

IFRT Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

11:30am - 1:00pm AKT; 12:30-2:00pm PT; 1:30-3:00pm MT; 2:30-4:00pm CT; 3:30-5:00pm ET

MINUTES

Members Present:

Steph Barnaby, Peter Coyl, Rhonda Evans, Karen Gianni, Sarah Hartman-Caverly, Wanda Huffaker, Ray James, Michael Kirby, Rebecca Moorman, Steve Norman, Angela Ocaña, Kristin Pekoll, Deb Sica, Jennifer Steele, Amanda Vazquez.

I. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Ocaña called the meeting to order at 2:35pm CST. A quorum was established.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Members introduced themselves using the Zoom chat feature.

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vazquez moved to approve the agenda. Sica seconded. The motion carried, and was passed with no objections.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

IFRT Executive Committee Minutes - [January 11, 2023](#). Barnaby moved to approve the minutes. Moorman seconded, noting that the spelling of “Immroth” needs to be corrected. The motion carried, and was passed with no objections.

V. REPORT OF OFFICERS

A. Chair: Angela Ocaña

- i. There is an Intellectual Freedom meeting convening at Annual. Angela Ocaña, Amanda Vazquez, Peter Coyl, Deborah Caldwell-Stone, Sam Helmick, maybe Rhonda Evans and Karen Gianni, are meeting tomorrow (2/16) to begin planning this Summit.
- ii. Cyndi Robinson is taking the lead on arranging the IFRT 50th Anniversary party in Chicago. It will be Friday or Saturday (6/23 or 6/24), most likely in a venue that is not the Convention Center.
- iii. Ocaña and Vazquez met with the four emerging leaders. They’re a really great group. They will be working on a project to address unreported challenges.
- iv. There is a Social Justice and Intellectual Freedom group that is meeting with ALA President Lessa Kanani’opua Pelayo-Lozada next week. More information to come.

B. Chair-Elect: Amanda Vazquez

- i. Nothing more to report; she's working on all the projects Ocaña reported on.
- C. Treasurer: Jennifer Steele
 - i. Nothing to report.
- D. Director at Large: Rebecca Moorman
 - i. Planning a Merritt Fundraiser baseball game during ALA Annual. The White Sox are playing the Red Sox. Hopefully we can find a time that doesn't conflict with other events.

VI. REPORT FROM COUNCILOR: Peter Coyl

- A. Posted his [LibLearnX Council Report](#) on Connect.
- B. It's appropriate for Council to introduce a resolution honoring IFRT's 50th anniversary. Coyl will be glad to draft one; Ocaña will help.

VII. REPORT FROM OFFICE FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM: Karen Gianni

- A. We're very close to advertising the OIF Assistant Director position.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Bylaws Committee: Steve Norman
 - i. Council voted on new bylaws, and we seem to be in compliance, so I have nothing to report.
- B. Coalition Building Committee: Ray James
 - i. Lobbied heavily for the Hodges Award at LLX; he is expecting some nominations.
- C. Immroth Committee: Wanda Huffaker
 - i. We have some nominations for the Immroth Award.
- D. Membership Promotion Committee:
 - i. We're still chairless at the moment. Ocaña will appoint someone soon.
- E. Merritt Fund Support Committee: Deb Sica
 - i. First, a huge shout out to Wanda and her hoodie. [Huffaker walked around LLX with a hoodie emblazoned with a Merritt Fund message and QR code.] Sica did a ton of outreach at LLX, really helping raise awareness of the fund. Gianni reported that the Merritt Fund received more donations at LLX than it did at Annual last year.
 - ii. A lot of speakers added the Merritt slide to their presentations, at both LLX and JCLC (the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color).

- F. Nominating Committee: Rebecca Moorman for Rhonda Evans
- i. The *Meet the Candidates* event went well. Almost all the candidates were there, and we ran out of time before we ran out of questions.
 - ii. Vazquez suggested we ask the candidates to write up answers to questions, since we asked them to prepare and ran out of time. Moorman will coordinate with Evans about getting back to candidates.
- G. Oboler Memorial Award Committee: Steph Barnaby
- i. We have five nominees for the Oboler Award. Now there are five books for the committee to read over the next month. They will discuss and make decisions after they've read all the books.
- H. Programming and Events Committee: Johannah Genett
- i. Genett was unable to attend, and she shared these upcoming events through email.

Intellectual Freedom Challenges: Lessons from the Frontlines

Wednesday, March 1, 1-2pm Central Time

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://ala-events.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ugeOWgBUQMG6l8toKK5_nw

At this virtual program, hear from three library staff about a recent intellectual freedom challenge they handled. What worked, what didn't, what do these professionals wish they knew ahead of time. Speakers include: Megan Lotts, art librarian at Rutgers University, who handled a challenge to an art exhibit; Martha Hickson, librarian at North Hunterdon High School in New Jersey, who will share key learning points from her experience defending books in the school district setting; and a staff person who has experienced book challenges in the public library setting.

Campuses don't have a "wokeness" problem. They have a certainty problem.

Friday, April 21 at 12-1pm Central Time

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://ala-events.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VrWxRVzDR7-4SrFv2362bw

Stories of campus political excesses pile up. The word "woke" has become the go-to term for many people who wish to express their concerns about these excesses. It's meant to refer to a narrow progressive political ideology that leads to concerns over free speech, shoutdowns, and self-censorship. But these very real challenges have been misdiagnosed by both higher education's [critics](#) and its [defenders](#). Campuses don't have a "wokeness" problem. They have a certainty problem. And as a major resource for teaching and research, libraries and librarians can play a crucial role in addressing this.

- I. Publications and Communications Committee: Sarah Hartman-Caverly
- i. Hopefully everyone got the newsletter yesterday. We're thinking ahead to next month's newsletter too, and will be asking for annual reports soon.

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INTELLECTUAL
FREEDOM
ROUND TABLE

- ii. Focus for social media: Freedom to Read Week (Canada), promoting awards, promoting Merritt Fund, reshares from affiliated organizations. They will be meeting with the Emerging Leaders, and plan to promote them. Thanks for all the great content from IFRT committees.

IX. LIAISON UPDATES

- A. Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table is looking for a liaison to our group. Ocaña and Huffaker both expressed interest, but they want to give others a chance. Will post on Connect.

X. ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE ROUND TABLE

- A. February 28th, Ocaña will be presenting at *Tune in Tuesday*, a series for ALA Councilors. The focus of the meeting is round tables, and Angela will be talking about the IFRT. She asked us for any feedback about the round table.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Coyl moved that we end the meeting, and Steele seconded. Ocaña adjourned the meeting at 3:27pm CDT.