

**Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures
a Division of the American Library Association
Board of Directors Meeting
December 17, 2024; 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Central
Via Zoom**

Members Present:

L. Angie Ohler, President
Don Allgeier
Wendy Tressler
Rachel Fleming
Miranda Bennett (left at 4:00 pm)
Cara Calabrese (left at 4:02 pm)
Lauren Corbett
Thomas Lamanna, II
Amy Swartz
Julie Reese, Executive Director
Alison Van Norman, Board Intern

Ex-Officio:

Morag Boyd
David Dahl
Megan Heady
Karen Schneider

Staff:

Mia Blixt-Shehan
Tom Ferren

Guests:

Melissa Brooks
Margaret Heller
Amber Jones
Steve Kelley
Patti McCall-Junkin
Jeremy Myntti
Mary Rzepczynski
Jacqueline Toce

1. Welcome to Board and Guests

Ohler called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

2. Adoption of Agenda

DOC 25.18 Board Agenda (PDF)

Ohler proposed to adopt the meeting agenda. Calabrese moved and Lamanna seconded.

MOTION unanimously passed to adopt the meeting agenda.

3. Adoption of Consent Agenda

Note: Board members may ask questions about consent agenda reports before voting to accept, and/or ask that a report be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion.

DOC 25.19 [October 2024 Draft Board Meeting Minutes \(PDF\)](#)

DOC 25.20 [2025 Core IFLA Nominations Action Request \(PDF\)](#)

DOC 25.21 [2025 Core Election Slate Nominations Committee Report \(PDF\)](#)

DOC 25.22 [Memorial Resolution Honoring Sheila Intner Action Request \(PDF\)](#)

Fleming moved to remove the Core Election Slate Nominations Committee Report off the consent agenda for a brief discussion. Tressler seconded.

MOTION unanimously passed to remove the Core Election Slate Nominations Committee Report from the consent agenda.

Ohler proposed to adopt the consent agenda minus the Core Election Slate Nominations Committee Report. Tressler moved and Fleming seconded.

MOTION unanimously passed to adopt the amended consent agenda.

4. President's Update

- a. Core Forum
- b. Election Reminder
- c. December Reports
- d. Annual Conference Schedule

Core Forum this year was a resounding success. Forum is seeing growth in registration numbers each year. Ohler reported hearing positive feedback from attendees this year. Kudos to everyone involved for making Core Forum a success, especially the support from Julie, Tom, and Mia.

Ohler reminded Core Board members that they are not permitted to endorse candidates for ALA units according to ALA's approved campaign guidelines. The goal is to ensure that no candidate is given an advantage by receiving a higher level of support from the association or its units. Divisions and roundtables are permitted to publish members who are running for office in their official communication channels. Individuals can express excitement over candidates, as long as the intent is clear that the support is from the individual, from the Core Board member.

Ohler reminded the Board that December reports are due.

ALA has shortened the 2025 Annual Conference schedule. Conference will start on Thursday, and the closing will be Monday instead of the usual Tuesday. Core will need to adjust our conference schedule to limit conflict with sessions, awards ceremonies, pre-conferences, and our Core Gala. Because of this, the first Core Board meeting will need to take place on Thursday. Reese presented a draft schedule for conference, noting that some minor adjustments will be made.

5. Past-President Update

a. 5-Year Anniversary Planning

Tressler reported that the Core 5-Year Anniversary will take place on June 29 from 6-9pm at the Free Library of Philadelphia in the Skyline Room & Terrace. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and desserts will be served, and there will be a cash bar. Tressler and the Core office are currently in negotiations with a speaker: historian and author Ray Arsenault. The anniversary will be a ticketed event—the fee has not yet been determined but will be ready for when ALA registration goes live. There will be fundraising opportunities with new endowment Friends of Core, scholarship donations, and potential sponsors to help with our annual fundraising and sponsorship goals. There will also be a virtual celebration event during the week of September 1, 2025 and likely a celebration at Core Forum 2025 in Denver to close out the anniversary year. Lastly, there will be a separate fundraising campaign for our endowment to celebrate the 5-year anniversary.

Tressler added an item to her update regarding LibLearnX. The final LLX conference will take place at the end of January 2025 in Phoenix. Core 101 at LLX will be on Saturday, January 25 at PCC West, Lecture Hall 207. Core was selected for an Emerging Leaders project for the 2025 Emerging Leaders cohort. The Emerging Leaders kick-off is at LLX. Tressler will be attending part of their full-day event to get the Emerging Leaders started on their project. Tressler will also be attending the LLX Governance Institute for Core.

6. Executive Director Update

- a. Core Forum
- b. Staffing Update
- c. Giving Tuesday Results
- d. ALA/Core Office Holiday Closure

The official finance report on Core Forum from ALA will be in the November FY25 budget report, which we are still waiting to receive. We received \$36,000 in donations, which was slightly lower than the fundraising goal of \$54,000. Registrations came in higher than budget: 450 registrations was the goal, and we received 470. Registrations were impacted by the IT outage in the weeks leading up to forum—research has been done on the potential lost revenue and submitted to ALA; they submitted an insurance claim for this which is still being processed. There will be an official Core Forum report with the co-chairs to the Board during the February Board meeting. The next Core

Forum will be held November 12-14, 2025, in Denver, CO. Proposals for Core Forum 2025 will open at the end of January.

