

Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA) Executive Board meeting
Oct. 12, 2005
Snow King Resort, Summit Room II
Jackson, Wyoming

Members attending: Beth Avery, Mary Bushing, Dan Chaney, Betty Dance, Theresa Dickson, Sally Dockter, Joe Edelen, Martha Greene, Carol Hammond, Wayne Hanway, Marilyn Hinshaw, Louis Howley, Bridgett Johnson, Michael Kim, JaNae Kinikin, Peter Kraus, Richard Landreth, Julie Linneman, Nina Little, Krsystyna Mrozek, Valerie Nye, Sharon Osenga, Colleen Smith, Dan Stanton, Suzanne Taylor, Stephen Van Buren

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m.

II. Welcome and introductions

President Beth Avery welcomed Board members to the meeting. Members introduced themselves briefly.

III. Acceptance of the Agenda

The Task Force on Unsung Heroes report was added to the agenda.

The agenda was accepted.

IV. Acceptance of the minutes of the Jul. 23, 2005 meeting

The minutes had been accepted electronically prior to the meeting.

V. Conference update

Attendance at the joint conference is about 475 and was planned for 315. There are no final budget figures.

VI. President's report

This has been posted electronically.

VII. Committees

A. Bylaws and Procedures

Betty Dance noted that everyone should have read the Bylaws changes.

There have been minor changes throughout the document. These include the use of “MPLA region” throughout. In section 2.3.2 a complete paragraph relating to federal laws dealing with internal revenues was eliminated.

In the section on membership, honorary membership is gone, while trustees and friends have been added. A question arose about honorary members. Carol Hammond recalled that someone wanted to be an honorary member in the past. The criteria for that category were very loose, nor was there a need for this category so it was eliminated. Sharon Osenga asked if there were any honorary members at this time. Carol said that there are none now. Beth suggested that honorary membership could be an Executive Board action.

Carol noted that these Bylaws had to go out to members 30 days in advance of the Membership Meeting. The Bylaws have been approved by both the Bylaws and Finance and Management Committees. If there are substantial changes, then we need to go back to the drawing board and have an online vote. The question now is can we take these Bylaws to the Membership Meeting for approval.

Bridgett Johnson noted that these Bylaws can be amended after they are voted on and approved at the Membership Meeting.

Joe Edelen wondered about section 7.3, which specifies the quorum for a Membership Meeting. Wayne Hanway and Carol both agreed that the wording can be confusing and probably will be confusing in the future. Beth said that if it is necessary, an amendment can be made.

Betty Dance completed the review of the minor changes in the other articles.

Carol Hammond moved, and Martha Greene seconded, that: the MPLA Bylaws be approved and submitted for ratification at the MPLA Membership Meeting on Oct. 14, 2005. Motion passed.

B. Finance and Management

Carol noted that Judy Zelenski has been asked to be the interim Executive Secretary of MPLA. The term of office would be one year. Judy has been asked to do some time studies related to this position’s duties. At the end of her interim year, MPLA will need to put out an RFP and seek a permanent person for this job. This person may or may not be Judy. We do not have a good grasp of the time involved to do the Executive Secretary’s duties because Joe has been doing it in conjunction with his own job.

The proposed compensation is higher than that paid to Joe. This had to do with the additional tasks relating to the financial resolutions, the newsletter printer, and maintaining the handbook. The compensation is reasonable at \$9000.

Carol Hammond moved that: MPLA appoint Judy Zelenski to be the interim Executive Secretary and accept the terms in the letter of appointment as presented. Motion passed.

Judy and Joe already have begun working on the transition.

Carol next brought four resolutions relating to financial matters to the Board. Since Carol is the Committee chair, no second was needed for each of the four resolutions.

These resolutions relate to the changing of financial accounts and instruments from banks which Joe used to banks which Judy will be using.

The first resolution to establish financial accounts allows the establishment of money market and checking accounts at FirstBank of Lakewood, Colorado. The resolution also authorizes Judy to have and use a bank credit card on behalf of MPLA, as well as authorizes Judy to establish a merchant credit card account.

Carol Hammond moved, that: the resolution to establish financial accounts be approved. Motion passed.

The second resolution notes that MPLA holds a Certificate of Deposit with First Bank & Trust of Vermillion, South Dakota. This CD matures September 3, 2006. Judy would be authorized to transfer or reinvest the proceeds of the CD.

