Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations
Meeting of the Board of Directors

Anaheim, California
June 24, 2012

MINUTES
**To be formally approved at the association’s board meeting during the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, WA, in January, 2013.**

Board members present: Donna McDonald, Robin Hoklotubbe, Kathryn Suarez, Ed McBride, Helen Wilbur, Peter Pearson, Virginia Stanley, Rod Gauvin, Steve Laird, Deborah Doyle, Gail Griffin, Susan Schmidt, Dora U. Sims, Rod Wagner.

Staff: Sally Gardner Reed, Beth Nawalinski, Jillian Kalonick.

Visitors: Kathy Spindel, Cherine Janzen, Peggy Danhof, Cindy Friedemann, Charles D. Hanson, Jane Rowland, Rose E. Mosley, Shirley A. Bruursema, Joan Ress Reeves, Nell Allen, Terry Higgins, Marguerite Ritchey, Martha Graham.

Welcome – President Donna McDonald called the meeting to order at 8:14 a.m. and welcomed all present.

Minutes (January 22, 2012) – It was MOVED by Peter Pearson and SECONDED by Rod Gauvin to approve the January 22, 2012 board meeting minutes. Motion APPROVED.

Director’s Report – Sally Reed reported that she expects that ALTAFF will finish the fiscal year in the black, and for the first time. Sally said that a substantial portion of revenues comes in after the annual conference (September begins the fiscal year), with ticket sales and corporate payments. Expenses are steady and nearly the same each month, revenues are not. Peter Pearson asked about the end of the ALA subsidy. Sally said the subsidy will end September 1, 2014 with the beginning of the 2015 fiscal year, and that this is an issue that will need to be addressed. The current budget includes $56,000 in subsidy support.

Sally said that the association has three main areas of revenue – memberships, corporate sponsorships, and services and publications sold to members. Of the three the one that is most steady and reliable is membership. How to reach new members is an issue to address. The association has gained 200 members since 2010. ALTAFF has added 400 members (trustees) who were members of ALA but not members of ALTAFF. Half of those members renewed after their free memberships expired. One type of membership that isn’t getting traction is group membership. Sally mentioned membership information included in the board packet (services, publications, toolkits, webinars that come with individual or group membership) and encouraged board members to use this information for membership promotion. There are 16,000 public libraries and they are all potential members. Sally said we have to appeal to those
who never attend a conference and what ALTAFF has to offer that doesn’t require conference attendance. She said a new name “United for Libraries” will help reach people. Sally said she would like to see United for Libraries be the AARP for libraries with potential for hundreds of thousands of members.

Dora Sims asked about ways to reduce expenses including publishing costs. Sally said there are things that could be considered in reducing publishing expenses – alternating print and digital. Sally said that The Voice ranks high in member priorities and its quality shouldn’t be compromised. Dora asked about a feasibility study on office location (Philadelphia vs. Chicago). Sally said that divisions headquartered in Chicago pay rent to ALA and they pay for other expenses (rent, equipment, utilities – all the things paid for in maintaining the Philadelphia office).

It was MOVED by Dora Sims and SECONDED by Gail Griffin to undertake a feasibility study to compare expenses for Philadelphia and Chicago office locations. It was noted that cost information for maintaining office space at ALA headquarters should be readily available. The motion was withdrawn with the request that staff bring back to the board comparative cost information for office space. Sally said that ALTA’s office space costs were in the range of $85,000 - $90,000 per year and they were heavily subsidized and that ALTAFF has saved ALA significant expense as well as contributing back nearly $60,000 in revenue. It was suggested that a sub-committee work with staff on finances and bring back to the board a report for the next meeting. A question was asked about audits and it was noted that ALA is annually audited, including ALTAFF, and audit reports are available on the ALA website. Donna McDonald said that she would appoint a budget committee to review the budget in total. McDonald said that audits have not indicated any problems (in regard to ALTAFF). McDonald commented that staff undertook, at their own initiative, downsizing office space to save expense, and eliminated one staff position.

**Baby Boomer Webinar** – Sally Reed reported the launch of a baby boomer webinar program. The baby boomer generation is different from others in their volunteer expectations and they are contributing more hours than any other volunteer co-hort. This information comes from Carla Lehn, California State Library consultant. Lehn has done a lot of research and publishing on this issue. Sally will present a three-part webinar with Carla – (1) how volunteers are different and how their expectations have changed; (2) re-organization of friends groups to be more attractive to this group; and (3) how libraries can re-structure their volunteer services to be more attractive to baby boomer generation volunteers. This will be a good source of revenue for ALTAFF.

