

SLA Executive Board Meeting
February 2, 2005; 12 noon
181 University Ave., 2nd Floor

Attended: Laura Knapp, Martha Foote, Daniel Lee, Joy Shanfield
Guest: Ulla de Stricker
Regrets: Gayle Kiss

1 -- Agenda

Laura added to her report, the review of Board attendance at forthcoming meetings or events, and update on the student proposal to coordinate student billeting for 2005 Annual Conference. Daniel added to his report, update on turnover of Survey Monkey subscription account from Erika Steffer to Chapter, and ongoing expenses of its maintenance.

2 – Minutes

Small text corrections were made to wording in section 3 (g) (Succession planning) and section 6 (Treasurer's Report), in the January Board minutes.

Daniel moved that the minutes from January 12, 2005 be approved as corrected. Seconded by Martha. Approved.

3 – Succession planning (Guest, Ulla de Stricker)

(i) Daniel proposed changing paragraph 3 from "Duration of positions are OPEN" to "Duration of positions is limited to 2 years", i.e., a person can stay in one position for up to two consecutive years. After some discussion, it was agreed that the following lengths of term are desirable for various Board positions:

President and President-Elect: maximum of 1 term (year)

Treasurer: minimum of 2 terms (years)

Other Board positions: 1 year, with option to renew to a maximum of 3 terms (years).

Laura will check whether duration of terms is mandated or suggested by the national organization.

(ii) Everyone agreed with Gayle's point, that a precedent of paying for Secretarial work (minute taking) should not be established. The position is a nice one for initial entry to the Board, and is easy to recruit for. The position of Secretary will be added back to the proposed Board.

(iii) Position of Membership Chairman was suggested as falling under the Liaison Board position last month, but in retrospect it does not seem to be a good fit. In view of its importance to the workings of the Chapter, it is now proposed that Membership position be added back to the Board. Logically, it will oversee the work of the Registrar.

(iv) Delete word "Current" from the group now designated as the Volunteer Pool."

(v) Daniel noted that it is difficult for the Web Master to be the only person from the Chapter permitted to connect to the SLA corporate web server (a rule from corporate SLA) to make changes that are required on Chapter web site. Accordingly, people in this role tend to burnout quickly. This problem was discussed with SLA (at Leadership Summit).

(vi) It may be too narrow a description to rename the Director position "Web Site Manager". The position in fact oversees the web site, the electronic newsletter, the discussion list (listserv), and software applications (for Treasurer, Survey Monkey, etc.) Technology Manager was proposed.

(vii) The designation "Liasion" has too much of a Public Relations connotation, and it is proposed that it be changed to "External Relations Coordinator."

(viii) Laura pointed out the need to add the Awards function to the list of functions recruited for from the Volunteer Pool.

Additional clarification was sought around how this will work in practice. The President-Elect will recruit for Board positions. The President-Elect will liaise with the Volunteer Pool for all matters except Programming. The members of the Board will recruit people into the Volunteer Pool, and then select from within it for the functions that they oversee:

- President, for Awards
- Technology Manager, for Newsletter, Web Site, etc.
- Membership Chair, for Registrar and Careers
- Secretary, for Archives

After considering placing the responsibility for Vendor Relations under Treasurer, it was left with other external groups under External Relations Coordinator (the financial connection is less important than the need to cultivate a Prospects list for vendors).

Ulla will re-write the proposal to reflect these changes, submit it for approval, then post it to the web site and send it to discussion list. It is recommended that that the changes be implemented for the start of the next Chapter year in May 2005 (or January 2006, see section 4-A).

Because of another commitment, Martha Foote left the meeting at 12:40 pm.

4 - President's Report

A – Leadership Summit

Laura reported that the Leadership Summit was excellent. An external company, Leadership Outfitters, provided sessions that focused on the general applicability of skills learned and honed by volunteering for leadership in SLA. She observed that Board people were more accessible than at meetings past.

Much time was spent over aspects of a proposal to increase dues based on income categories. A co-proposal will reduce Chapter allotments, and this was not well received. The New York Chapter pointed out that the value of SLA stems from its chapters. The complex matter is back in the hands of the Finance Committee after it failed to be put to a vote.

It is also proposed that the association move to a calendar-based fiscal year. Chapters will have until the year 2007 to make the change. At some point, a new President will have to serve an 18-month term, or the present Executive Board can consider staying on in office until the end of December 2005. This may make a lot of sense for this Chapter, as Martha will have less than a full year in which to learn and prepare for her Presidency.

Daniel made a motion that the current Board stay on as Executive Board until the end of the current year, 2005, and that Martha Foote assume the Presidency in January 2006. Seconded by Joy. Unanimously approved. Martha and Gayle will be asked for their vote on this matter.

It was Laura's impression that the President and President-Elect of the national organization are not making many visits to Chapters, which makes her wonder why we were initially turned down.

She attended some Membership Forums (Board meetings). They are using Rules of Order other than Roberts and employing consent agendas. These are sent out beforehand in an effort to streamline processes.

She relayed Daniel's concerns to John Crosby and Janice Lachance. They agreed with his assessment of the limitations of COP (Communities of Practice). Regarding the web site platform, they require one to three years to fix it. They loved his idea of including access to library literature (e.g., via database such as LISA) as a benefit of membership if free access is available. John will call Daniel.