Carol Hammond moved, that: the resolution for certificate of deposit be approved. Motion passed.

The third resolution authorizes Judy to transact any business with our merchant credit card company, Paymentech.

Carol Hammond moved, that: the resolution for merchant credit card processing be approved. Motion passed.

The fourth resolution contains a letter to FirstBank of Lakewood, Colorado, that restates what the first resolution of these four stated. The letter is signed by Sharon Osenga. The resolution also authorizes Joe to transfer monies from the bank in South Dakota to the bank in Colorado.

Carol Hammond moved, that: the resolution and letter to close out financial accounts be approved. Motion passed.

The next item is the dues structure proposal. Currently there are many permutations with the current salary structure. A subcommittee of the Finance and Management Committee looked at the structure and made this proposal which is before the Board.

There are two additional recommendations, which are provided for consideration but are not subject to approval by a vote at today's meeting:

1. Free memberships that are given out in various programs should not count towards years of membership required for professional grants.
2. The programs that award free memberships should be examined and analyzed for effectiveness in attracting permanent new members and for real costs to the association.

Institutional dues would stay the same under this proposal.

Carol Hammond moved, that: MPLA approve the new dues schedule as presented and take this dues schedule to the Membership Meeting with our recommendation that they be adopted. Motion passed.

Carol noted that a tentative schedule for the reorganization was posted for Board members' information.

C. Awards

Suzanne stated that her report has this year's Award winners listed.

There is one action item. There is nothing in the procedures about whether or not to reimburse a member of MPLA who gets an Award. The Committee members felt that members should not be penalized, by virtue of their membership, from having their expenses reimbursed.

Sharon Osenga noted that, for some remote regions, direct airfare to Conference can cost \$800. The Conference Committee does not expect those kind of expenses.

Mary Bushing suggested that if you were going to agree to pay something for Award recipients, then there should be a ceiling such as \$300 of Conference expenses. This would make it budgetable.

Joe is concerned that it looks cheap if you give out an Award and then do not pay the recipient's way.

Wayne Hanway noted that there was no time urgency for this to be decided today. Wayne recommended that the Awards Committee be asked to prepare a well thought out plan for the next online Executive Board meeting. This recommendation was approved.

VIII. Webmaster

Dan Chaney noted that the website will be relocated from the University of South Dakota to Oklahoma State University (OSU). OSU has agreed to host the MPLA website.

This transfer will allow MPLA to register its own unique domain name. Dan has registered a domain name in the past.

The next issue will be deciding on a domain name. The problem with domain names is that all the good ones are taken. For example, mpla.org is taken. It could cost a lot of money to buy mpla.org.

There are other options for which the costs are not prohibitive. We can leave a pointer at the old site to redirect users to the new site.

Sharon Osenga moved, and Peter Kraus seconded, that: mpla.us be accepted as the new domain name for MPLA. Motion passed.

Dan's next question was how long should MPLA renew the domain name. The general consensus was that it needed to be for a long time.

Sharon Osenga moved, and Nina Little seconded, that: MPLA purchase the domain name for 10 years. Motion passed.

The next issue is the disposition of the mailing lists mpla-l and mpla-ex. These are provided by the University of South Dakota. Dan has talked to OSU and OSU is willing to host these mailing lists.

A discussion ensued about the need for mailing lists. One issue was whether or not the discussion list would be monitored. Otherwise spam could get through to members.

Another issue is what content to include in the mailing lists. Beth asked if every member wants to see all the job listings, for example.

A further issue is that people already are swamped with emails. Do they wish to receive more emails as members of mailing lists?

Carol said that part of the reorganization is trying to save the time of the new Executive Secretary. There is an effort to reduce the time that Joe used to commit.

We should use this opportunity to draw people to the website. Rather than using a mailing list, have them come to the website for information such as jobs.

Dan observed that if it wasn't for the job postings on mpla-l then there would be no traffic at all. At least mpla-ex has a purpose with reports and Board activities. Dan said that we can target things to particular groups with MemberClicks, although you must be a member to use this feature.

Carol Hammond moved, and Louis Howley seconded, that: MPLA abandon both of the lists mpla-ex and mpla-l and use MemberClicks for those purposes. Motion passed, with Peter Kraus opposing.

IX. Other reports
. Task force on unsung heroes

Stephen Van Buren reported for the Task Force. One question the Task Force faced was who are these people. The Task Force noted that it could be either a group or individuals, depending on the criteria specified.

