



Working Together as a Board, Vendor Relations Issues, and New Committee Structure Highlight Fall Board Meeting

As I begin this column, I am flying to Chicago for the fall Executive Board meeting. I always feel a sense of excitement and anticipation with the start of a new board year—new members bring new ideas and fresh points of view. We will soon learn to work together as a board and swiftly take on the new issues and projects before us.

On a sadder note, I flew yesterday to Washington, D.C., for the memorial service for Bob Oakley, our much beloved colleague and Washington affairs representative. The upcoming board meeting will have an empty seat where he would have sat—he will be sorely missed.

I am beginning my last year as your secretary. I thank you for the opportunity to serve you as a member of the AALL Executive Board.

Attendance

The board met for its fall meeting on November 8-10, 2007, in Oak Brook, Illinois. The fall meeting is regularly held at the McDonalds Corporation training facility—The Lodge—fondly referred to as “Hamburger University.” It is located on a beautiful campus with ponds, geese, and walking paths. Unfortunately, we spend most of our time watching the view from inside, as our meetings take up the bulk of the daylight hours.

The board meeting was preceded on Wednesday afternoon by a board Finance and Budget Committee meeting. Since the Executive Board no longer meets the day after the end of the Annual Meeting in July, the fall meeting is now the first time that the newly elected board meets together. Thus, Thursday morning was devoted to an orientation for the new board members: Vice President James Duggan, Treasurer David Mao, and board members Jean Wenger and Sally Wise. Council of Chapter Presidents Chair Mary Lu Linnane and SIS Council Chair Catherine Lemann were also invited to participate in this orientation.

The orientation included an introduction to AALL finances by Paula

Davidson, AALL director of finance and administration; a discussion of the Continuing Professional Education Program by Celeste Smith, AALL education manager; a summary of Washington Affairs Office projects by Mary Alice Baish, acting Washington affairs representative; and an introduction to legal and fiduciary duties of board members by Lisa Stegink, AALL attorney.

Following the orientation, and for the remainder of the meeting, the board was joined by Baish; Kate Hagan, AALL executive director; Davidson; and Kim Rundle, AALL executive assistant. Pam Reisinger, AALL director of meetings, was also present for a portion of the meeting.

Retreat Discussions

As has been the case for several years, the fall board meeting included time specifically devoted to a retreat. Thursday afternoon and Friday morning were set aside to orient the new board towards working together. Maureen Sullivan, a library consultant and former facilitator for the Association of Research Libraries, who has previously worked with AALL, was the facilitator for the retreat discussions.

The discussions focused on how the board members can work together and what are the individual roles of board members. Sullivan asked board members to think about what they would contribute as individuals, what they needed from others, and what legacy they hoped to leave behind. In addition, a portion of the retreat was devoted to developing a strategy for dealing with recent and ongoing concerns by AALL members regarding vendor relations and AALL. The retreat engendered active participation from all members of the board.

Formal Board Meeting—Committee of the Whole Discussions

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

Two separate committee of the whole discussions were held. The first concerned the future of the Washington Affairs Office, this was also held in Executive Session. As part of this discussion, Mary Alice Baish was named acting Washington affairs representative.

The second topic discussed was vendor relations and AALL. This discussion led to the creation of a vendor relations site on AALLNET and an e-mail from President Ann Fessenden to the membership regarding vendor relations. A Vendor Strategies Working Group, made up of board members, was also created as a result of this discussion.

Actions

The meeting agenda included many action items. Action items are agenda items for which a vote of the board is required. The first action item was for the board to approve recommendations for expenditures by the Finance and Budget Committee. Those recommendations included the reduction of dues for up to one year for unemployed AALL members and two committee requests for funds (Public Relations and Recruitment to Law Librarianship Committees).

Additional action items included approving an action plan for the board for 2007-2008 to implement the AALL Strategic Directions, returning responsibility for selecting the Gallagher Award winners from the board to the Awards Committee, approval of a “CRIV Site Visit Statement of Purpose,” approval of a registration fee waiver for non-AALL member speakers of special interest section (SIS) programs (at the Annual Meeting), and the co-sponsorship of the China-U.S. Conference on Legal Information and Law Libraries (Beijing, May 2009).

Finally, the board approved the final report and recommendations of the Special Committee on AALL Committee Structure. This very extensive and lengthy report provides for an entirely new committee structure for AALL, which designates committees as one of three types—process, policy, or special. Committee terms will vary from one to three years. The new structure calls for the addition of vice chairs to all continuing committees to facilitate the ongoing work of the committee and provide for continuity. The report also provides, for each committee, a two- or three-year transition plan into its new format. Some committees will change names and/or cease to exist.

