

Texas Councilor Report
ALA Council Midwinter Meeting to April 2022
Submitted April 16, 2022

I am honored to be serving TLA as our ALA Chapter Councilor from Texas. As you'll see below, the meetings in 2022 were not only concentrated over three days in January, but have continued monthly or more since then and will be ongoing at least through June of 2022.

Council sessions were held virtually, in advance of the LibLearnX conference that now replaces Midwinter. LibLearnX is purely for professional development now; all governance meetings are separate.

June's Council meetings will be in a hybrid format to accommodate councilors who are unable to travel for health or other reasons. ALA is committed to supporting governance roles for all members, even those with limited budgets or travel time for in-person meeting attendance.

Electronic voting is now the norm in all Council meetings, to support speed and accuracy.

The major focus the January meetings was devoted to discussion of the Transforming ALA Governance (TAG) proposals. In our total of 10 hours of meetings, we spent about half talking about TAG, but were not close to even preliminary votes. An additional official meeting was scheduled for and held on March 10 to complete business unfinished in January.

TAG update:

- In addition to formal meetings where votes can be taken under the supervision of our Parliamentarian, there have been several discussion meetings to share ideas about how to move ahead. I have joined all of these well attended events to hear the rich discussions which will inform our work later on the official floor of voting meetings.

One of the biggest sets of decisions is:

- Should Council be the policy-making body as it always has been? Or should those powers be given to a new version of the Executive Board? At the March meeting, an intermediary vote indicated by a margin of (I think) 3 votes that the policy-making powers should go to a new Board format.
- Given that vote, the next major question is how to constitute the Board to ease those concerns while keeping it small.
- **No vote has yet been taken that is binding.** There will be another discussion meeting in April, and one in May in advance of June's Annual Meetings. I plan to attend all in order to best understand the complex nuances of options on the table.
- There is intent to take votes in June that will be binding. **Because any of the changes being considered require changes to the Bylaws, and likely the ALA Constitution as well, every vote will need to be taken twice and then followed by a membership vote.** IF (and not certain) binding votes are successful in June, the second votes would likely be in January 2023 and the membership vote attached to regular election processes in Spring 2023.

Resolutions passed at the March meeting:

- [Resolution to Support School and Youth Services Librarians Facing Increased Intellectual Freedom Challenges](#) was written by the Youth Council Caucus, of which I am a long-time member. It passed overwhelmingly.
- [Resolution to Promote Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) was written by AASL, and also passed overwhelmingly. (PDF submitted with my report.)
- APPROVED, ALA CD#35b, Action Item 3, Revised, that the TAG Task Force's mandate be extended until the ALA Council determines that its work has been completed, that the motion on the ALA governance structure that was included in part C of the TAG Taskforce's report (as amended by Council) be sent back to the Taskforce for further consideration, and that the TAG Taskforce be directed to proceed ... The TAG TF will bring to our official meetings in June proposed new structures for our consideration and vote.
- Two Texas librarians were recognized with resolutions celebrating lives well lived and voices that will be much missed: **Barbara [Immroth](#) and Teri [Lesesne](#).**

The **ALA budget status** is much improved, according to reports from ALA Treasurer Maggie Farrell, BARC Chair Rodney Lippard, and Executive Director Tracie Hall.

Here are some highlights from the many reports to Council.

- There is an **EDI focus** which is of interest here in Texas; work on the intersection of Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice (IF/SJ). **The ALA/OIF IF/SJ Working Group** appointed last June will be hosting three online sessions that are framed as opportunities to learn more about potential alternatives to library neutrality in our current era where libraries are not considered neutral by our patrons. Explanatory information about the three concepts (radical empathy, trauma-informed response, and cultural humility) will be included.
 - Monday, April 25th at 1 p.m. Central; focus on public libraries
 - Tuesday, May 17th at 4 p.m. Central; focus on school libraries
 - Wednesday, June 8th at 2 p.m. Central; focus on academic libraries
- **The Freedom to Read Foundation Report** is especially of interest to us here in Texas, so I include its high points here:
 - Joining with the National Coalition Against Censorship and other civil liberties and civil society organizations to issue a **Statement on the Attack on Books in Schools** to protest the organized political campaign to censor books in schools. The American Library Association also joined the statement.
 - FTRF also joined **coalition letters** written by NCAC protesting book censorship in the **Keller, Texas Independent School District** and the Pinellas County, FL School District.
 - The FTRF Symposium is planning a symposium online for two half-days in July entitled **“Where Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice Meet: A Call to Action.”** Stay tuned for details coming soon about July dates and announcing speakers. The symposium will be free to all, interactive, and will welcome librarians of all types as

- well as other interested community members; its goal is to how we might empower individuals to act and engage in advocacy for intellectual freedom and social justice.
- **Side note: I also sit on the FTRF Board**, and would be remiss not to suggest that everyone here join FTRF. Membership is very affordable, and supports essential legal efforts in behalf of Freedom to Read efforts
 - Executive Director Tracie Hall noted the adoption of **the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Scorecard for Library and Information Organizations** created by the Committee on Diversity and Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services. Details are in the full report.
 - ALA has opened a new coalition effort: **Unite Against Book Bans**. The structure is similar to our Texans for the Right to Read, and I encourage everyone to join both. It is free and located on the internet, on Facebook and on Twitter.

All council documents are available at <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/virtual-january-and-annual-conference-council-meetings>.

Respectfully Submitted
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