

Special Libraries Association
Business & Finance Division
Executive & Advisory Boards Meeting
Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center – Presidential Board Room A
5 June 2004; 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Presiding: Cindy Lenox (Chair)

Attending: Terri Brooks (Treasurer); Sylvia James (Chair-Elect & Continuing Education); Karin Rausert (Director, 2nd year); Gayle Kiss (Director, 1st year & Strategic Planning); Brian McGreevy (Secretary 2002-04); Stephen Marvin (Mentoring Chair); Bob Clarke (International Relations); Marty Cullen (Past-Chair, Awards & Vendor Relations); Steve Kochoff (Chair, Nominating Committee); Jeannette Moss (Coordinator, College & University Librarians Section); Verna Riley (Webmaster); Awilda Reyes (Chair, Professional Grant Awards & Student Stipends); Jen Venable (Chair, Public Relations); Hal Kirkwood (Chair, Centers of Excellence Awards) and Kevin Manion (Incoming Secretary 2004-06).

1. Call to Order (Lenox)

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda (Lenox)

There was a motion and a second to accept the agenda. Motion passed.

3. Introductions (all present)

Executive & Advisory Board members introduced themselves and described their respective board roles.

4. Extend Voting Privileges (Lenox)

Cindy made the motion to extend voting privileges to both Executive and Advisory Board members. The motion was seconded and passed.

5. Approval of the Prior Minutes (McGreevy)

Brian: The draft minutes from the 24 January 2004 meeting had been previously distributed. There were minor changes suggested. There was a motion and a second to accept the revised minutes with the suggested changes. Motion passed.

6. Report of the Chair: (Lenox)

6a. 2004 Nashville Conference Programs: (Lenox)

Cindy: All previously schedule SLA-BF programs are a go. Attendance for continuing education (C.E.) programs has improved from the previous year in New York. Moderators are doing a good job of following up on C.E. presentations.

ACTION ITEM: Cindy Lenox will follow-up with Nashville moderators for session summaries (content, attendance figures, etc.)

ACTION ITEM: Sylvia James will follow-up with presenters at Nashville C.E. sessions. Sylvia will also check with C.E. presenters about obtaining permission to post course materials on the SLA-BF Web site in PDF format.

Sylvia: There are two half-day programs and one full-day program scheduled for Nashville. The programs will draw roughly 100 attendees and thus, will generate about \$22,000 in revenue.

6b. Conference Sponsorship: (Lenox)

Cindy: Nashville expenses for ticketed events and C.E. will probably run higher than previous estimates and could cause the division to realize a net loss for the conference since vendor support came in under original estimates. The original estimate for vendor support was \$50,000 and the likely amount to be collected is in the \$40,000 range.

Marty: The division came out ahead in regard to expenses for these activities in New York for the 2003 conference.

Cindy: All B&F open houses have a sponsor to help offset costs. A typical open house incurs about \$3,600 for expenses given an average of 150 attendees.

Cindy: Standard & Poor's (S&P) recently stepped forward to cover the onsite costs of the SLA-BF Breakfast. Thus, the event will be free for the first 200 who sign up. However, a total of 82 people had already pre-paid SLA for the event and will now need to be reimbursed.

Bob: Pitch it to S&P that S&P will pay the money back after it receives the list of the names of the people who paid for the event. The list would be a good marketing opportunity for the company, he added.

Hal: Registrants shouldn't expect immediate re-payment.

Marty: This unilateral action by a vendor to directly underwrite and pay conference costs to the host hotel opens up an important issue for the division because we would lose out on revenue.

Sylvia: If more sponsors directly reimburse the conference hotel for program/reception costs instead of the B&F division, "we're heading down a dangerous slippery slope."

Terri: The B&F division has already pre-paid SLA for the estimated costs for the breakfast.

Cindy: The final decision on who will coordinate the repayment will be discussed further at the SLA-B&F Executive Board meeting on Wednesday, June 9, 2004.

ACTION ITEM: Sylvia James will add the reimbursement issue to her June 9 agenda.

6c. Structuring of the SLA-B&F's Units and Sections: (Lenox)

Cindy: I used the Survey Monkey service to electronically poll B&F members as to whether or not they would like to transform certain roundtables into section groups. Likely candidates include real estate, public & government, and financial institutions. I also polled members for suggestions as to what additional sections would B&F members like to see added to the current group of six, such as adding a Private-Equity Unit. Responses from B&F members totaled almost 200. Of those with an opinion, more than 90% approved of the initial plan.

ACTION ITEM: Cindy Lenox will summarize the Survey Monkey results for the Fall Bulletin.

