

Interim ALA Utah Chapter Councilor, Debbie Short

Report from ALA Midwinter, Atlanta, GA

Here are the highlights and action items from my time at ALA Midwinter in Atlanta from January 20-24, 2017. All Council documents, reports, and resolutions from Midwinter 2017 can be found here: <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/council-documents-midwinter-and-annual-conference-2017>

### **Additional Meetings:**

#### **Chapter Leaders Forum**

The Chapter Leaders Forum pre-conference was held to engage Chapter Councilors and other leaders from the various regions throughout the country. The agenda included “Tips for a Successful Library Advocacy Day,” “Making Meetings Work,” and discussion on how chapters are involved with ALA work. The forum attendees were also updated on the work of the Chapter Relations Committee and work from ALA including the new ALA Advocacy Bootcamp.

#### **Chapter Relations Committee**

The Chapter Relations Committee held two meetings at Midwinter, which many Chapter Councilors also attended. The committee is focusing on efforts to strengthen communications between ALA and chapters. Attendees had numerous opportunities to provide input on the open process for the work that will go into revising communication methods.

#### **Town Hall Meeting**

In addition to the regular work of Council, a Town Hall meeting was held directly after Council I on Sunday morning regarding association values in uncertain times. It was facilitated by Cheryl Gorman from the Harwood Institute.

Conversation revolved around these questions: As we think about the member dialogue sparked by the recent election, what is our intention? What’s the deeper purpose (the big “why”) that is really worthy of our best collective effort?

- What do we know so far and what do we still need to learn about?
- Are there specific areas where our core values are being challenged that need more attention than others?
- As you reflect on the member discussion since the election, what’s taking shape? What are you hearing underneath the variety of opinions being expressed? What’s in the “center of the table”?
- If there was one thing that hasn’t yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding and clarity, what would that be?

### **Council I, Sunday, January 22, 2017**

Council I was kept short to allow for the Town Hall meeting described above.

At Council I, a vote was taken to bestow an ALA Honorary Membership to Ann Symons.

This was passed.

### **Council II, Monday, January 23, 2017**

**New Strategic Direction of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Adopted** The Council approved expansion of the [ALA Strategic Directions](#) to include “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.” The four ALA strategic Directions now include:

- Advocacy
- Information Literacy
- Professional and Leadership Development
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

**Policy Monitoring Committee** report was presented by ALA Councilor Christopher J. Corrigan, Chair

Council was asked to vote on changes to the policy manual based on passed votes of Council. Vote passed.

### **Resolution on the Education Requirements for Future ALA Executive Director**

ALA Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels has announced his retirement, which is set for July 17. Council approved membership of the Executive Director Search Committee. A contentious split Council vote narrowly approved retaining the standing policy that requires the Executive Director of the ALA hold an ALA accredited MLIS or equivalent degree. The [defeated resolution](#) called for the policy to be amended to make a library degree highly preferred instead of required for the Executive Director.

The vote was extremely close (78-75). If you are interested in the two sides of the topic, Steven Bell wrote an article, *ALA Goes Looking for a Leader*, Library Journal, January 26, 2017 addressing the issue.

### **Resolution Establishing Family/Caregiver Status as Protected in ALA Volunteer Work**

Council passed a [Resolution](#) to value the contributions of its volunteers on committees and other groups and recognize the importance of their families. It was noted that such a resolution was needed because some members had previously been dismissed from volunteer positions

because of absences due to family circumstances. The resolution stated that:

- No section of the organization shall use family status to jeopardize or sideline an individual's path as a volunteer in the organization.
- Family status shall extend to any member's children, spouse/partner, parents, or any other family member in a traditional or non-traditional sense.
- While an individual's family status shall not be used to determine if a person shall be chosen for a committee or volunteer opportunity, the organization shall make every effort to make appropriate accommodations for persons with family status issues.
- While periods of appointment may not be changeable particularly for elected positions within the organization, absences at meetings will not be grounds for immediate loss of position.

