

Minutes of the ARSL Annual Board Meeting
Sept. 21-22, 2008
Sacramento, CA at the Radisson
Submitted by Mary Pasek Williams, ARSL Secretary

Present: Patty Hector, Carla Lehn, Sonja Plummer-Morgan, Becky Heil, Jim Malzewski, Timothy Owens, Rose Chenoweth, Carolyn Ashcraft, Larry Grieco, Mary Pasek Williams, Andrea Berstler, Steve Steele. *Guest:* Jim Connor. *Absent:* Don Reynolds, Satia Orange, Susan Hill Pieper, Lynette Sloan.

Carla and Patty distributed new board notebooks they prepared for the upcoming year for all board members that include by-laws, agreements with other organizations, strategic plans, board member rosters, recent minutes and treasurer's reports, and other documents key to understanding board functions and responsibilities.

The annual board meeting commenced at 2:30pm Pacific time on Sept. 21, 2008 with introductions and a self-introduction exercise presented by Carla, ARSL convener. She asked:

- What is one thing you are especially proud that ARSL has accomplished this year?
- What's one thing you think we really need to focus on in the upcoming year?
- What skills/expertise could you contribute to where we need to go?

ACTION ITEM: Carla will compile the responses from all in attendance in a separate document.

Carla presented a brief history of ARSL. Rose recommended that the history of ARSL be recorded in written form. Timothy noted that East Carolina University in Greenville, NC is considering taking on the work of the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship, which was previously produced by Clarion University.

Review of Strategic Goals and Committee Structure:

Committees have been following the strategic plan very well. Carla summarized the strategic goals for review and updating. **ACTION ITEM:** Carla will update the Strategic plan for 2008-2010 based on our conversations today and tomorrow.

Jim Connor left the meeting at this time but offered his goal to bring 50 trustees to next year's meeting.

- Conference Planning Committee:

Patty Hector, committee chair, noted that all work plan task goals were addressed/met.

Carolyn offered ARSL free postage through the Arkansas State Library for conference brochures, handouts, etc. mailings for up to 9,000 mailings for conference advertisement for the 2009 conference!

It was recommended that we all solicit vendors for the next conference. Larry White created a list for the 2008 conference committee based on the California Library Association's exhibitor list and suggestions from the board.

Committee reports:

- Budget/Finance/BCR Committee:

Becky Heil, chair of this committee, reported that she and Mary crafted a policy, which was approved, for reimbursement for board members to attend the annual meeting and conference. Becky noted difficulties in deciphering statements from BCR, our fiscal agent. BCR is aware of these difficulties and is changing to a new accounting system and will assist us to get better information when the change is complete. Becky has maintained a very good working relationship with BCR and feels that in this first year of our relationship, things are going very well.

Becky previously distributed a September 2008 Treasurer's Report for board review.

Becky previously distributed a March-Dec. 2008 ARSL Budget for board review. Board meeting and board member travel will be moved to fall under the "Administrative" expenses category rather than under the "Membership" expenses category.

Comments on 2009 projected expenses are as follows:

1. We may consider lowering the registration costs for vendors next year.
2. Conference call costs should be reviewed to see if these costs will rise next year. Jim reported that WJ (WebJunction) welcomes the use of Wimba (WebJunction's web conferencing tool) to do web conferencing for board and committee meetings at no extra cost to ARSL.
3. Projected logo design costs will be carried over to 2009.
4. Printing costs for conference brochure mailing will be added to printing costs for an added \$1000.
5. BCR also took over managing our listserv this year; this was very helpful.
6. An annual cost of \$110 will be added to Administrative costs to cover our ALA affiliation.
7. An on line survey cost will also be added.

Adjusted numbers for projected 2009 are: \$54,710 for expenses and \$16,990 for surplus.

ACTION ITEM: Patty asked all committee chairs to submit a budget to Becky by our next board meeting.

- Membership Committee:

Larry Grieco, committee chair, noted that the committee was created by default (Larry, Carla and Becky) due to lack of members at first, but in spite of that, he feels that a lot was accomplished.

Strategic goals: all are on target and are attainable.

Tasks: Surveys, focus groups and other methods were used to research (10/23/07 document on survey results that Carla produced explains this) what members would like as benefits to memberships.

The committee decided that timetable for membership renewals will remain as is (renewals during members' registration anniversary months).

WJ newsletter goes out once a month and Jim welcomes information to be posted.

Canadian membership still needs to be pursued.

- Nominating Committee:

In Don Reynold's (committee chair) absence, Carla and Patty reported that since the association's

bylaws are silent on how the nominating committee will work, this past year we chose to solicit new board members on line (via the listserv to the ARSL membership) and ended up with 15 members who wanted to run for the board! Selections were made based on geographic distribution as well as seeking a mix of library directors, regional administrators and consultants. The downside to this process is that the committee had to turn several people away, but used this as an opportunity to have them serve on committees. An election was held - only 1/3 of the membership participated in the election. A question still remains: do we want to give direction to the committee for nominating new board members when positions are open? Suggestions included posting candidates' photos and statements on the website.

It was suggested and agreed by all members that we schedule a board meeting the evening before the conference in order to familiarize ourselves with fellow members, association procedures, offices and policies. As of now, we have our annual board meeting for the afternoon of and the morning after the annual conference. **ACTION ITEM:** It was agreed that at this point, the president will determine how the board will meet before the conference.

- Marketing and Partnership Committee:

Timothy Owens, chair, noted that the committee rearranged and reordered tasks in their list of goals. This committee created three documents:

1. Policy/Issues Statements
2. Issuing Opinions and Letters of Support
3. Policy on the Definition of ARSL Partnerships

Timothy made a motion to approve these policies in concept, Becky seconded. Motion passed. The committee recommends that we review these documents as a board for subsequent policy approvals.

