



## **Vendor Relations Issues, Strategic Directions Action Planning, and Bylaws Amendments Highlight Spring Executive Board Meeting**

As I write, I am flying from a chapter visit to the Northern California Association of Law Libraries (NOCALL) meeting, held in gorgeous Napa. The hills there were a glorious light green, and the grape vines were just beginning to bud. It was a great time to be in Napa, and the NOCALL meeting was fabulous, including a great time on the Wine Train.

I am on my way to Chicago for the spring Executive Board meeting, where I hope the weather is not too bad. Spring is coming slowly, and, as every year at this time, we are all anxious for the flowers to come up and the trees to turn green. By the time you read this, we will all be preparing to travel to Portland, Oregon, for the first AALL Annual Meeting on the West Coast in five years. See you there.

The AALL Executive Board's spring meeting was held in Chicago, April 2-5. President Ann Fessenden presided over an ambitious agenda. The board was joined by Council of Chapter Presidents Chair Mary Lu Linnane, SIS Council Chair Catherine Lemann, and AALL staff—Executive Director Kate Hagan, Acting Washington Affairs Representative Mary Alice Baish, Director of Finance and Administration Paula Davidson, and Executive Assistant Kim Rundle.

In attendance in a second role, Catherine Lemann was recently elected incoming vice president/president-elect. Also attending as a newly elected member of the board was incoming Secretary Ruth Hill. Both Lemann and Hill will take office at the close of the Annual Meeting in July.

### **Planning Day**

The Executive Board spent one full day planning for ongoing implementation of projects related to the AALL Strategic Directions 2005-2010. Maureen Sullivan facilitated the discussion, which focused on the identification of board actions coming from the Strategic Directions. Hagan provided the board with a very useful presentation that summarized some

“Findings and Analysis” of the results from the AALL Member Survey, which was distributed electronically to members last fall.

The findings included five priorities for board attention:

- Increase awareness of member services
- Engage more members
- Expand educational opportunities
- Use technology effectively
- Demonstrate advocacy efforts and value.

The board used the five priorities as the focal point of its discussions and ultimate decisions for action.

### **Formal Board Meeting—Committee of the Whole Discussions**

As is our current practice, part of the board meeting was devoted to “committee of the whole” discussion. In this type of discussion, parliamentary procedure rules are suspended so that the discussion can be free flowing. This method is accomplished by making the whole board one large committee, i.e., committee of the whole.

Topics discussed during these periods of the meeting included vendor relations, the report of the Developing Law Librarians for the Future Special Committee, and the AALL resolutions procedures.

### **Action Items**

The board meeting agenda included many action items. Action items are agenda items for which a vote of the board is required. First, the board approved several items submitted by Treasurer David Mao on behalf of the Board Finance and Budget Committee. Those items included approval of payment for the costs of continuing to fund the Continuing Professional Education Grants Fund, funding for the 2009 Leadership Academy, and funding for improvements to AALLNET.

In addition, the board approved the 2009 Budget Guidelines and a new AALL Gift Acceptance Policy. The board then approved the Grants Committee's proposal to create two grant applications—one for newer members (less than five years) and one for long-time members (five years or more).

The board also approved recommendations made by the Vendor Strategies Working Group, proposed amendments to the Association bylaws, and a proposal from the Board Policy and Procedure Task Force to explore the feasibility of wider access to board agendas and documents.

Finally, the board approved a new procedure for AALL resolutions, including an online submission form; accepted the recommendations of the Final Report of the Chapter Visits Task Force; and approved the creation of a new Member Advocacy Award to be named after Bob Oakley.

### **Consent Items**

Several consent items were included on the board agenda. Consent items are considered agreed to by the board simply by their submission and presence on the agenda. Consent items included a new version of the Government Relations Policy and a new charge for the new merged committee that will combine the Access to Electronic Information Committee and the Citation Formats Committee.

### **Reports**

The Executive Board meeting was devoted to an extensive agenda, including reports by the president, vice president, treasurer, acting Washington affairs representative, and executive director. President Fessenden reported on her recent activities. She had a very busy spring, including dealing with issues related to vendor relations and planning for the transition of the Washington Affairs Office, given the untimely death of Bob Oakley.

With respect to vendor relations, Fessenden appointed a working group of the board, which developed recommendations for this spring meeting. Subsequent to this meeting, she held individual meetings with the major vendors—BNA, Lexis, Thomson West, and Wolters Kluwer—to further discuss AALL member concerns. Further, Fessenden appointed a special committee, chaired by Sally Holterhoff, to create a plan for the future of the Washington Affairs Office. The report of the committee is due to the board at its fall 2008 meeting.

