CO-4

Electronic Communications Committee Report
for the MPLA Executive Board Meeting March 5, 2005

The committee successfully utilized the MemberClicks' ECC Bulletin Board to make recommendations and comments to help meet its goals and objectives from the Long Range Plan.

The ECC Online Meeting Subgroup was established with members Wes Edens and Judy Druse participating. The subgroup was established to monitor online meeting software. To find out what previous committees had found, old minutes were reviewed. Vendors Web sites were also checked. Online meeting technology has not changed that much from the previous evaluations just maybe some more "bells and whistles" that might have been added. In the future, the committee will sign up for a free online training module from one of the major vendors like Citrix. The Chair will ask Wes to provide list of products that he found. Wes noted that (as had previous committees found) the prices were still too high. For voice and online presentation delivery (i.e. Powerpoint), its 50 cents per minute per person from WebEx. At this point it looks like online conferencing is still too pricey. Teleconferencing is probably the best deal for the money, especially for small groups. Judy noted using online software can be too time consuming to set up on the computer which could result in losing members.

The ECC MemberClicks Subgroup was established to develop expertise with MemberClicks and promote its use. Jean Anderson volunteered. The Chair will check with Dan Chaney about highlighting a MemberClicks feature for the next newsletter.

The ECC Discussion Lists Subgroup was established to develop policies to govern the use of MPLA lists and discussion feature on MemberClicks. Judith Howard and Eric Hansen volunteered. A MPLA Discussion List Policy is already available. Since the use of the MemberClicks Bulletin Board/Discussion feature is low, the Committee noted that members will need to be enticed to log on and use it. To encourage the use of MemberClicks, restricting access to certain features or services from the MPLA Web site would help. Members would have to login to MemberClicks to access the information. The Board will have to find a balance/tradeoff between having the Web site as a great marketing tool for MPLA and encouraging the use of MemberClicks with restricted access. Below is a list of possible areas that the Board could consider for restricted access:

Member Services
Membership Directory
Membership renewal
Change Personal Information

MPLA Forms
Executive Board Travel Reimbursement
Membership Renewal
MPLA Leadership Retreat

Documents & Reports
Executive Board Minutes (perhaps newest one available, archive restricted)
MPLA Grant Opportunities
MPLA Manual
Poll Results (i.e. salary survey)
Finances

From the Bulletin Board discussion everyone agreed Jobline should not be restricted. One member did not think MPLA forms should be restricted, while another did not think there should be any restriction at all.

It was also recommended that an online survey or a focus group at the next conference gather input from the members to what incentives could be offered to encourage MemberClicks use. A question was raised if the bulletin board has a feature that notifies the participant when a message has been posted (i.e., Instant Messaging feature).

Janet Ahrberg, ECC Chair