B – Membership

Pam is continuing to contact the non-renewing members, without the help of Yasmin Chandra who did not renew her SLA membership. Gayle is advising Pam to use Survey Monkey, and ask members to check their own information in the Membership Directory. Pam will need additional help now that Yasmin is out of the position.

C – Past President's Report (for Gayle)

Lynn Howarth programme is coming together; venue will be either the Ontario Club or the University of Toronto. Gayle is doing the Information Highways panel discussion meeting for Sonia, and it still needs a moderator. Ulla de Stricker responded and volunteered.

Sonia Solomon is really being stretched as Programming Chair, as many of the original volunteers have disappeared (Stella resigned, Phillip Wolfart moved to Manitoba, Kathleen Story does only promotional work). Gayle feels that Sonia should not be doing the work herself, but should be getting work out of the volunteers who have continued on.

The Chapter missed an opportunity to nominate Juanita Richardson for SLA Fellow, for which the deadline is now past.

The posting of the Courier to the web site is about one month behind, which is a concern to the Editors but should not be. They were promised an interview with Pam Rollo for February 4.

Response to the membership survey was acceptable. People around the table were not sure whether they had filled it out or not, and remarked that it would be better if the reminder went only to those who had not responded. This is difficult to tell, because the Chapter mails to members at more than one email address for each.

The Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) has asked for \$200.00 to help with the evening planned for potential volunteers in March. Discussion was held about how tight their budget really is. Helle moved, and Joy seconded, that they be given a room to hold the meeting in and \$200.00 for coffee. Approved.

The OLA day had approximately 80 registrants, and it is unfortunately impossible to know how many of these were SLA members. OLA did not do for us what they had agreed to do, that is keep statistics on registrants, and do targeted marketing to special librarians. Liz Malzak will attend the wrap-up meeting on Friday, and suggest that they should at least ask for a show of hands for membership in associations at events that others have a part in.

Re Survey Monkey: SLA national responded that they consider it to be an asset for Chapters to use their Survey Monkey, and see surveys used by other groups. They do not see why these should be regarded as confidential.

Re housing students: the Chapter is not allowed to promote housing outside of the official Conference hotel. The group speculated about whether the discussion list could still be used to make such informal match-ups (need and availability of free accommodations).

D – Board attendance at events

OLA, Feb. 4 – Daniel; Vendor round table / IT Trends, Feb. 17 – Helle, Daniel, Laura; Book Club, Feb. 24 – no one; Secrets, Mar. 2 – by and for students; LAC (Local Arrangements Committee), Mar. 3 – Laura and Helle; Jennie Levine, Mar. 8 – Daniel and Helle.

E -- Publicity Plan, Anthony Danko

Anthony Danko attended the meeting, bringing a draft PR plan and speaking about it to the Board. The proposal analyzed the current situation (ad hoc, decentralized PR efforts using discussion list or quarterly newsletter, Courier), provided concise goals and objectives, as well as strategies for achieving them. Central to the plan is the centralization of communications through a single person, the PR Chair, and the establishment of a frequent (monthly) communiqué to members via email (listserv and beyond). Its content would be news about Chapter members and events.

He also proposed promoting awareness of the SLA Annual Conference in Toronto to the business community, employers and other important groups using presentations, pieces written for and published in the media (e.g., Facts & Arguments column in Globe & Mail), and advertising to trades. The group shared information about contacts that each has, and which librarians should have contacts (in business towers downtown). He suggested collaborating on a prepared 300-word text on how librarians add value to organizations.

He invited the Board's feedback, to be gathered and sent to him by Laura.

5 – Director's Report

A – Survey Monkey software

Erika Steffer will be reimbursed for 3 monthly payments of \$20. USF. He needs to investigate whether a credit card is needed to make monthly subscription payments. Daniel moved, and Helle seconded, that Erika be reimbursed, and the Chapter take over the existing subscription and account.

B – Web Site

Daniel will ask Heather and Britta whether they will stay on in their roles. He feels it is necessary to do further changes to the web site, and to brainstorm about what and how. Likely candidates for change are the current home, Registration, and Newsletter pages. He would like to incorporate blogs and frequent (weekly) communiqués, but points out those these are impossible on the current technology platform (see response from SLA about timeframe for change, section 4-A, above). He personally dislikes the necessity for login and logout on the main site.

6 – Treasurer's Report

A – Joint Holiday Social

The programme realized a very small loss, and it was not clear from the record keeping how many members attended from each association (SLA, CASLIS). Accordingly, the treasurers of both organizations agreed not to split the small amount between them.

Bottles of wine were returned, as organizers overbought on this item. In general, organizers of events should be told about has been learned from past events (e.g., how much liquor tends to be consumed, what the ratio of sandwiches to salads usually is).

B – Event money owed

Helle is waiting for information from Registrar, that is, names of people who have not paid for events at which they registered or attended, and amounts owed. She will try to collect this money.

C – Year-end financial reports

SLA headquarters is willing to accept manual reports from us if she is unable to use the latest version of Quicken sent by headquarters. SLA needs our information in order to turn over to us the allotment money.

C – COP

Helle commented on how strangely this application is behaving – she is not able to send email in her own name, but her text goes through under other, random names. She also receives repeated welcome messages (identity problem?).

7 – Other business

There was none.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 pm.

Next meeting: March 2, 2005. Ulla de Stricker will be unable to attend on that date.