**Trustee Academy** – The Trustee Academy has been a good source of revenue for ALTAFF. Sally recognized Peggy Danhof for coming up with the Trustee Academy idea (applause). The academy has been purchased by several state libraries for libraries in their states. Gail Griffin requested that a copy of information about pricing for the academy be distributed to board members.
**State Memberships** – Sally Reed said that the Nebraska Library Commission (state library agency) pays for memberships for all libraries in the state. This model will be promoted to other state libraries, not just for the Trustee Academy but to encourage state libraries to purchase memberships for all their libraries’ friends and trustees. State group purchases are a good way for state libraries (with shrinking staffs) to use ALTAFF to educate trustees and help friends groups with advocacy and fund-raising.

Sally commented on the use of webinars to present information on a variety of topics such as membership benefits, literary landmarks, running a board meeting, and more. Some of these may be revenue producing and others would serve to encourage membership.

**Authors for Libraries** – Sally thanked Beth Nawalinski and Jillian Kalonick for their work organizing Authors for Libraries. Software has been developed to match authors with zip codes – helpful for local advocacy and programming. Authors that agree to join are those willing to be advocates for libraries. This is beneficial all around.

**ALTAFF and LLAMA (Library Leadership & Management Association) Partnership** – Sally Reed reported on a task force led by Donna McDonald and Pat Hawthorne (LLAMA president-elect) to pursue partnership between the two divisions on common interests including programming and advertising. LLAMA members include library directors who work with trustees, friends and foundations. There is a natural alliance for the two divisions. A pre-conference program on fund-raising will be held in Chicago for the 2013 conference. A discussion group will meet in Seattle to explore ways to ensure functional friends groups. Directors need to find ways to work well with friends and friends need to find ways to work well with library staff. An offer to LLAMA member library directors is free access to the baby boomer webinars if they enter memberships for their library friends group.

**President’s Program** – Sally reminded board members that Dan Rather is the speaker for the ALTAFF President’s Program.

**ALA Initiatives** – Sally reported that the ALA conference committee is working to compact the conference. A benefit is that everything will be in the conference center. This action will force more collaboration in programming because there will be a limited number of program slots. With collaborative programming, fewer slots will be needed. Sally said that another ALA initiative would tie dues to annual cost of living changes. This may be a direction that divisions will go to as well.

**2013 – 2015 Board Nominees** – Rose Mosley (Nominating Committee Chair) presented the committee’s nominations for 2013-2014.

**President-Elect:**
- Peter Pearson
- Christine Hage

**Friend at Large:**
• Cherine Janzen
• Sam Huang

**Foundation at Large (2 positions)**
• Kay Runge
• Alice Calabrese
• Jeffrey Smith

**Secretary/Treasurer**
• Peggy Danhof
• Charles Hanson

**Division Councilor**
• Susan Schmidt
• Nann Blaine Hilyard

It was MOVED by Rose Mosley on behalf of the committee that the slate of nominees be approved. Motion APPROVED.

**Committee Changes and Expectations** – Donna McDonald referred to committee charges and expectations information included with the meeting packet.

**Board Promotion – United for Libraries** – Sally Reed said that one of the challenges with approval of the new name is the need to work hard to promote the name change, and especially beyond the ALA community. Sally invited promotion ideas and commented that “United for Libraries” should appeal to those less inclined to contribute to an association. United for Libraries is a more appealing name for contributors and grantors. Robin Hoklotubbe suggested working with state representatives. A press release could be sent to state associations for distribution and a state contact could be asked to add their own introduction. Helen Wilbur suggested promoting through other organizations and their publications. Helen suggested approaching AARP and offered her assistance. Peter Pearson mentioned state library associations and getting information included with their publications and conference packets. Sally said work will be done internally working toward the change. September 4 is the date for the name change. Board members were encouraged to send promotion ideas and post them to the board e-mail list.