Fessenden also reported that the new president's e-newsletter has proven to be popular with the AALL membership. Finally, her recent travels include representing AALL at the Northeast Regional Law Libraries Meeting in Toronto in October; the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, in November; the International Association of Law Libraries in Mumbai, India, in December; the Association of American Law Schools meeting in New York City in January; and the American Libraries Association Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia in January.

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Vice President/President-Elect James Duggan also reported on his recent activities. He has been in touch with both the Annual Meeting Planning Committee and 2009 Local Advisory Committee chairs. Planning for the Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., is well under way. Duggan made appointments to the newly formalized Appointments Committee and attended its meeting where he selected new committee members, committee chairs, and vice chairs. Further, Duggan has determined that his presidential initiatives will focus on improving AALLNET and a possible publisher colloquium. He also hopes to establish a special committee on honoring AALL members.

Treasurer Mao presented the recommendations of the recent Finance and Budget Committee meeting, which was held in February. His report included the recommended Budget Guidelines for fiscal year (FY) 2009, FY 2007 year-end statements, and FY 2008 First Quarter Financial Report. For additional information, see "From the Treasurer" in the May 2008 issue of *AALL Spectrum*.

Acting Washington Affairs Representative Baish provided the board with information about recent events. Baish has been busy taking over Oakley's responsibilities. First, she hired a new assistant—Emily Feldman—who has "hit the ground running." Feldman has launched an e-newsletter and has also started a blog. The "AALL Washington Blawg" was successfully launched on February 21. During its first two weeks, more than 700 people visited the blog where they found information about recent Washington Affairs Office (WAO) activities, legislative updates, and items of interest to the law library community.

Second, Baish discussed issues related to "orphan works." We continue to support legislation on orphan works. However, photographers and textile owners continue to oppose the bill. There was a hearing on the legislation in March.

Further, Baish reported on the need for improved funding for the Law Library of Congress. She has been working closely with the American Bar Association (ABA) on the parameters of a bill that Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) hopes to introduce this spring. The bill would: (1) authorize an additional \$3.5 million for the Law Library of Congress; (2) give the Law Library of Congress a separate line item in the federal budget; and (3) authorize the creation of a non-profit foundation. The foundation would be the mechanism for the ABA to begin fundraising efforts for expanded services, such as interlibrary loan and document delivery.

Finally, Baish reported that she received a letter from the Uniform Law Commission informing us that it has approved the

creation of a study committee on "Online Authentication of Legal Materials." Michele Timmons, the Minnesota revisor of statutes and National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL) commissioner who attended our National Summit on Authentic Legal Information in the Digital Age in April 2007, proposed the creation of a study committee last June. Timmons asked to be named to the new committee, as has Diane Boyd-Vine, a NCCUSL commissioner from California and director of the California Legislative Services and Legislative Data Center. Baish has recently initiated discussions with Boyd-Vine about a possible beta test on authenticating California bills. The chair and members of the new study committee will be named at the NCCUSL meeting in August. AALL has been invited to name an observer.

Executive Director Hagan reported on the upcoming Annual Meeting in Portland and the board's schedule for that meeting. As of the date of the Executive Board meeting, registrations were up, as were Exhibit Hall booth sales.

Finally, reports were received from the Chapter Council Chair Linnane and SIS Council Chair Lemann.

### Information Items

Additionally, information items were received for the agenda from a variety of

persons and groups. These items are part of the agenda only for informational purposes and do not require any action on the part of the board. Occasionally these items include a summary spoken report, such as those in the reports section above.

As part of the information items, reports were received from the Board Policy and Procedure Task Force (interim report), the Involving All Our Members Special Committee (preliminary report), the Self Represented Litigation Network (2007 annual report), the Public Access to Government Information Award Winner (2008), the Washington Affairs Office Review Special Committee, and board members reporting on chapter visits.

During a break, the board visited with the AALL staff in the Headquarters office. It is always a nice opportunity for board members to see the staff and reconnect face-to-face with the persons with whom we work closely all year.

This is my final column as your secretary. I now pass the secretary's baton to Ruth Hill. She will be a great new secretary. I wish her the best during the next three years. I have been fortunate to serve as a board member, and I thank you for that opportunity. If you have questions about this column, feel free to contact me or any member of the Executive Board. ■

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