

New Mexico Library Association
Business Meeting 2003 Minutes

Earl Phillips, the NMLA President, welcomed members to the meeting. He thanked Eileen Longsworth, the Vice President/President Elect, for her work and the work of her committees on the conference. He then introduced the rest of the Board Officers, Kathy Albrecht, Treasurer; Susan Magee, Secretary; Thaddeus Bejnar, ALA Councilor.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the 4/18/02 NMLA Business meeting. Motion passed.

Kathy Albrecht gave an informal treasurer's report.

"NMLA is solvent. We've weathered the first full year of post 9/11 economics and we've done it with our feet firmly on the ground. . . Almost everyone was asked how much we could cut their budget . . .and then we turned around and cut their budget once or twice after that. . . . NMLA wrote a budget that expected about \$92,500 in income with an out go of approximately \$88,000 so we had a little safety margin in there. There were a few line items that blew away but many others were significantly under their allowance. Right now we expect another \$7-8,000 of income to come in. We'll be paying off the conference and things should go smoothly. I will be happy to meet with anyone after the meeting to answer any detailed questions.

NMLA is a very comfortable organization to work with and there is a lot of collegiality. Board communications are very easy but over the last 3-4 years we have been gradually migrating to some really informal budgetary procedures. At the Board meeting yesterday we had a big discussion about getting back to real generally accepted accounting practices as far as budgeting, expenditures, requisitioning and encumbering funds are concerned.

For instance, on June 30th we will have all our bills paid so on July 1 we will start spending our new budget. Therefore, it is important to get your invoices and requests for reimbursement in to me in a timely fashion. If, for some reason you are incurring costs right up to June 30th so you are unable to turn them in until July, I have created a new encumbrance form to use. It will be posted on the webpage or you can call me and I'll fax you a copy. The form simply says these funds are budgeted to me but I won't have my receipts until after July 1. This will allow us to 'spend' that money from this current budget and we won't produce a final budget report for this year until all those encumbrances can be closed out.

Many of you have budget requests to make for the next fiscal year. Please send in your requests by the May 9 deadline. I have forms with me for anyone who needs them."

Eileen welcomed everyone to the conference on behalf of the City of Albuquerque and Mayor Martin J. Chavez. She thanked the conference committee chairs and members for working so hard to put on a great program amidst many challenges and asked that they stand for recognition. They were applauded appreciatively.

"The conference is what drives our budget. The funds we generate from the conference are the basic income that we have to expend for other services. We have a problem within our organization and that is that the cost of being a part of NMLA, being a member, getting the newsletter, maintaining the website, having our administrator do various services for us, these costs are higher than our membership dues generate. We have a couple of things to consider – one of the problems that we have relates to the budgeting practices that Kathy spoke of is that we do not have much in the way of reserves so we don't have much money in the bank to survive a bad year. If we have a conference people don't come to, we over spend on a budget line or something unanticipated happens, we have very little in the way of reserves.

If it were my own family budget I would be very nervous. In my family budget when I haven't had reserves I've done one of two things: raise income or cut expenses. Those are the two options we are looking at right now. I'd like to have a quick informal survey – if you are in favor of raising dues, conference fees or other things that would raise income and make the Association more solvent please stand. . . . Now, if you are in favor of cutting costs – downsizing our expenses such as our newsletter, directory and other administrative expenses, please stand. Yes, you can stand for both.

My email is on the website and we will continue this dialog on the email discussion list. This helps us get a sense of the membership's voice. I'm "hearing" raise income at this point which is the same thing I've heard from board members and others. It has been several years since we've had a dues increase and there are other things we can do to generate income, which is a critical issue, so that we can have a good, quality association and have a good conference."

There was no unfinished business but Betty Long was introduced to talk about a possible by-laws change.

The proposal before the Board for discussion at today's meeting is to make the Mountain Plains Library Association representative position on the NMLA board an elected position. This representative is the NMLA liaison to the MPLA board and is currently a non-voting member of the NMLA board appointed by the NMLA President. Making it an elected position, as it is in all the other states in MPLA, would add an additional voting member to the NMLA Executive Board. We'd like to hear any concerns you might have with having another voting position on the board and another elected position on the ballot. Any discussion?

Concern: NMLA is also affiliated with other organizations such as the American Association of School Librarians and Reforma. Shouldn't the representatives to these have the same level of representation on the NMLA board as the MPLA representative?

Concern: How do the affiliations and representatives to them come to be – do they take on the responsibilities themselves, pay their own dues and fees? How does that happen and how will it affect the NMLA budget?

Answer: Currently affiliate representatives are appointed by the President of NMLA. The Association has financially supported the MPLA representative and semi but not well-supported the AASL representative. The ALA Councilor is already a voting member of the board and is supported for his required attendance at the ALA conference and other trips. There is an assumption to be made that if these positions are elected positions there is definite monetary support that should follow.

Concern: Are there other organizations we are now affiliated with and are we limited to just those?

Answer: Currently we are affiliated with MPLA, AASL, REFORMA, and ALA (Councilor). We are not restricted to those four and others may be proposed to the board.

Concern: It seems very difficult to get people to run for the limited number of offices now. The pool for these additional officers would be very small. And what would be the costs.

Answer: True, the representatives in these positions now have been involved for several years already. Each affiliation creates budget line items for travel, registration fees, etc. Most of these organizations have annual and board meetings in other places in the country. MPLA is currently funded and would make no impact on the budget. However, adding additional similar positions with the same level of support would definitely affect the budget.

Concern: It would be good to evaluate all these affiliations to see what benefit they bring to NMLA in terms of resources, opportunities and connecting with other similar groups so we can make an informed decision on the question.

Concern: Given that the ALA Councilor is an elected position, can you provide history as to how that came about? How many members were central to the board and for what reason was the ALA Councilor made a voting member and not other affiliation representatives? What was the board membership discussion at the time to bring it about?

Answer: The size of the voting board has been the same for a very long time. All ALA Councilors are elected to their state association boards. (All MPLA representatives are elected except NM.) Other chairs and affiliation members serve on the board but are not voting members as only the elected board members vote.

Feel free to share your thoughts and other concerns with any of the board members during the coming year.

Earl passed the gavel to Eileen and adjourned the meeting.