Cindy: After three years work, there will soon be a new SLA-B&F section: College & University Business Libraries. "This is one of the bright spots of the past year," she added.

ACTION ITEM: Cindy Lenox will contact the Chair of the Financial Institutions section about the lack of a breakfast slot for the group at the Nashville conference.

7. Treasurer's Report: (Brooks)

Terri: I have some cash-flow concerns – the vendor invoices went out late. There are also still sizable outstanding advertising revenues outstanding. Plus, we had to prepay some \$38,000 to the SLA before the conference for estimated conference expenses in Nashville. Note: Because the economy is showing signs of resurgence and vendors are showing more of an interest in sponsoring B&F events, the treasurer had increased the initial estimate of vendor support for B&F events at the Nashville conference from \$45,000 to \$50,000. The final total might come in closer to \$40,000.

Marty: Better to invoice vendors in January.

Terri: Nonetheless, the budgeted numbers are close the actual ones. The amount of income the division will see depends on the S&P sponsorship of the B&F breakfast and where the money flows: directly to us or through the hotel. The division is still in very good financial shape, however, with combined accounts totally about \$51,000. There is an ongoing issue with the SLA regarding our division's membership numbers, which the SLA counted as 2,591 on 1 December 2004. Based on that number, we get a check from the SLA in late March for nearly \$25,910.

Marty: The SLA should move the roll call to February 1st after the late-December, early-January renewal process has run its course.

Terri: The SLA should also directly provide the Chair with a membership report.

Sylvia: The Membership Chair should be an executive board position.

ACTION ITEM: Sylvia James will bring up this issue at her first meeting with the board as the new chair on Wednesday, June 9.

Sylvia: As the current Membership Chair reported to the current B&F Chair on the results of the SLA's recent membership drive regarding new members to the SLA-B&F division?

Hal: Historically, Membership Chairs has done little, if anything, to chase new members (at least during his many years associated with the B&F board).

Steve: I'd like to suggest that the Membership Chair personally telephone B&F members who have dropped their membership.

Sylvia: We have 500 SLA-B&F members in Europe and we have three people on the Membership Committee.

8. Bulletin Editor's Report (Lenox in lieu of Platt, who couldn't make meeting)

Cindy: Vicky Platt is out on pregnancy and former-editor Chris Hoepfner will handle the editor's duties for the Fall issue.

Cindy: The last two issues of the Bulletin have been disasters. The Winter issue featured a back inside-the-cover page with a mixed up roster of current-and-former board members. This was not a bright star for the year, because this is how many members directly contact board officers.

Terri: Who is responsible for final proofing?

Cindy: In addition, the Spring issue has yet to arrive and it was intended to promote scheduled programs at the Nashville conference. The editor said she was kept waiting by ad copy that missed the submission deadline.

9. Report by the Bulletin Advertising Manager: (Mills, unable to attend meeting)

From report by Christine: There was one new advertiser in the Bulletin: Reuters. More ads should appear as the economy picks back up. Revenue for Fall issue: \$2,800, but \$1,300 remains outstanding. Revenue for Winter issue: \$2,300 with another \$1,300 still outstanding from the same advertisers who owe from the Fall issue. Revenue for Spring issue: \$2,300 with the whole total as yet uncollected. She promised to pursue the outstanding balances till they accounts are settled. She also promised to help the new advertising manager get up-to-speed on the job when the new manager is announced.

ACTION ITEM: Marty Cullen volunteered to talk to Christine Mills about how to best go about collecting the outstanding balances.

Cindy: When I was Bulletin Editor, I also helped collect outstanding ad revenue.

Gail: What about collections for past ads that were outstanding from before Christine took over last year?

Terri: Other chapters require pre-payment.

10. Webmaster Report: (Riley)

Cindy: The previous Webmaster was overscheduled and unwilling to fully take on the responsibilities that the position demanded. She had good intentions and she did come up with a new look for the site rather than keep the content up to date. Karin worked hard with Chris this year to see that she had everything she needed. Her repeated lack of follow-through led the B&F Chair to recruit a new Webmaster, Verna Riley.

Sylvia: The B&F site needs a content manager. The site also needs to be "internationalized" and updated with the correct content: the "Big 5" accounting firms are now known as the "Big Four" and have been for quite some time.

11. SLA-B&F Discussion List Manager's Report: (Lenox for Panchenko, who couldn't attend meeting)

Cindy: The discussion list works well and has for year under the current manager's tutelage.

