boomer volunteers to be released in March. The webinars are expected to generate revenue and memberships. The webinars will cost $39 for members and $139 for non-members. The cost variance offers significant advantage to join ALTAFF.
**BoardGift Solicitation** – Peter Pearson reminded that fund-raising is a way of life for organizations – a necessity for what we do. He said that 75% of philanthropic giving is through individuals. Peter said that it is vital that board members make a personal contribution. He said that it is critically important that 100% of our board give to ALTAFF before we go out to the rest of the world to seek contributions.

**Committee Reports** – Donna McDonald requested brief reports from committee chairs.

**Nominations** – Rose Mosley (chair) reported that the committee met yesterday to consider officer candidates. The committee will present their slate at the annual conference.

**Legislation, Advocacy, and Intellectual Freedom** – Shirley Bruursema (chair) reported that the committee met yesterday to put together their program for the annual conference in Anaheim. Their program title is “Advocacy – Transforming Libraries through Front Line Advocacy.” Shirley said the committee has developed a fantastic program and she encouraged all to attend. Shirley mentioned the importance of the advocacy topic, especially at this time, with library budget challenges. The committee has started planning for a 2013 program for the Chicago conference with the subject to be “Censorship – What to do When the Censors Come Knocking.”

Donna McDonald asked Beth Nawalinski to report on outreach to other divisions regarding programs. Beth said that staff is reaching out to other divisions to request that they highlight programs of interest to friends and trustees. Beth mentioned a special opportunity arranged through conference services for an exhibits plus registration to include the opening and closing sessions and ALTAFF non-ticketed programs.

**Leaders Orientation** – Peggy Danhof (chair) reported that the committee will meet in the afternoon to discuss the program coming up for the annual conference in June. The committee will report later.

**Annual Conference Program Committee** – Robin Hoklhubbe (chair) reported that the committee met yesterday. Nuts & Bolts will be held on Friday, June 22, from 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The committee is working on arrangements for a specialized outreach services luncheon that will be held on Saturday. Robin said the committee has other activities in the works for a full conference schedule. Dora Sims asked if the committee will have any programming for trustees such as a workshop to address searching for a director. Robin said that round table discussions almost always have something concerning working with a director (such as hiring, working with).

**Web and Newsletter Advisory** – Cindy Friedemann (chair) reported that the committee will meet this afternoon.

**Digital Content Working Group** – Rod Gauvin (ALTAFF representative) said the new digital content working group met yesterday for the first time. The group was formed by Keith Fiels and Molly Raphael to develop policies and recommendations concerning digital content. Formation of the working group is the result of some of the major trade publishers’ refusal to license e-books to public libraries. Rod commented that refusal is based on a number of considerations such as concern for sales, piracy, loss of control and other issues. Gauvin said there are additional issues that the group will address (e.g., planning, data, business models, accessibility). He said there are about 30 members with all ALA
divisions represented. Rod said the good news is that discussions are now being held and there is work underway to arrange meetings with major trade publishers to explore these issues.

Awards – Rose Mosley (chair) commented that the committee will meet this evening.

Public Library Association Conference – Gail Griffin reported that the PLA conference will be held in Philadelphia, March 13-17. Gail said that ALTAFF submitted three topics. One was selected. The topic is “With Friends Like These . . . ” The session will be on Friday, March 16.

Public Service Award – Sally Reed said that U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ-12) has been a “huge” champion for libraries in New Jersey and also for libraries at the federal level. Emily Sheketoff, ALA Washington Office Director, suggested that Rep. Holt receive the 2012 Public Service Award (to be presented on National Library Legislative Day). Reed said that Rep. Holt introduced legislation to include libraries in workforce development funding that goes to states and locales. If there are block grants that go to states for workforce development libraries would get a part of that funding.

It was MOVED by Robin Hoklotubbe and SECONDED by Gail Griffin to present the 2012 ALTAFF Public Service Award to Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ). Motion APPROVED.

Joint Membership Proposal with State Chapters – Donna McDonald asked Sally Reed to report on a joint membership proposal with state chapters. Sally said the ALA Chapter Relations Committee would like to include trustees and friends in a two-year introductory special offer that if they join their state chapter for $100 they automatically get ALA membership and ALTAFF membership. Sally described the allocation of the membership dues distribution. The membership is not for existing members. The intent is that a new membership will result in a continuing membership. In response to a question Sally Reed said that the new membership proposal is strictly voluntary. It was also stated that some state chapters have already committed. Sally said that she did not have a list of the states but could get one. It was noted that the ALA Chapter Relations Office has started to reach out to state chapters. It was MOVED by Susan Schmidt and SECONDED by Gail Griffin to move forward with the two year joint membership initiative among ALA, ALTAFF, and Chapter Trustees. Motion APPROVED.

