APPENDIX C

Nominating Committee Procedures Manual

Mountain Plains Library Association
Nominating Committee Procedures Manual

Guide to the Nomination and Election Process

I. GETTING READY

The Nominating Committee
The President appoints the chair of the committee. Ideally this will be someone with previous experience on the committee. The committee is composed of one representative from each member state, appointed by the President.

Committee Calendar and Schedule
As soon as the committee is appointed, establish the calendar for the committee. Appointments are usually made as soon as the new officers take office. One of the most important steps the chair of nominations can take is to plan the work for the year, based on when the ballots must be mailed and returned, so the election results are known before the annual conference takes place.

Develop the calendar in consultation with the newsletter editor (because ballots are mailed to members along with the newsletter) and with the Executive Secretary of MPLA (who copies and collates the ballot, counts the results, and announces the winners).

Develop the calendar working back from the date of the next conference, and include:

> Conference date
> Date by which results are announced
> Date on which ballots are due to Executive Secretary
> Date of newsletter in which ballots will be mailed to members
> Date on which to deliver the camera-ready ballots to Executive Secretary
> Date by which nominating committee will have nominations for officers
> (President and Secretary)

> See the sample nominating Committee Schedule.

Important note: It is impossible to go a good job if you don't leave enough time for committee input, making calls to potential candidates, and giving members who are asked time to consider if they can run for office. People need time to think about making a commitment, and it can take several weeks if you have to try several people. Set the schedule and deadlines as soon as you can, and begin your work early so you do not run into a crisis while trying to get the ballot out on time.

Electronic Discussion Group
As soon as the committee is appointed, request that the Executive Secretary set up an electronic discussion group. This will allow you to contact everyone at once with a message, and all members of the committee can see responses posted to the list.

Contact everyone using the electronic list and be sure they are receiving messages.

Distribute the schedule to the committee on the list.
Be sure they all have a copy of the current MPLA membership Directory. They will need it to do the work of this committee.

Use the List to post questions for discussion, and share names of potential candidates.

You may also use the MPLA Board list to contact the section chairs about deadlines, etc so you can reach all of them with announcements or reminders as well.

Delegation of tasks
Others on the committee may be asked to take on parts of the process so it doesn't all fall to the chair. Some aspects may require computer skills and support. Some tasks that may be delegated are:

- Calling the potential candidates for either President or Secretary (be sure the callers are prepared if this is not done by the chair, see "contacting candidates" below.

- Composing the ballot. Will require some layout and ability to work with formatting; possibly use of a scanner for photographs, and proofreading skills. The committee provides camera-ready copy of the ballot to the Executive Director.

II. NOMINATING OFFICERS

Nominations for Officers
The Nominating Committee is responsible for identifying candidates for just two offices – President-elect and Recording Secretary.

Two candidates should be identified for the ballot for each office.

The members of the committee should be asked to identify at least one person from their state for each office, President-elect and Recording Secretary.

Committee members, especially those from some states with larger memberships, may be able to offer more than one name, and should be encouraged to do so.

All members of the committee should consult the most current MPLA membership directory, which contains a list of the MPLA members in their state. If they have misplaced their copy, extras can be provided by the executive secretary.

A list of potential candidates should be created and passed along from the previous year. It should include members who were recommended for the ballot, but either not contacted, or who were asked to run but were but unable to do so at this time - but would be interested being on the ballot in the future. Share the list with the committee and get feedback to find out if they believe these are still good choices. Solicit new names to add and prioritize the list for making calls.

Contacting potential candidates
The chair should call the candidates and ask them if they would accept the nomination. Be prepared when you call to:

- Explain the duties of the office
- Provide the appropriate pages from the MPLA Manual of Procedures, which includes the bylaws. This can be sent by fax, but the best option is to refer them to the copy of the manual on the MPLA Web site at http://.www.mpla.us/
- This describes the responsibilities of the position, financial implications for travel, timeline for assuming office, and what support will be available from the Association.
- Have available the schedule of future conferences with dates and places for their information.
- Give them a reasonable amount of time to consider, but to keep on schedule, give them a deadline to respond. Some years several people are asked before two agree to be placed on the ballot. Waiting more than a week for an answer may be more than the process can afford.

Candidate Information Form
Provide those who agree to run with a candidate information form.

An updated copy with current deadlines and "return to" information should be posted and available on the MPLA web site for candidates to access and use. The address is www.usd.edu/mpla/committees/nominations.

This form is also provided on the disk included with this guide so it can be sent electronically as an email attachment or printed and faxed if necessary.

<u>ALL INFORMATION SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY by EMAIL.</u>
If everyone follows the established format, composing the ballot is greatly simplified and only involves, copying, cutting and pasting – instead of major keyboarding! Digital photographs should be submitted, if possible.

Pictures of Candidates
Ask candidates who agree to run to provide a current portrait photograph. It will be easier to compose the ballot if they can provide a digital photograph; if not, a scanner will be needed to copy and insert the picture.

So that all candidates are presented equally, pictures should not be provided for some and not others. For the recent past years, only photographs of candidates for President-elect and Recording Secretary have been included because of the difficulty of getting them for everyone. The committee may opt to provide pictures of all the candidates, including those running for sections. If so, the "equality" guideline should apply and the sections will need to solicit pictures as well as professional information from candidates.

III. PREPARATION OF THE BALLOT

The complete ballot must be provided to the Executive Secretary in copy-ready form in time to be copied and mailed to members in the summer issue of the newsletter. Ballot preparation requires some word-processing expertise, and possibility access to a scanner.

Three things will make this an easy task:

1) All the candidates must submit information using a form, so it doesn't have to be re-written. <u>See Sample</u> of the candidate information form to be used.
2) The forms must be submitted electronically to a single location, as an email attachment, so the information doesn't have to be keyed in.
3) Use the format from the previous year, available on a diskette, and "paste" in the current candidate information for the officers candidates.

Photographs of candidates for President-elect and Recording Secretary should be inserted, as specified above.

Ballots are to be returned to the Executive Secretary by the specified date (included on each ballot in a "return to…by…. " note). <u>See sample ballots</u>.

In April 2000, The Board voted to not provide the option of write-in candidates. The ballot therefore should not include a space for this.

Use of the Newsletter
In some years, a list of candidates and the offices for which they are running has appeared in the *MPLA Newsletter* before the election. <u>See Sample</u>. The chair or

the member of the committee responsible for composing the ballot should prepare and submit the information, if it is to be included. Sometimes the schedule of both the newsletter and the committee may not allow for this announcement.

The Election
The Executive Secretary mails out and then counts the ballots, notifies the candidates, committee and board members of the results, and announces the winners on the MPLA page and in the Newsletter. See Sample.

IV.   WRAPPING UP and PASSING THE TORCH

Report to the President
The chair of the committee prepares a final report for the President, outlining the work of the committee and including the names of those who were asked to run, the members who did run, and the outcome.

Recommendations from the committee
The final report should include any recommendations that the committee may wish to offer to improve the process. These should also be sent to the President-elect, if action would be required in the following year. Copies of the final report and any recommendation that are made should be filed in the MPLA Handbook briefcase for the chair of the Nominating Committee and also included with materials passed along to next committee for the following year.

Things to hand to the incoming committee
MPLA Handbook and briefcase should be sent to the incoming chair.

The list of potential candidates for officers, the forms for the candidate information and for the ballot layout on a disk, and a copy of the procedures (this item) should also be passed along to next year's committee.