The committee accomplished its goal of becoming an ALA affiliate. This opens opportunities, including the benefit to be at the ALA booth during the conference. The committee wants to establish guidelines for development with partners and to open avenues of communications with them. One task is to budget for and create a permanent display (banner, poster, or other) for any conference in which we participate, whether as the host, as an affiliate or as a participant in any way.

The committee also is looking at ongoing recognition of the founder of the organization, with a possible start-up of a "Bernie Vavrek Scholarship" fund.

Another goal of this committee is to open a channel with chief officers (state librarians) and to broaden collaborations with them. Looking at true partnerships will require analyses of benefits of these partnerships.

Logo work will continue into 2009.

- Program and Publications Committee:

In the committee chair, Lynette Sloan's absence, Jim Malzewski reported that with the discontinuation of *Rural Libraries* (unless East Carolina University revives it), the committee may encourage publication by graduate students or others on an as-needed basis.

The organization should focus on using only WJ's hosted ARSL website and the ARSL listserv to educate our membership regarding the organization, its events, and its news in order to consolidate all information into a "one-stop shop." Many members have told us that we are creating confusion by spreading our information into too many web destinations to represent ARSL. Jim stated again that he is happy to post anything ARSL-related on the WJ site, and is also willing to teach anyone interested in how to post it themselves, without his assistance.

ACTION ITEM: The committee will notify the listserv members of the hiatus of the *Rural Libraries* publication. Rose will send out this message.

Much confusion has been generated because the former Clarion-sponsored ARSL website address is still search-able and displayable on the Internet, despite many attempts by our president, Don Reynolds, asking for its removal. The association's website is now webjunction.org/arsl. **ACTION ITEM:** Incoming president Patty Hector will call Clarion University to ask that the Clarion ARSL website be taken down.

Mon., 9/22/08 Meeting commenced at 8:00am Pacific Time.

Becky Heil was nominated to continue as the association's treasurer. Mary Pasek Williams was nominated to continue as the association's secretary. Treasurer and Secretary were voted in.

Determine Board and Committee meeting schedule for the year:

Board meetings will take place on the third 3rd Monday mornings in the even months. The first meeting of this year will be October 20 at the following times: 10am Pacific, 11am Mountain, noon Central, 1pm Eastern. Carla will work with the president and will send agendas approximately one week ahead of time. Meetings will be held on Wimba through WebJunction. **ACTION ITEM:** Committees should send out reports to all board members the Thursday before the meeting. Please send these reports to googledocs rather than to email addresses.

Expectation on how we work together as a board:

Discussion took place regarding effective ways for the board to work together. The following rules of etiquette were suggested:

- Please reply to all emails directed to you.
- Be reasonable with what you expect in response to your email requests.
- Please use the committee structure to funnel things in correct direction.
- Please let the entire committee know if you will be out of commission for any length of time so that we all know why you are not responding.
- The executive committee should handle issues in between meetings so as not to bog down the entire committee (Pres., VP, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past president). The executive committee will then inform the board of any decisions made.

ACTION ITEM: The decision on the association's logo for letterheads will be made by the executive committee.

Approval of minutes of July 29, 2008 board meeting:

Rose respectfully submitted minutes for the July 29, 2009 meeting of the board during Mary's absence. Corrections were recommended and changes were made by Mary. Becky moved to accept, Timothy 2nded. Minutes accepted. Approved minutes will be sent to Jim to be posted on ARSL's website on WJ.

Ex-Officio member voting issue:

According to Robert's Rules, an ex-officio may vote but can't make a quorum. According to our by-laws, we follow Robert's Rules, so the concern about this is that ex-officio members could possibly vote for many years, which many board members aren't comfortable with. Discussion ensued about whether or not the position of newsletter editor should be an ex-officio member rather than a liaison to the association. We may have to review two issues in the By-laws regarding ex-officio members.

ACTION ITEM: Sonja, Ken and Rose (Andrea will help if necessary) will make up an ad-hoc By-laws revision committee (Sonja will be chair) to determine ex-officio member powers and any other potential changes to the by-laws.

Conference Committee Refund Policy:

Refunds for members registered who did not attend the conference has come up because several people canceled attendance at the meeting and expected full refunds, even though the association may have already expended non-refundable funds (food, special event reservations) on the registrant's behalf. A recommendation was made to create an addendum to our policy for regarding refunds: requests for hardship cases may be sent to the executive committee who in turn will review these cases to determine whether to refund portions of the conference fees. **ACTION ITEM: The conference committee will review this conference registration refund proposal and will bring it back to the whole committee for passage.**

Leadership:

Timothy asked about a discussion he had with Transformational Library Partners, an association acting as a pass-through agency (grant manager) providing tuition for distance learning for rural libraries to receive their MLS degrees and conference attendance. The association will consider working with organizations like this as a proposal. The conference planning committee needs to have a decision on this method if we do choose to enlist it to be able to incorporate this into the annual conference.

Patty recommends that we should send members (i.e. the Vice-President) to represent us at the Rural Assembly annual meeting. Carla suggests that we create guidelines regarding which conferences we will send our members to. No action was taken on this yet.

Everyone thanked the conference planning committee for the enormous amount of work they did to present and host an enjoyable, excellent and educational conference that went very smoothly.

ACTION ITEM: Patty will send thank you notes to all organizations (including the California State Library) who partnered and worked with us to put on this conference.

Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am Pacific Time.