United for Libraries – Donna McDonald reported that she had been approached by ALA President Molly Raphael concerning ALTAFF’s re-naming as “Citizens for Libraries.” There was concern that “citizen” was too exclusive. This concern was shared by representatives of some other ALA affiliated groups. Donna said that we have been asked to reconsider action on name choice. Donna asked Sally Reed to comment. Sally said that board members have been asked to consider name alternatives. She mentioned that one suggestion was “Advocates for Libraries.” Sally said that a concern in using “advocates” is that it immediately identifies as an interest group. Reed said that another idea is “united for libraries.” United for Libraries implies a grassroots and broad based focus – not advocates, not lobbyists, just people. She said that it occurred to her that “united for libraries” is what we are. From the last board meeting we took away the idea that we are looking for a three to four word tagline, something that goes out beyond the library family.

Concern was noted for moving away from identifying as ALTAFF. Others mentioned that there is difficulty in relating to ALTAFF, and particularly in fund-raising on behalf of the organization. A simpler
and more recognizable name is desirable. ALTAFF, as an acronym, is based on a long and complicated name. Another concern was moving away from the trustee, advocate and friends identity. The name was changed to Citizens for Libraries by action of the board and membership. Despite the name change there has not been significant action to publicize it, and never actually rolled out. Sally Reed suggested using “United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations. This would provide a shorthand way to introduce the organization and use a name that resonates and that we are a division of ALA. This would be a way to have it both ways. Sally said that United for Libraries has had great response from people she has talked with, and groups she has spoken to, and she has had nothing but a positive response.

It was MOVED by Dora Sims and SECONDED by Gail Griffin to retain the name ALTAFF (clarified as revert to the name ALTAFF). A roll call vote was requested and taken. Motion FAILED.

It was MOVED by Dora Sims and SECONDED by Gail Griffin to change the organizational name to ALTAFF: United for Libraries. A roll call vote was requested and taken. Motion FAILED.

It was MOVED by Peter Pearson and SECONDED by Kathryn Suarez to change the organization name to United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations. A roll call vote was requested and taken. Motion APPROVED. Sally Reed reminded that the motion goes to membership for approval and there will be another chance to vote it up or down.

**Ethics Statement** – Donna McDonald said that an ethics statement is used by many organizations and it is important for ALTAFF to have such a statement as a model for other organizations. Donna recognized the Task Force on Trustee Ethics and Responsibilities members for their work on the statement (Peggy Danhof, Diane Sarantakos, and Shirley Lang). The Task Force presented two documents for approval. Peggy Danhof, task force chair, commented on the process used in developing the statements, including review of statements used by other organizations. It was noted that this is intended as a model statement for use by public library boards of trustees that is endorsed by this organization. Peggy thanked task force members for their work in preparing the statement.

It was MOVED by Gail Griffin and SECONDED by Rod Gauvin to approve the Public Library Trustee Ethics Statement. Motion APPROVED.

**Increasing Board Seats for Corporate Sponsors from 4 to 5** – Sally Reed presented a request to increase board member slots for corporate sponsors. She referred to the earlier discussion concerning corporate member involvement in communicating budget concerns. Sally said that she receives questions from potential corporate sponsors about getting a seat on the board if they become a corporate sponsor. This is a helpful fund-raising tool. Reed said that an issue to consider is board balance versus the strength in their voice (corporate sponsors) with ALA. A question was asked about finding other ways to involve and engage corporate sponsors with the thought of maintaining board membership balance. A suggestion was offered to consider an advisory board for corporate development, or for other work that is needed (e.g., marketing). It was also suggested that an author could be included because we have authors for libraries. This approach wouldn’t require a by-laws change. Sally Reed withdrew the proposal for increasing board seats for corporate sponsors per other ideas offered for alternative participation.
It was MOVED by Marsha Bennett and seconded by Gwendolyn Guster Welch to create an advisory board to be organized by the executive committee. Motion APPROVED.

Planning Session for 2012 Goals and Accomplishments – Sally Reed said that when ALTAFF does strategic planning the discussions are used by staff to develop strategies and tactics. They are then prioritized. When completed they are checked off. Sometimes they are modified. The strategy discussions provide staff direction for accomplishing goals. What the board sets for goals informs the work of staff. Sally suggested that given limited time on the agenda that discussion be devoted to membership recruitment, especially for groups and academics. Ideas – direct mailings (working with our academic library members), connecting with organizations such as National Association of Community Colleges, etc. Another suggestion was a tool kit with resources for academics. Charles Hanson mentioned the” Ten Reasons to Form Academic Friends Groups” that he has used. A similar approach could be used to reach schools. Another suggestion was sample press packets for different topics. Sally said that once a decision is made on the organizational name the tool kits can be issued.

ALA Presidential Candidates – Barbara Stripling commented on her focus and presidential themes (transforming libraries – transforming communities). A representative for presidential candidate Gina Millsap was present and commented on behalf of Ms. Millsap.

Adjournment – President Donna McDonald adjourned the board meeting at 11:15 a.m.