

TF-1

MPLA Reorganization Task Force Recommendations

July 23, 2005 Final Report

Task Force Charge: Review the existing structure of MPLA and its Board (sections, officers, paid staff, representatives, committees) and recommend changes that would better reflect the needs and interests of members and contribute to greater organizational effectiveness.

Issues:

Current make up of sections has not been reviewed in many years; do we have the right ones that truly reflect member interests? Are there too many, too few, or not the right number of MPLA sections? It has been suggested that members be surveyed to determine interests; this can be done electronically on Memberclicks. That database will also show the number of members in each section.

Continual difficulty in getting anyone to run for section officers; should these continue to be elected? They are now often de facto appointments since usually only one name is on the ballot. Should they continue to be voting members of the board? Should their role change to be solely the program-planning group for MPLA?

Role of Committee Chairs: Committees do much of the work of the organization but often operate largely on their own. Should Committee chairs also be on the board as voting members? Would the travel costs be prohibitive?

What size should the Board be? What size can we afford?

Motion passed by the Board in July 2004:

"To appoint a task force to study the organization of MPLA and make recommendations for changes in the current structure of sections and committees and the set up of the board of directors."

Committee members who worked on this task force are listed at the end of the report. The Task Force held three two-hour phone conference meetings and worked between those meetings via e-mail and via the telephone to develop the following recommendations.

Recommended Standing Committees:

- Awards
- Administration Committee (formerly Finance, Management, Bylaws & Procedures)
Consists of the president, past president, vice-president/president-elect, secretary, one state representative, one electronic community moderator and the executive secretary who is an ex officio member. The person on the Administration Committee who is in

charge of Bylaws should be present at all meetings (electronically or in person if Bylaws are a major issue).

- Communications (formerly Electronic Communications)
- Leadership Institute
- Nominating
- Professional Development (formerly Professional Development Grants, Scholarship, and Continuing Education)
- Membership

The Membership Committee's charge in the Procedure Manual would be stated as:

1. Promotion of new membership.
2. Retention of existing members

The Administration Committee will address the organizational shortcomings and lack of concrete outcomes by the Membership Committee by clarifying and strengthening the specific tasks assigned to this Committee in the *Manual of Procedure*.

The Intellectual Freedom committee should become an Electronic Community (explained below).

Responsibility for Public Relations will be assigned to the Newsletter Editor.

The Webmaster and Newsletter Editor will be ex officio members of the Communications Committee.

One board member will be appointed by the President to serve on each committee and be both an active member of the committee and a liaison to the Board.

Additionally, there will be a Conference Program Council chaired by the Vice President/President-Elect. The Council's members would represent each of the Electronic Communities and would be responsible for submitting suggested conference programs. The incoming President in consultation with the outgoing Moderator of each Electronic Community would appoint them. The Vice President/President-Elect would continue to be the direct liaison between MPLA and the host state association's conference planning group.

Recommendations on Sections:

It is the consensus of the Task Force to evolve sections into active Electronic Communities where members can gain insight into best practice and problem solve in specific interest areas while developing relationships with other MPLA members.

1. Conduct an electronic survey asking all MPLA members to identify the 2 communities, from a prepared list, that they are most interested in joining. This is to determine the initial list of electronic communities to be created. (The offered list will consist of current sections and other areas of interest. Members will not be restricted to participating in only 2 communities; this is for purposes of determining interest only.)
2. Electronic Community Moderators (who will replace Section Chairs) will no longer be elected, nor will they be members of the MPLA Board.

3. MemberClicks will be the electronic space in which the Communities will be created, using the existing Bulletin Board functionality.
4. Communities may request time and a meeting room for a face-to-face gathering at convention, if they so desire.
5. Each Electronic Community will have a Moderator responsible for initiating and facilitating discussion within the MemberClicks space. The Moderator will also represent the community on the Conference Program Council.
6. The Moderator will be selected by the outgoing Moderator and the President-elect of MPLA and appointed for a one-year term. The Vice President/President-Elect will appoint the first Moderators.