12. Vendor Relations Committee's Report: (Cullen, Co-Chair)

Marty: John Ganly and I are still after a couple of vendors who still owe us from last year in New York. I plan on visiting the companies at their booths in the Nashville Exhibit Hall. Also, it should be noted that some previously significant vendors decided to skip the Nashville convention this year. Thomson has not given B&F a dime this year or last year in New York. It's a shame. It's time to re-strategize on how to get them back into the sponsorship fold.

Bob: Why? Is it because the company prefers to give to SLA directly?

Sylvia: Bureau van Dijk wants to sponsor a C.E. course (i.e., pay the costs for the in-house audio-visual bill and for course materials). Note: The company won't sponsor open houses or social events in Europe for SLA.

13. Nominations Committee Report: (Kochoff)

Steve: There are three new officers up for a vote on Wednesday, June 9:

- For B&F Chair-Elect – Toby Pearlstein, Director of Information Services for Bain & Company/Boston.
- For B&F Director 2004-06 – Christopher Hoepfner, Associate Director of Libraries for DePaul University/Chicago.
- For B&F Secretary 2004-06 – Kevin Manion, Associate Director of Strategic Planning & Information Services for Consumers Union/Consumers Report (Yonkers, N.Y.).

14. Awards Committee Report: (Cullen)

Marty: The Bureau of National Affairs (BNA) had agreed to pay \$2,500 to sponsor the SLA-B&F's Distinguished Member Award.

Sylvia: For receiving an award for \$2,500, the winner should contribute something to the B&F division. Perhaps writing an article for the Bulletin? Perhaps they could speak about their achievements that lead to the award. I think the award should be something people aspire to win. Put some conditions on it: perhaps it could be to go to an event for information professionals one wouldn't normally go to, such as the Online conference in Europe. By giving money alone, SLA-B&F doesn't advance the division.

Marty: That's a good idea. The money could help the winner to do something for the division.

Hal: The sponsor will get more out of the award if the winner helps promote the award.

Steve: Ask the sponsor about how to best maximize the award.

Sylvia: Perhaps the sponsor could have a seat on the nomination/judging committee.

Cindy: The board needs to better define this. We have to look at tradition. It is supposed to be a reward.

Terri: If this award is going to be \$2,500 annually, it will need its own sponsor. The SLA-B&F treasury could probably absorb a \$1,000 award by without any additional underwriting help, however. Perhaps the \$2,500 from BNA could underwrite two awards for \$1,250 apiece?

Terri: I make a motion to add this topic to the agenda for the June 9 executive board meeting. Motion was seconded and accepted.

ACTION ITEM: Sylvia James will add this topic to her agenda. Sylvia will also share materials from how the awards process is run by SLA in Europe.

ACTION ITEM: Verna Riley will delete the reference to Primark on the SLA-B&F Web site as a named sponsor of the Outstanding Achievement in Business Librarianship.

15. Report by the Chair of the Centers of Excellence Committee: (Kirkwood)

Hal: Now into its third year, the Centers of Excellence (C.O.E.) Awards Program is still taking baby steps. It's growing up. This past year I polled previous winners and judges about improving the process. There is a consensus that the award requirements should require measurable outcomes. Also, there is a need for a "template" or a clearer "list" of expectations. The C.O.E. also presents many opportunities for marketing the award, the winners, the sponsors and the B&F division. Perhaps past winners could be asked to report on what impact, if any, the award has done for their institution's reputation either inside or outside the organization. I have printed up a deck of promotional cards to be handed out at the Nashville conference to help generate buzz early and stimulate earlier submission of applications.

Steve: The award is patterned on the Malcolm Baldrige Awards and the sharing of best practices. There needs to be an article written on these award-winning practices and then they could be assembled into a book, perhaps by a person on the tenure-track. After all, this is a juried award. Articles and a book could serve as another way to reward the organization and to help add an incentive to other potential nominees.

Sylvia: Articles and a book could also help the winners within their own organizations highlight the department's accomplishments and recognition.

16. Report of the Grants & Stipends Chair: (Reyes)

Awilda: Time was a factor in the submission process this year and it was decided that applicants should submit their applications by email. A total of 21 professional and student applicants submitted essays for consideration.

Student Stipend Winners:

- Elizabeth Grimes, University of Maryland
- Laura L. Leavitt, University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign

Professional Grant Winners:

- Judith Akalaitis, research librarian at Agilent Technologies – Wireless Division
- Verna L. Riley, research & data management librarian, The Center for Community Capitalism – Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise
- Leslie Rodgers, research analyst, Lucent Technologies – Integrated Information Solutions

- Holly Eggleston, business librarian & assistant professor, University of Montana

Holly Eggleston had to forfeit her award because she couldn't attend the Nashville conference.