Consent Items

Four consent items were on the agenda. Consent items are considered agreed to simply by their submission and presence on the agenda. The consent items were voted

upon by the board as one item. The four consent items were:

- acceptance of the final report of the Pro Bono Partnerships Special Committee
- acceptance of a resolution of thanks from the Technical Services-SIS Executive Board to the board for making requested modifications to the Annual Meeting schedule
- approval of the recommended change to the AALLNET volunteer form to allow members to list relevant chapter and SIS experience (by the Leadership Development Special Committee)
- approval of the creation of the Morris L. Cohen Student Essay Contest (recommended by the Legal History and Rare Books-SIS).

Reports

President Fessenden and Vice President Duggan reported on their activities since the July board meeting. In addition to spending time in Chicago to “come up to speed” as the new AALL president, Fessenden represented AALL at the American Bar Association Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admission to the Bar meeting held in San Francisco and at the Northeast Regional Law Libraries Meeting in Toronto. She also conducted chapter visits to the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries (MAALL) and San Diego Area Law Libraries.

She has also been busy appointing new AALL representatives to fill the newly created representative positions recommended by the Task Force on AALL Representatives to Other Organizations, which was passed by the board in July 2007. Further, Fessenden testified before the House Oversight Committee on House Administration concerning funding for the Library of Congress.

Finally, Fessenden read and delivered to the Oakley family a framed resolution in honor of Bob Oakley at the memorial service for Oakley held at Georgetown University Law Center just prior to the board meeting.

Duggan has selected his Annual Meeting Program and Local Advisory Committee chairs for the 2009 conference in Washington, D.C. He had previously selected new members and a chair for the Nominations Committee and has begun his orientation to become president in 2007. He also conducted a chapter visit to the

Western Pacific Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries and sent out a request for volunteers for AALL committees.

Hagan and Reisinger also reported to the board. Hagan reported on her October meeting with Baish and Fessenden to discuss the Washington Affairs Office’s short- and long-term needs. She also traveled to the MAALL chapter meeting.

In addition, she discussed the publication of the *AALL Biennial Salary Survey*, the AALL membership survey, and her newly implemented monthly reports to the board.

Reisinger gave a final report on the 2007 Annual Meeting in New Orleans and reported on plans for the 2008 meeting in Portland. The chairs of the Council of Chapter Presidents (Linnane) and Council of SIS Chairs (Lemann) also delivered short reports on their activities so far during the year.

Mary Alice Baish continued the tradition begun by Bob Oakley of reporting in depth on some of the recent activities (since July 2007) of the Washington Affairs Office (WAO). Initially, Baish educated the board about three developments in the copyright arena. First, the Library Copyright Alliance (LCA) submitted a second amicus brief to the 11th Circuit in *Greenberg v. National Geographic Society* in October. This case involves the digitization of 100 years of *National Geographic* magazine as a set of CD-ROMs. Greenberg is a photographer who alleges copyright infringement.

Second, the American Library Association Washington Office of Information Technology Policy created a new pilot project with the goal of building expertise and broadening the ability of the LCA to be represented at the international level. It selected three new “international copyright advocates,” including AALL’s Jonathan Franklin.

Third, last spring the Section 108 Study Committee, of which Oakley was a member, began to write its report and recommendations.

Baish then noted that the WAO has kept up with its full workload since Oakley’s departure from work in late July and subsequent death. That work includes supporting the *OPEN Government Act*, passed by the Senate in early August; access to federally funded research at the National Institutes of Health; and the appointment of the new public printer, Robert C. Tapella.

Finally, Baish announced that she hired Emily Feldman as the new advocacy communications assistant for the WAO. Feldman is the former staff associate at OpenTheGovernment.org.

If you have any questions about any of these matters, please feel free to contact me or any member of the Executive Board. ■

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in the AALL Washington Affairs Office (WAO). Feldman previously worked for OpenTheGovernment.org, a broad-based coalition of organizations, including AALL, that are committed to making government more open to achieve accountability, security, and safety. Since joining the WAO in November, she has assumed responsibility for our open government issues, as well as improving our communications and advocacy work.

One of her first priorities is to expand the AALL Advocacy online discussion list. If you’re not already a subscriber to the list, now is the time to join. You’ll receive alerts, our e-bulletin, and more information about our issues. Sign up online at www.aallnet.org/aallwash/aalladvocsubscribe.html. ■

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