I. January 11, 2022
II. President
III. Liza Vick
IV. Board Action Required (none)
V. Brief Summary of Activities

In early December, I attended the ALA Affiliates meeting, where we discussed how to better strengthen our mutual bonds and shared priorities. Discussion was led by ALA President Patty Wong and Executive Director Tracie Hall. We all have very specialized goals and communities but we agree that we serve all library users and share common desires. President Wong led discussion of strategic priorities we all support, including coming together to advocate at ALA in DC and at state levels. Many of us are currently in strategic planning cycles – MLA, Reforma, BCALA, AJL. Another commonality is that several of the affiliates are engaged in hiring executive directors: APALA and BCALA. We talked about cross promoting membership and engagement: Francesca Marini (TLA President) and I mentioned our conference co-sponsorship and desire to have more partnership in ALA with arts librarians (an ARLIS representative also attended and was keen to collaborate). ALA wants to focus on providing excellent value for membership at the conferences, lest members decide the organization is too large and expensive for them (this mirrors our efforts to be more transparent and engage younger and more diverse members). We’re all keenly focused on highlighting our relevance to members. Organizational membership in ALA for affiliates was mentioned, and some of us wish to explore a joint ALA and Affiliates membership pilot.

The Strategic Planning task force has made incredible progress with input from the board (at our October retreat) and from membership. Since the retreat, the task force and DeEtta Jones and Associate have worked on fine tuning our shared values definitions, and they have exciting plans for the plan rollout in the spring, with ample opportunity for member input and accountability setting (via a survey coming out in the winter and another town hall on February 3). The shared values we established are: advocacy, collaboration, community, growth, inclusion.

The planning committee will co-host the town hall and help us build action item accountability in the plan in micro-cycles (each few years we’ll reevaluate progress toward objectives). Our hope for this plan is to roll it out organically, and bake the objectives into our structure so that all individual members feel they have agency (in addition to committees, task forces, publications). When it comes to implementation of our shared mission and values, rather than a top-down hierarchy, ideally we’ll have grassroots initiative, with member creativity making change.

Election/Board recruitment: We are all invested in more diversity in our leadership structure. Marci Cohen and Bruce Evans are leading an initiative to recruit members to run for election and to demystify our process, modelled on Educause and NERCOMP. Bruce and Student/Early
Career reps (TBD) will co-lead a spring town hall about running for board officer positions. To follow: town halls later in the year focused on editors/special officers and committee membership. They/we hope to encourage all members to feel empowered to self-nominate, and particularly to motivate early career members to feel welcomed to run for elected office.

2022 Hybrid Conference Task Force meetings have resumed, focused on myriad details of our first hybrid conference. Sylvia Yang and Andrew Justice have planned a series of informational videos (I recorded the first, welcoming members to register early, outlining safety protocols). Future videos will be spaced out every few weeks and keep members updated as plans unfold.

It’s been my honor to send out numerous award letters to travel grant recipients for this upcoming conference (Freeman awardees and our first bumper crop of Paraprofessional / Public Librarian awards).

I have been working with the chairs of the Joint “R” Committees (RISM and RILM) about the future of these committees and their various funding models (more to come in the spring). Past President Susannah Cleveland and I met with the Diversity Committee chair to jumpstart the next cycle of Climate Survey (2022).

The Student/Early Career board representative pilot program is in its last year and I have had fruitful discussions with incoming nominating committee chair Bruce Evans about recruiting a student representative for this last pilot year and about our need to diversify election slates.

As you all know, in October the board passed a group of motions that facilitate the digitization of Rowan-Scarecrow monograph series backlist titles for an Open Access collection under the auspices of Internet Archive. Kathleen DeLaurenti has graciously agreed to continue working on this project after her term as Open Access Editor ends in the spring. Her editorial team is facilitating the work of both locating and sending copies to IA (primarily from Johns Hopkins University) and sending letters to author/creators that introduce and explain the project, and help them set up creative commons licensing. CFO team Liz Hille Cribbs and Tracey Rudnick are expertly handling myriad royalties arrangements (communications to authors will go out in the winter).

Respectfully submitted,

Liza Vick, President