

Association of Alabama College and Research Libraries

Executive Board

Virtual Meeting Minutes: August 2, 2017

Present: Rickey Best (Past-President), Peggy Kain (President), Debbie Cobb (Treasurer), Tim Dodge (Secretary), Eric Kidwell (Legislative Liaison), and Dusty Folds (Newsletter Editor).

Called to Order: Past-President Rickey Best called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

Requirement for AACRL Officer Nominees to Be Members of ACRL: Rickey Best introduced the issue by observing that it has been increasingly difficult to recruit nominees for AACRL offices and that an important possible reason may be the current requirement that such nominees be members of *both* the Alabama Chapter and the national ACRL.

Secretary Tim Dodge inquired about how removing this requirement might affect the participation of an AACRL officer attending the Chapter Relations Council meetings of ACRL normally held at the Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference of the American Library Association. Mr. Best suggested that there should be no problem but noted that if the person representing the Alabama Chapter were not a member of ACRL, he/she would not be able to vote. He has witnessed such a situation regarding a member from a state chapter in the upper Midwest attending a recent ACRL Chapter Relations Council meeting.

Mr. Best also noted that increasingly work being done by the ACRL Chapters Council is being done online thus obviating the need to attend in-person meetings too to some extent.

Legislative Liaison Eric Kidwell said that he was less concerned about the loss of Chapters Council voting rights than with recruiting nominees for AACRL officer positions.

Mr. Best suggested revising AACRL Bylaws to *encourage but not require* membership in ACRL thus allowing greater flexibility in recruiting members/officers who are willing to do association work.

This was followed by brief discussion noting that the cost of membership in ACRL is a problem for some AACRL members, especially considering the need to also pay for membership in ALA in order to be able to join ACRL. President Peggy Kain also noted that recruitment of AACRL officer nominees needs to take place earlier.

ACTION: Those present agreed that the AACRL Bylaws should be revised so that AACRL members including nominees for officer positions are to be encouraged but not required to also be members of ACRL. Rickey Best noted that once a draft of the revised Bylaws are ready, they can be sent out to the AACRL membership via e-mail for approval. Meanwhile, he also suggested having Webmaster Ellen Wilson post the text of the to-be-revised Bylaws on the AACRL web site.

Should AACRL Merge with ALLA CUS? This issue recently came up via e-mail discussions on July 19 with an inquiry from President-Elect Jessica Hayes noting that Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee (among others) had their state ACRL chapters structured so as to be part of their

state library association and not as a stand-alone separate entity as is currently true of AACRL. Mr. Dodge had noted during this e-mail exchange that “around 1996 or so, the national ACRL decided that state and regional chapters would need to either become incorporated as their own individual nonprofit organizations, or merge with their state library association, or disband. This was due to liability concerns, i.e., if someone broke a leg at an ACRL state chapter function, national ACRL did not want to potentially get sued by the one who broke his/her leg, etc. AACRL put it to a vote of the AACRL membership somewhere around 1996-97 and we voted to remain a separate entity from ALLA (or AlaLA as it was known then) even though there was and remains significant overlapping membership between AACRL and ALLA CUS. Next step was to incorporate as a non-profit and also tax-exempt organization. This was punted down the road a couple of times until my first term as AACRL President and I had the privilege (and headache) of getting us incorporated with the State of Alabama as a non-profit organization and established with the IRS as a tax-exempt organization. I did get some assistance, especially from Susan Herring who served as AACRL Treasurer at the time, but it was, at least the tax-exempt status part, a real headache but the job was done. I’m not saying we might not want to revisit this issue at some point but I do know that as of the late 1990’s, the AACRL membership wanted AACRL to remain a separate entity form ALLA.”

Mr. Kidwell observed that among the reasons AACRL was established as an independent association (in 1986) was that AACRL would be in control of its own finances and would not need Alabama Library Association Executive Council approval for expenditures, etc. He said that he is opposed to merging with ALLA and that the negatives would outweigh the positives. He noted that if AACRL became a part of ALLA that membership dues would be much higher than currently. Rickey Best also expressed concerns that AACRL money would go to the College, University, and Special Libraries (CUS) division of ALLA and there is no guarantee AACRL would have access to this money to fund its own webinars, workshops, etc. Mr. Folds, however, suggested that ALLA CUS would gain more members even if a few were lost from AACRL. He noted that some current CUS members see no advantage to also being members of AACRL. Mr. Kidwell suggested that if AACRL were to merge with ALLA CUS that either CUS or AACRL would thus disappear in regard to what Mr. Folds had noted. Mr. Kidwell noted that there were many people who had overlapping membership in both groups and that offering a reduced membership rate for AACRL might help, noting that in the past a very low AACRL membership rate had proved attractive. Mr. Best thought offering a reduced membership rate to ALLA CUS might be an incentive to get CUS members to also join AACRL should AACRL be merged into ALLA.

Ms. Kain said there would be a lot of work to do if the AACRL membership decided to merge with ALLA CUS. We would need to talk with CUS to determine terms of membership, the structure of such a merged association, who would serve as officers, and more. Mr. Folds suggested asking the membership if they would be interested in a merger since there is a need to continue this discussion. Ms. Kain agreed there would be a need to talk to the CUS leadership. Mr. Kidwell inquired about how much of AACRL’s identity would need to be given up and that this would really be more something to be decided upon by the ALLA Executive Council rather than the CUS leadership.

Rickey Best observed that if AACRL were to merge with ALLA CUS that this process would likely take two years or more and would involve contacting ACRL, the State of Alabama, and the Internal Revenue Service since AACRL has been incorporated as a non-profit tax-exempt organization since 2001.

ACTION: Investigate this issue more thoroughly. In addition to having Jessica Hayes involved, the following also agreed to help out: Peggy Kain, Dusty Folds, Rickey Best, and Tim Dodge.

Best Practices Sessions for 2018 ALLA Convention: Peggy Kain inquired about what needs to be done. Dusty Folds said he will include notices appealing for presenters in the forthcoming issue of the newsletter. Rickey Best suggested starting earlier is better and that calls for Best Practices presenters go out no later than early September. Also ideas for a webinar should start being considered now. **Please send ideas for a webinar to Ms. Kain.**

Web Site Update: Treasurer Debbie Cobb reported on behalf of the absent Webmaster, Ellen Wilson. The current hosting option expires in November. Ms. Wilson plans to engage the new hosting option in September, thus allowing for a two month transition period. The new web site hosting service is called DreamHost. Ms. Wilson plans to do a full back-up of the current AACRL web site. The new one should have the same functionality as the existing web site and will continue to have the same URL (<http://www.aacrl.org/>). She plans to fix billing operations so as to avoid double-billing problems that have been experienced.

Miscellaneous: Debbie Cobb plans to send Peggy Kain the ACRL reimbursement form within the next week.

Adjourned: 2:47 p.m.

Submitted by:

Tim Dodge
AACRL Secretary