The job ad for Membership & Communications Specialist staff position has been posted. This person will assist with membership support, communications, and work with the Marketing and Social Media Committee. We are hoping to start interviewing for this position in January.

This year's Giving Tuesday campaign raised \$2,000 from 16 individual donors. \$1,450 went to the new Friends of Core endowment fund, and \$550 went to the Core Forum scholarship fund. Two scholarship awards were given for the 2024 Core Forum, with more than nine applicants. Last year's Giving Tuesday results were \$490 total from 11 donors, so we are seeing growth in donations.

ALA and Core offices will be closed from December 24 to January 1. Reminder to the Board that staff will not be available to assist with getting into a Core Zoom room during that time.

7. Bylaws & Organization Committee Report

DOC 25.23 [Core Bylaws & Organization Committee Report \(PDF\)](#)

- a. The proposed amendments address four primary objectives:
 - i. Add the Diversity & Inclusion Committee as a committee of the Board and remove the Advocacy Committee as a committee of the Board. This amendment reflects bylaws language changes in support of recommended organization changes made by the Committee Restructure Project Task Force. While the Advocacy Committee would no longer be a committee of the Board, efforts are ongoing to more appropriately situate this work within the organization.
 - ii. Clarify/emphasize that the election for Division Councilor will follow ALA's bylaws. While this is technically covered by Article IX, Section 4, the unique nature of the Councilor role benefits from explicit reference to ALA's governance over Councilor elections.
 - iii. Standardize term limits for Directors-at-Large to match those for Division Councilor. Directors-at-Large are currently prohibited from serving consecutive terms. This restriction doesn't exist for other Board positions, like the Division

Councilor. No concrete reason for this restriction was identified by the Committee.

- iv. Stagger nominating committee membership, expand terms to 2 years, and model best practices from other and past divisions in which the Nominating Committee submits a slate of candidates to the board for approval before the slate goes to ALA.

Dahl presented on behalf of the Bylaws & Organization Committee with proposed amendments to the bylaws. Bylaws amendments require a simple majority vote by voting Board members, then move forward to membership votes, where a 2/3rds majority vote is required. The committee report has four objectives for the bylaws amendments, which are listed above.

Ohler proposed to discuss and vote on each proposed amendment separately.

Ohler proposed to adopt the first proposal to modify the Core Bylaws Article V, Section 1 and Article VIII, Section 1 to add the Diversity & Inclusion Committee as a committee of the Board and remove the Advocacy Committee as a committee of the Board. Allgeier moved and Calabrese seconded.

The Board raised the potential of keeping both committees as division-level committees, and Dahl clarified that if this amendment were to pass, Advocacy would remain a division-level committee, but if it's removed as a committee of the Board the committee chair would no longer be an ex-officio member of the Board. The question was raised about potentially merging the two committees; Boyd reported that there has been discussion on the potential committee merge, and they ultimately found that the charges of the D&I and Advocacy Committees are very different. Interest was expressed in moving the Advocacy Committee into the Access & Equity section in order to make more meaningful connections.

MOTION unanimously passed to modify the Core Bylaws Article V, Section 1 and Article VIII, Section 1 to add the Diversity & Inclusion Committee as a committee of the Board and remove the Advocacy Committee as a committee of the Board.

Ohler proposed to adopt the second proposal to modify the Core Bylaws Article V, Section 1 to clarify/emphasize that the election for Division Councilor will follow ALA's bylaws. Fleming moved and Tressler seconded.

The Board expressed agreement that the Core bylaws should be in alignment with ALA bylaws, especially in regard to ALA Councilor positions.

MOTION unanimously passed to modify the Core Bylaws Article V, Section 1 to clarify/emphasize that the election for Division Councilor will follow ALA's bylaws.

Ohler proposed to adopt the third proposal to modify the Core Bylaws Article V, Section 1 to remove the restriction prohibiting Directors-at-Large from running for re-election to a consecutive term. Swartz motioned and Tressler seconded.

The Board clarified that there is no restriction on number of terms for Councilors in the ALA bylaws, and this amendment would put Core bylaws in alignment with ALA bylaws. It was then noted that this change would allow for building more institutional memory and knowledge among the Board. The Board raised concern about terms being unlimited, or if a successor is not elected. Dahl clarified that the current bylaw doesn't put a limitation on the number of times that someone can run, but that they can't do it consecutively. The nominating committee would also have a role in someone not running for the same position too many times. The Board noted that this change would make the bylaws less restrictive and therefore could make the process of filing leadership positions easier. The idea was proposed for next Nominating Committee to start an internal Standard Operating Procedure to ensure diverse slates. The Board clarified that among other division Councilors, the general practice is to serve two consecutive terms at most, take a break, and then can serve another term if desired and elected.

MOTION unanimously passed to modify the Core Bylaws Article V, Section 1 to remove the restriction prohibiting Directors-at-Large from running for re-election to a consecutive term.