### **Council III, Tuesday, January 24**

Memorials and tributes (with links to the resolutions)

#### *Memorials:*

McRee (Mac) Elrod  
Robert (Bob) Alan  
Valerie Bross  
Sandra (Sandy) Friedman Dolnick  
Nettie B. Taylor  
Ruth Gordon  
John Shuler  
Karen Avenick  
Warren (Jim) Haas

#### *Tributes:*

Emily Sheketoff

#### **Action Items:**

COL/IFC Joint Working Group on the Resolution on Gun Violence Affecting Libraries, Library Workers, and Library Patrons

#### **Amended Resolution on Gun Violence Adopted**

The ALA membership approved a Resolution on Gun Violence a year ago at the ALA Midwinter 2016 conference. The ALA Council formed a working group to review the resolution to address

several areas of concern to various groups and individuals in the association. Council approved the [“Revised Resolution on Gun Violence Affecting Libraries, Library Workers, and Library Patrons”](#) at this year’s conference, calling for:

- Directors of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to publicly announce that their respective agencies will resume funding non- political, comprehensive research on causes and effects of gun violence in the United States; ensure that such research, and any uses to which such research is put by the NIH or CDC, does not violate the “Dickey Amendment” prohibition on the advocacy or promotion of gun control; and sponsor robust research for the dual purposes of “preventing firearm injuries” and identifying “ways to prevent firearm deaths . . . without encroaching on the rights of legitimate gun owners;”
- Libraries to collaborate with appropriate local agencies to provide training and education for library workers related to the presence of guns in the workplace; and
- Libraries to support community discussions around all aspects of guns in society.

**Deaf Culture Digital Library Working Group** postponed indefinitely. Needs to be more developed before ALA takes action. Council voted on the motion to postpone,

### **Intellectual Freedom Committee, Privacy Subcommittee and Choose Privacy Week**

“This fall, the IFC’s Privacy Subcommittee partnered with the LITA Patron Privacy Interest Group to create seven checklists to provide libraries with practical guidance on implementing the Library Privacy Guidelines published by the Intellectual Freedom Committee in 2016. These include:

- Library Privacy Checklist Overview
- Library Privacy Checklist for Library Websites, OPACs, and Discovery Services
- Library Privacy Checklist for Students in K-12 Schools
- Library Privacy Checklist for Public Access Computers and Networks
- Library Privacy Checklist for E-book Lending and Digital Content Vendors
- Library Privacy Checklist for Data Exchange Between Networked Devices and Services
- Library Privacy Checklist for Library Management Systems / Integrated Library Systems”  
[Intellectual Freedom Committee \(IFC\) Report](#) (with checklists)

### **Resolution on Access to Accurate Information**

“In 2005, Council adopted the resolution on Disinformation, Media Manipulation & the Destruction of Public Information, which presciently recognized the growing problem of disinformation and its impact on access to public information and civic discourse. Because of a growing trend over the past several years of not only information disappearing from the public domain, but also actual disinformation propagated across multiple media platforms, the committee felt this resolution should be reaffirmed and updated to reflect the current media environment.” A new amended resolution was introduced and approved to state ALA’s concern on this matter.

**Resolution on Access to Accurate Information as Amended.** The full resolution can be found on the last page of the Intellectual Freedom Committee Report (link above). The Resolved clauses read as follows:

- Resolved, the American Library Association reaffirms the resolution on Disinformation, Media Manipulation and the Destruction of Public Information approved in 2005 (2005 ALA CD #64).
- Resolved, ALA opposes the use of disinformation, media manipulation, and other tactics that undermine access to accurate information;
- Resolved, ALA encourages its members to help raise public consciousness regarding the many ways in which disinformation and media manipulation are used to mislead the public;
- Resolved, ALA urges librarians and library workers to actively seek and provide sources of accurate information that counter disinformation;
- Resolved, ALA supports the critical role public, academic, and school librarians in teaching information literacy skills that enable users to locate information and evaluate its accuracy;
- Resolved, ALA will pursue partnerships with news organizations, journalism institutions, and other allies to promote access to accurate information and defend the role of journalists and the free press in American society.

### **FY 2018 Programmatic Priorities**

- Strategic Directions for framing budget direction. The priorities for FY 2018 include:
- Diversity
- Equitable Access to Information and Library Services
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Advocacy for Libraries and the Profession
- Literacy
- Organizational Excellence
- Transforming Libraries

**ALA Annual Conference Remodel** Information was made available about the changes to take affect at the ALA Annual meeting. The planned [ALA Annual Conference Remodel](#) includes addressing several longstanding issues brought forth from the membership, including:

- Shrinking the overall footprint of the conference, including having most program sessions and discussion groups at the main conference venue
- Offering a single application process for all ALA programming, including divisions, roundtables, and interest groups
- Having one hour sessions

#### **Report from Conference Accessibility Task Force**

Working on a survey going out in mid February re: people's experiences with accessibility at conferences.

ALA Annual will be in Chicago from June 22-27, 2017.