**New Committee Assignments** – Gail Griffin reported on committee assignments. Gail said she has worked on committee assignments for the past several months, reviewing bios, and committee assignment requests. Gail noted ALA policies that limit members to no more than three committees. Those members listed on more than three committees are asked to choose their committee preference within the three committee limit. Sally Reed added that the three committee limit applies to all ALA committee appointments. Gail said that committees will have co-chairs.
**Board Ethics and Responsibilities** – Barbara Jones (Director, Office for Intellectual Freedom and Executive Director, Freedom to Read Foundation) – Barbara Jones said that Sally had asked her to come to the ALTAFF board meeting to talk about how the Freedom to Read Foundation board works and some of the challenges they have had. Donna McDonald asked Barbara to address board ethics. Jones said that there are occasional conflicts. They have followed a civility statement that was developed by the ALA’s Office for Diversity. Jones said other important issues are confidentiality and transparency. Some board matters need to be confidential. Confidentiality can be challenging in relation to transparency. There are personnel issues that must be confidential and handled privately. There are also some financial issues that must be private. To be considered in an ethical way is the balance between confidentiality and transparency. Handling of funds and investments is another issue.

Barbara Jones said communication isn’t only about transparency; it’s also about using judgment in what to send. Too much information can be confusing. She tends to send information out at the end of the day rather than sporadically throughout the day. A strategic plan is also helpful. Board members tend to bring their own agendas. A strategic plan helps to keep the organization focused.

Another issue that falls under transparency is filtering. This has come up in membership and other communications when filtering involves court cases and legal strategy. Jones said it is vitally important that the board speak with one voice. Filtering is a complex issue. Interpreting legal issues is difficult. A media consultant was hired to help create talking points.

Donna McDonald asked about the new norm for communication given the current environment of Twitter, e-mail, text messages and other forms of instant communication. Jones said it differs from organization to organization. She said that she errs on the side of transparency. She consults with people throughout the day but delays to later (end of day) to reach a decision. Jones said that her board includes people who do not all use social media. The office has a Twitter feed. Among board members – some things need to be done in person (per bylaws). But this is getting harder to do. Jones said the board is thinking of changing this and moving toward use of Skype conversations and conference calls. Some decisions require a vote of the whole board and others the executive board. Decisions requiring all members to be involved can be a problem and especially if a decision is needed on an urgent basis. Jones said that e-mail is the communication norm for the office and foundation. Some board members only use e-mail and do not use other social media. Asked about timeliness of board documents Jones said that her office aims to provide board members with meeting documents two weeks before conference. Sally Reed added that this is ALTAFFs practice as well. Jones said that timeliness of other information varies. She mentioned court decisions as an example. Court decisions may come out shortly before or during the ALA annual conference.

Jones said that the ALA Committee on Professional Ethics is working on an ethics issue now. The committee is a good information resource and source for assistance.
Assignment of Board Ethics Statement Task Force – Donna McDonald noted ideas offered by Barbara Jones for consideration and the need for an ALTAFF communication policy. McDonald said that she will appoint a task force to develop an ethics statement for the ALTAFF board. Donna asked for volunteers. Steve Laird volunteered. Additional members will be sought to work with Steve.

Gail Griffin asked if there was a copy of the United for Libraries ballot available and asked how it was worded. She said she believes the name is being used in a different way than what was on the ballot. Sally Reed said that the ballot said “United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations” and said that we won’t print that on everything. The external presence will be “United for Libraries.” The full name will be on the stationery. Griffin asked if this was an executive decision to leave off the association part of the name or a board decision. Sally said this was based on the discussion the board had. The full organization name is the official name. United for Libraries is the promotional name. Sally said if that is an issue it needs to be resolved right away.

It was MOVED by Suarez and seconded by Laird that when there is limited space promotional leeway be given to staff to use United for Libraries. Motion APPROVED.

School Libraries Task Force – Donna McDonald reported that a resolution will come before the ALA Council tomorrow in regard to school libraries. McDonald is a member of the task force. The resolution expresses the importance of school libraries and school librarians. McDonald said this is an on-going advocacy issue. She asked that the board approve the council resolution. Gail Griffin added that the resolution is especially important as school libraries are being closed and school librarian positions have been and are being eliminated.

It was MOVED by Griffin and SECONDED by Suarez to support the council resolution. Motion APPROVED.

Recognition / Transition – Donna McDonald recognized Helen Wilbur and Rod Gauvin, board members leaving the board at the close of the conference, for their work, efforts and leadership on behalf of ALTAFF (applause).

Donna presented a gavel to Gail Griffin and expressed best wishes to Gail for a good year as President.

Sally Reed asked for a moment, on behalf of the staff, to thank Donna McDonald for her great leadership and a great year as President (applause).

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.