Another question which arose was the frequency of the award. One per year seems the most reasonable. One alternative method of doing this would be to alternate the award between a group and individual. The suggestion to do this quarterly seems to be difficult because it is hard to solicit awards anyway. So doing this quarterly would only exacerbate an existing problem.

At this point in the process, the criteria for selection are iffy. The report listed individual task force members' comments in blue and orange. Criteria suggested include giving the reason the person was overlooked for other awards; looking for people who keep things running smoothly in their institutions but never get credit because they make it look so easy; required MPLA and State Library Association membership; positive influence on co-workers; superior response to internal emergency/disaster; and excellence in mentoring.

The Task Force felt the award should consist of some combination of a plaque, certificate, and/or recognition on the website and newsletter. There was no recommendation that this be a cash award.

Wayne Hanway felt that for an Unsung Hero, the number one thing we should do is a feature article in the Newsletter and on the website. It should be played up.

Mary Bushing always wondered why we give some awards that are very duplicative of what the state library associations already give. When was the last time MPLA evaluated its awards?

Beth noted that the idea for the Unsung Hero Award came up in the long range plan. People felt like there were so many library workers who were not visible. There are a lot of one-person libraries that take on doing a One Book program, for example. We do not have anything to recognize them in this profession.

Sharon also observed that the requirement that they be MPLA members is tricky because some of them are not members of many library associations. This is because they do not have the budget. For her, this membership requirement for MPLA sends up red flags. Perhaps the Award could include a one-year membership.

Stephen noted that all of this is negotiable. But what does it say about our membership policies? They need us, and we cannot reach them.

Wayne was on the planning group. The point is that we have people doing good things as individuals or as libraries that, often for reasons of size or limitations in situation, are not eligible for other awards. MPLA can do a lot of good by rewarding these efforts. MPLA can step forward and do something that is not being done. This raises other questions. What is the purpose of MPLA? What are we doing to get noticed? This Award would give public relations folks something to do. This Award means that there is a good story to tell.

Marilyn observed that these people never apply for Awards because they do not think that they might be eligible. Wayne said that the biggest challenge for giving Awards is getting people to nominate anyone for the Awards.

Carol feels that the name “Unsung Hero Award” falls flat. She would prefer a different name. There need to be nice tight criteria, with language that talks about making a difference for good.

Stephen noted that this would not have to be awarded every year.

Mary noted that some awards are not appropriate awards because they make not one iota of difference. One example is the Trustee Award, which has no cache in the regional area. If the awards are going to be examined, then the questions raised by Wayne should be incorporated. Why does MPLA give awards? MPLA is a different kind of association and should not duplicate state library associations. She agrees that the name of the award needs to change.

Beth made a recommendation that the Task Force on Unsung Heroes flesh out the details of this Award. The recommendation was accepted, with Peter Kraus opposed and Stephen Van Buren abstaining.

The second recommendation Beth made was to look at MPLA’s Awards and why we have them; what MPLA is trying to accomplish; how much do they duplicate state library awards; and whether they further the mission of MPLA. This review would be done by the Awards Committee. The recommendation was accepted with Peter Kraus abstaining.

X. For the good of the order

Marilyn Hinshaw asked attendees who have been to the MPLA Leadership Institute to raise their hands. Mary Bushing noted that, on the MPLA ballot, six of the candidates are fellows from past or current Institutes. Four of those elected were past Leadership Institute fellows. Marilyn noted that the fact sheet listed the concrete results we are getting out of the Leadership Institute.

Carol noted that Joe has announced his resignation. This was the last Board meeting at which he will serve as Executive Secretary. Joe received a standing ovation.

Beth announced that on Friday afternoon she and Sharon were hosting an MPLA reception at 282A.

Dan Stanton suggested that, for those members participating in the Conference, it would be wonderful to work a plug for MPLA into the beginning of your presentation since it is being webcast.

Dan Chaney said that he is archiving handouts from the Conference. These will flood in after Conference. If you are doing a session or acting as a point person for a session, please pass those handouts to Dan so people can have access to these documents online. Sharon observed that the webcast of programs will exist for a month under the contract. You may need the handouts if want to watch a webcast session. Small group discussions are being edited out.

Valerie Nye announced that the New Mexico Library Association is having its Conference in Albuquerque in April 2006.

Bridgett Johnson announced that the Montana Library Association will be having its Conference in Missoula in May 2006.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m.