17. Report of the Public Relations Chair: (Venable)

Jan: In the past year, the chair created a press release spreadsheet for the division by combining two media lists that originated in the SLA's Public Relations office. For the first time, press releases this past year for the C.O.E. Award winners were also distributed through the Associated Press.

18. Report of the Mentoring Committee: (Marvin)

Stephen: The chair recommends that B&F utilize the new Community of Practice (COP) tool developed by the SLA rather than the present mentoring page on the B&F site. It allows members-only discussions, chats, notes postings, and whatever else the division wants to post. The chair will report back to the board on whether the tool can be customized to exclude non-B&F members and then how to populate the database with SLA-B&F members. There were 24 mentors and 23 mentees in 2003. The chair tried to contact many of these participants for feedback, but many were no longer SLA members. The mentoring portion of the SLA-B&F Web site no longer works and needs to be fixed or replaced by a COP model. I would like to re-energize the mentoring process and will be soliciting new participants at SLA-B&F open houses in Nashville.

Cindy: COP opens up new avenues and SLA supports it. However, it shouldn't replace personal contact between mentors and mentees. SLA-B&F board members are asked to help solicit new participants at the Nashville conference.

19. Report of the Publications Chair: (Lesky not present at meeting and didn't submit a written report)

20. Report of the International Relations Chair: (Clarke)

Bob: I assumed the duties of the Committee in January 2004 to fill a vacancy. There was discussion at the SLA-B&F board meeting in January about underwriting the Nashville conference costs of a SLA-B&F member from India. The initiative didn't pass muster with the board for various reasons. This year, I promise to better incorporate Mexican members into SLA-B&F activities and events.

Sylvia: I'll promote the SLA-B&F at international conferences to be held this fall in London and Denmark.

21. Report on Bylaws, Governing Documents & the Practices Manual: (Rausert)

Karin: The newly revised governing document is three pages and will be posted on the SLA-B&F Web site. The site should also include: board roster, terms of office for board members, the Treasurer's report and biographies of board members.

ACTION ITEM: Karin Rausert will work with the Webmaster to post the updated governance documents on the SLA-B&F Web site. Other items to be posted include: board roster, terms of office for board members, the Treasurer's report and biographies of board members.

22. Unfinished Business from 24 January 2004 meeting: (Lenox)

22a. Bulletin Format (McGreevy)

I was asked to report to the board and detail the challenges faced and solutions chosen by the Georgia SLA chapter to transform its quarterly bulletin to an online-only publication. It was a very long process and taxed the resources of the volunteer editor recruited by the Georgia Chapter to oversee the transition. Learning how to use the Adobe Publisher software – a complex tool for online publishing – to replicate the paper-only version of the quarterly Peach State Update was onerous. The transition to an electronic-only distribution of the newsletter offers a chance to change the look and feel of the document. Sponsors have continued to advertise in the newsletter, but the loss of advertising revenue is more than made up for with cost savings derived from electronic distribution of the link to the PDF version of the newsletter. Note: the 2003 biennial member survey of the Food, Agriculture & Nutrition Division of the SLA as published in the division's online publication *Food for Thought* (vol. 34, issue number 2) featured questions about what members thought of the new electronic-only format: did they like the new version, did they like how they were notified about new issues, did they like the content, were they able to easily contribute to the newsletter and was the quality of the content up to their expectations.

Brian: I also surveyed how other SLA chapters and divisions currently leverage the online presence of paid sponsors and advertisers. A few chapters and divisions have a sponsor presence on their homepages. The most common place for sponsors to have a geographic presence is as advertisers in chapter bulletins. The divisions have a stronger presence of paid sponsors. The Advertising & Marketing Division, for example, makes good use of sponsors and their respective logos in a section that highlights Nashville conference sponsors. Other chapters and divisions feature book reviews with a thumbnail of the book cover. This could open up additional sponsorship possibilities for B&F. The B&F division is one of the last divisions to have its newsletter delivered electronically. Many chapters have very sophisticated looking newsletters that take advantage of the medium.

22b. Report of the Strategic Planning Chair: (Kiss)

Gayle: The committee made several recommendations as well as proposals for further board discussion in its written report, including:

- Simplifying the Division's reporting structure and responsibilities to reduce the extensive workload of the Division chair.
- Better involve and retain student-stipend winners.
- New proposals to increase membership and ensure membership renewal.

No action was taken by the board on the proposals or discussion points presented.

23. New Business:

None mentioned.

24. Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:50 p.m.