Ohler proposed to adopt the fourth proposal to modify the Core Bylaws Article IX, Section 2 and Section 3 to increase the term lengths for Nominating Committee members and incorporate details of the Committee's role in the nominations process. Calabrese moved and Lamanna seconded.

The Board expressed agreement that term lengths should be more than one year. Ohler confirmed that having members on staggered two-year terms is ideal. Heller, chair of the Nominating Committee, and the Board noted that the Nominating Committee started doing this this year, and this amendment would catch the bylaws up to the practice. Discussion continued, noting that there are definite merits to having staggering in term

memberships.

MOTION unanimously passed to modify the Core Bylaws Article IX, Section 2 and Section 3 to increase the term lengths for Nominating Committee members and incorporate details of the Committee's role in the nominations process.

At this point, Corbett proposed that the Board take a five-minute break. Tressler seconded.

MOTION unanimously passed to take a five-minute break at 3:18pm.

8. Budget Reports

DOC 25.24 FY24 [Final Financial Commentary Report \(PDF\)](#)

DOC 25.25 FY25 [Oct Financial Commentary Report \(PDF\)](#)

DOC 25.26 FY26 [1st Draft Budget Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

Reese shared the FY24 Final Financial Commentary Report with the Board. FY24 saw a -\$48,096 variance in revenue, creating a deficit of \$32,147. The endowment fund was used to reduce the deficit to -\$10,523. Reese then discussed a few of the key budget areas including membership dues, webinars, and annual conference programs and events. So far Core has seen a decline in membership from year to year; the ALA Connect issue that was discovered in Quarter 2 contributed to the membership loss of FY24, which was 4.86%. We are continuing to focus on membership and interest in joining over the next year—Core Forum is a good avenue to continue to drive membership interest. Webinar revenue also had a negative variance in FY24. There were more webinars planned than ended up being presented in the first half of the fiscal year, therefore resulting in lower registration revenue. In the Annual Conference line, we were able to generate an additional \$18,000 in revenue this year. This can be attributed to the new sponsorship opportunities for Core events. Reese also highlighted that Core presents more pre-conference opportunities at ALA Annual than any other division, and pre-conferences brought in \$43,583 in revenue this year.

The FY25 Financial Report contains two months activity so far. The report currently shows a net over expenses of \$14,000. Reese notes that the IT outage in Quarter 1 had a negative impact on this period, and that Core Forum expenses are not reflected yet. Reese raised a concern about the webinar line: many webinars that were planned for Q1 had to be moved to January, so we will be behind in webinar revenue in FY25 as well. Membership revenue is also projected to be behind.

Reese shared the current state of the FY26 1st Draft Budget, which is due to ALA at the

end of January. Reese shared the timeline and process of submitting the budget to ALA, and all the opportunities for review and adjustments that will take place before ALA Annual. The February Board meeting will have an opportunity for the Board to take another look at the budget and discuss. The Board raised a question about FY26 overhead. The percentage shown is currently a draft percentage because ALA calculates this number from two years of data. Reese will confirm with ALA when the actual percentage for overhead will be available and report back to the Board and the Budget & Finance Committee. Reese shared the document that shows how to calculate overhead using the net operating surplus method. Questions remain about when a division doesn't reach a positive surplus, and whether we should include endowment transfer in the budget numbers.

At this point Ohler pointed out the time (3:47pm) and suggested extending the meeting. Tressler motioned to extend 15 minutes. Corbett seconded.
MOTION unanimously passed to extend December Board meeting until 4:15pm.

9. Old Business

Feedback on the Core Journal Editors with T.J. Lamanna, Cara Calabrese, Amy Swartz

Lamanna reported that the working group is in agreement that the pathway for letters of recommendations and referrals should go through the leader of each division, and exceptions can be handled as they come up. The Board shared general agreement that the chair (or whoever is closest to the requestor's work) should handle requests for volunteer recognition, rather than someone they don't work closely with.

10. New Business

The Board raised an issue with the Core Election Slate Nominations Committee Report. According to the ALA bylaws (bylaws VI, 8), if the election of a division or roundtable councilor was not contested, it's an interim appointment and will have another election the following year. The Board considered whether the nominating committee could continue trying to find someone to agree to be on the ballot. Heller, chair of the Nominating Committee reshared the nomination form with the Board. Heller also clarified that the Board does not currently approve the slate information, and the committee will continue working on the slate until the January 10 deadline. Ohler, Heller, Tressler, and Reese will discuss how to address this after the Board meeting adjourns.

11. Recap of Action Items

Fleming will take the Memorial Resolution Honoring Sheila Intner Action Request to Council on behalf of Core and the Board during LibLearnX in January.

Dahl will work with the Bylaws & Organization Committee to prepare the bylaws changes for the ballot, including building pro/con statements for each amendment.

Reese is going to report back on the questions/concerns raised about the FY26 1st Draft Budget.

The next Core Board meeting is on February 13.

12. Adjournment

Ohler proposed to adjourn the meeting. Swartz moved and Fleming seconded. MOTION unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m. Central Time.