SURVEY OF TOPICS OF MUTUAL INTEREST TO MPLA MEMBERS
Sponsored by the MPLA Reorganization Task Force

As MPLA looks at reorganization issues, we would like to know what topics/sections are of most interest to you. The list below does not just reflect current MPLA Sections. It is an attempt to get an idea of how the environment has changed. We want to know what common library topics are of most interest to you for the purposes of online discussions and conference programs. Please respond so as to help MPLA fashion communities of interest that meet the needs of individual members. While we would not recommend limiting an individual's membership to only two, for the purposes of this survey and in an attempt to rank topics, please select only two areas that reflect your strongest interests at this time.

1. ___ Academic Libraries
2. ___ Access Services (circulation, stacks management, etc.)
3. ___ Audiovisual Services
4. ___ Bookmobile Services
5. ___ Children's Services
6. ___ Cataloging
7. ___ Collection Development (traditional & electronic)
8. ___ Government Documents
9. ___ Electronic Publishing & Digitization Services
10. ___ Human Resource Management
11. ___ Intellectual Freedom, Privacy & Censorship Issues
12. ___ Interlibrary Loan / Document Delivery
13. ___ Library Administration
14. ___ Library Systems Services (library electronic infrastructures)
15. ___ New Members
16. ___ Paralibrarians & Support Staff
17. ___ Preservation, Archives and Special Collections
18. ___ Public Libraries
19. ___ Reference & Instructional Services
20. ___ School Libraries
21. ___ Serials
22. ___ Special Libraries

23. ____ State Agencies, Cooperatives & Systems
24. ____ Technical Services
25. ____ Trustees & Boards (governing & advisory)

Recommendations on Board meetings and Potential Use of the Administration Committee

The Task Force understands that the benefits for most individuals of serving on the Board and being active in the Association are the friends and networking that result from such activities. We value these human interactions but also recognize that the environment has changed and the stress of juggling multiple commitments and complicated lives justifies some changes in the way the association functions.

Recommendations

1. Attendees at Board Meetings: The MPLA President, Past President, VP/President-Elect, Recording Secretary, Standing Committee Chairs, and State Representatives are expected to attend board meetings, whether face-to-face, online, or via conference phone call. The paid staff members are not required to attend meetings (whether online, conference call, or face-to-face) except at the request of the Administration Committee. When their attendance is requested, they will attend at Association expense.
2. Scheduling meetings and frequency: Unless there are extraordinary circumstances the Board shall meet face-to-face not more than twice each fiscal year: once immediately prior to conference and once 6 to 8 months later assuming there is sufficient business to require the time and expenses for the second meeting. The President, in consultation with the Administration Committee shall determine if there is sufficient business and purpose to call such meetings and shall do so within an appropriate time frame so members can make travel plans if necessary. If there is not substantial business requiring decisions, meeting should be held online or by conference call. During a transition year from spring-to-fall or fall-to-spring conference schedules, the Board may meet up to three times in person if the Administration Committee deems it necessary.
3. Board agendas, topics and activities: The Board shall conduct routine business (approval of minutes, reading and/or clarification of reports, voting on routine business, and general communication) via the Internet. Even if the perfect meeting software solution is not yet available, the majority of the routine business of the Association can be conducted via email and other electronic means. All reports must be posted a week before the meeting to allow for questions and comments. Each board member is responsible for bringing their own copies of all reports to the meeting, or having them available to view for online or conference call meetings.

When meeting in person, the board should conduct its routine business in an efficient and businesslike manner by addressing policy issues, recommended actions from committee work, and long range planning. Additional time at meetings might well be used for facilitated work sessions on planning issues such as revision and implementation of the Long Range Plan, membership strategies, and other appropriate topics. SEE SAMPLE AGENDA ATTACHED.

