

Missouri Library Association
Executive Board Teleconference
Monday, October 19, 2009
8:00 to 9:10 a.m.

Participants: Kimberlee Ried, Sharon McCaslin, Tony Garrett, Pam Klipsch, Karen Hayden, Sarah Howard, Susan Wray, Crystal Faris, Mary Beth Revels, Joy Dufrain, Brent Husher, Frances Piesbergen

President Kimberlee Ried indicated the purpose of the teleconference was for the Board to consider the contingency plans that she had requested at the special session held on October 7, during the Conference in Columbia. Board members were asked to speak to their recommendations.

Some members questioned whether the budget situation was really as bad as being indicated, and whether it was really necessary or prudent to eliminate the Executive Director's position at this time. Some reasons why it was thought eliminating this position would not be practical included: might not really be a budget savings if we have to hire a management firm to take over duties; some institutions will not support staff to take on the extra duties that could be involved; loss of institutional knowledge of procedures; could alienate more of the membership, etc. Others spoke up that they thought the budget situation could be very problematic and that some drastic measures, including the elimination of the Executive Director's position should be included in the discussion.

President Ried indicated that the budget is administered on a cash basis, hence monies received during this calendar year are applied to expenses for this fiscal year, even if the money received is for membership dues paid for the next fiscal year. The money which we have in our reserves at the moment is tied up in the stock market. Because of the volatility of the market, she would recommend moving the reserves into a more stable interest-bearing account of some sort.

Treasurer Tony Garrett indicated that he has received most of the budget numbers he needs to finalize the 2010 Budget proposal, but not all. It will take a little time to accumulate all of the information to get final numbers for the 2009 Conference.

In the 2010 Budget proposal, he has lowered the Conference income amount from \$70,000 to \$50,000, the Conference expenses by \$10,000 and may be able to reduce it yet another \$10,000 depending upon the figures he receives. The Executive Director position is included, but the part-time Assistant position is not in the proposal. Based on these numbers, he is projecting as much as a \$13,821 deficit or as little as \$3,821 deficit.

President Elect McCaslin is not comfortable with those numbers and feels the deficit will be higher. She would like to see the Board take action to address a higher deficit.

MACRL Chair Brent Husher stated that it appeared that we had two separate problems – the short term situation, which may or may not require drastic action, and a long term situation which could.

President Ried said that she would like to develop a membership recruitment plan. People have been talking about the need for one for a few years, but no action has been taken. Chair Husher indicated that the MACRL Division is in the process of creating such a plan.

It was also mentioned that the Ad Hoc Taskforce is working on many of the issues being discussed at this teleconference and that perhaps we should give them the opportunity to do the job they were created to do.

A discussion followed as to whether there really was time for us to do that since the Taskforce report is not due until sometime next year. In particular, President Elect McCaslin would like to see us proceed on the personnel issue, but focus on the budget aspects of the discussion – i.e. - how that would affect the prospective deficit.

Question was asked whether there is a formal job description for the Executive Director position. After searching the MLA Handbook online, President Ried found and forwarded the job description as listed in the MLA Bylaws and Handbook, noting that it is approximately six years old. It was suggested that the Bylaws and Handbook Committee probably should look into revising the document, in consultation with the current ED and the current Chair of the Bylaws and Handbook Committee. A clearer set of expectations should also be created to go along with any revision of the job description.

Discussion about the connections and interactions MLA has with other institutions and groups, both on a state-wide and national level. Would the elimination of the Executive Director position jeopardize those connections? The issues involved go beyond a single person or circumstance.

Discussion returned to the idea of advocacy; the Board needs to do a better job of advocating for the Association to convince those who have expressed disenchantment or hostility that the Association is a worthwhile organization with much to offer.

President Ried indicated that the contract for the 2010 Conference should not require any money to be spent this fiscal year and that she was satisfied with amounts presented for room rates, food, etc. from the Lodge of the Four Seasons. She is not happy with the numbers coming from the Kansas City area for the 2011 Conference and no contracts have been signed at this time. There needs to be further review and renegotiation to obtain better rates.

Discussion returned to the budget and personnel issues and what timeline we needed to set, particularly if we were going to consider eliminating staff. Remark was made that while most people would like to be able to give the courtesy of advance notice when laying someone off, sometimes that is not possible. If a financial exigency exists and we must eliminate the position, then we cannot let personal feelings cloud our judgment.

President Ried summarized the actions which need to be taken *before* the Nov. 13 Board meeting:

- Treasurer Garrett should make a revised/updated budget available to the Board.
- The MLA Presidents from 2008-2011 should meet with the Executive Director to discuss her duties and to prioritize tasks for the near future.

Brent Husher, Crystal Faris and Sarah Howard said that they would work together to review the contingency plans from each Board member and consolidate them as best as possible. They would also begin discussions on advocacy planning.

The teleconference concluded at approximately 9:10 am