4. Training and orientation: In October of 2005, training in the form of electronic tutorials or small conference call sessions shall be initiated for all new board members and committee chairs. A member of the Association skilled as a trainer and familiar with the Association's operations can conduct such training or tutorials. The cost of contracting for such services will be far less expensive and more convenient for all concerned than the real cost of inefficient board meetings and unfulfilled commitments by those in leadership positions in the Association. Such training shall include issues regarding the commitment to the Association, meeting essentials for conference calls, electronic meetings, and face-to-face meetings, as well as practical hints regarding preparation for decision-making on behalf of the Association.
 - o MPLA should hire a qualified trainer to develop tutorials.
 - o Use of a discussion facilitator to lead in-depth working session or lengthy discussion should be considered. The board needs a facilitator in much the same way as a parliamentarian might have been used previously.
5. Action Items: Committee reports shall include recommendations for board action when appropriate rather than merely reports of options. A committee recommendation is a motion that does not require a second.
6. Section Reports: Eliminate section reports with the change in section chair status and responsibilities. Do not require reports from Electronic Communities.
7. State reports: Shall be in writing and on-line only (due one week before a board meeting) and shall be included in the newsletter in summarized or full format.
8. Officer and Paid Staff Reports: There is no need for officers, except possibly the President who may have items to inform the board, to present reports. The Executive Secretary, Webmaster, and Newsletter Editor should prepare reports and an opportunity to ask questions should be provided, all online previous to the meeting.

Supporting evidence and information:

An analysis of the board meetings conducted face-to-face over the most recent three-year period revealed the following information:

- 11 meetings
- 47 hours of meeting time reported in the minutes
- 42 action items reported in the minutes (excluding the approval of the agenda)
 - o 8 were approval of minutes (as corrected)
 - o 6 were items presented as recommendations by the Leadership Institute Committee and approved (first two years of institute especially)
 - o 9 were manual of procedure, by-law, or Long Range Plan changes with little discussion
 - o 3 were approval of the budget as presented by the Committee
 - o 2 were employee evaluation and retention votes (Now handled by the executive committee).
 - o 8 were simple issue votes (endorsement for bibliography, money for Freedom to Read Foundation, letter of support for Western Council grant, etc.)
 - o 4 were related to Board Choice Awards (with lengthy discussions on these)
 - o 2 concerned domain name issues that proved moot

- Meetings at the conclusion of the conference contain no motions and consist almost entirely of reports on the conference with less than 60% of the board members in attendance.

According to the Bylaws the following require a vote of the board:

- Spending
- Bylaw changes
- Procedures
- Policies
- Resolutions

The cost of meetings face-to-face far exceeds the MPLA costs alone. In addition, the following costs are incurred for each meeting:

- Transportation for each attendee (some paid by MPLA, but most paid by individual, their library, or their state association)
- The cost of the ordinary professional time of the individuals (hourly salary plus 30% for benefits)
- The cost (not quantifiable) of time away from home and personal lives an issue of growing concern to many in both the older and the younger generations represented on the board
- The cost for many of making up missed work time and/or fulfilling duties on their own time

SAMPLE Agenda Template:

Before any meeting (online, conference call or face-to-face)

Post:

1. Minutes: Draft minutes from each board meeting must be available on the web no later than two weeks after any meeting is held. Once minutes have been approved by an online vote of the Board members, the corrected minutes should replace the draft on the web site.
2. Agenda
3. Committee Reports with recommendations
4. Reports from Executive Secretary, Webmaster, and Newsletter Editor
5. President's Report
6. State Representative Reports
7. Any reports from working groups or activities requiring decisions.
8. Conference Program Council reports, as needed from VP/President-Elect.

Activities to take place online before a meeting:

1. Additions or corrections to minutes, and approval (vote)

2. Amend or add to agenda
3. Opportunity to ask questions, seek clarification and get answers on all reports prior to the meeting,
4. Announcements

Activities to take place during a meeting

1. Decisions on action items from committees
2. Decisions on spending money, new policies or resolutions
3. Decisions of bylaw changes or procedures
4. Issues related to Long Range Plan activities and goals
5. Working sessions on membership strategies and other initiatives or programs of the board.
6. Discussion on policies and procedures as needed.

Recommendation on Training Officer

The Task Force proposes a new paid position of Training Officer, whose role will be to be available to help all those elected or appointed to MPLA leadership positions, details to be worked out later. The training officer should not be a committee chair. The Training Officer would take the place of the parliamentarian. The Training Officer will be available to help all those elected or appointed to MPLA leadership positions. The Task Force recommends that the Training Officer look into training, tutorials, and tips for running meetings. These tasks could be accomplished by one person or by more than one person.

Recommendation on Steward

The Task Force recommends that the Board appoint Carol Hammond as a Steward to assure the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations, and that she be encouraged to call upon members of the Task Force as needed during the implementation.

Respectfully submitted by the following people who served on the above Task Force:

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