

**Report from the Oregon Library Association Retreat 2016**  
**Silver Falls State Park**  
**July 25-26 2016**

*This narrative is meant to act as a look back at our wonderful retreat, and to let others know what was discussed and decided. I want to thank Fawn McGee for her heroic minute-taking, which I'm relying upon heavily in order to bring you this document. –Elsa*

**Monday June 25:**

We convened at 1:00, and introduced ourselves to the group (with the icebreaker question of: "what is the best part about your work?") There were 41 attendees.

Here are the highlights of that day, as we went down the agenda:

- **President's report:** Jane Corry discussed the years accomplishments, including the fun and successful conference, our delight that REFORMA is now a roundtable, our focus on strategic planning, the fantastic SSD conference, the Leadership Development Scholarship, and the work of the Legislative Committee.
- **VP's report:** Elsa Loftis thanked Jane for her mentorship, reported on the visit to Washington DC for National Legislative Day, and ALA's annual conference in Orlando to the chapter leader's forum. We then did a review of OLA's mission statement and discussed the previous Vision Documents (Vision 2020, Vision 2010, etc.) as foundational documents to our strategic planning project.
- **Presentation of Strategic Plan:** Coraggio Group. Craig Trames and Holly Valkama discussed the process of the planning, including the survey and focus group sessions. Then they discussed the framework of the plans, including our vision statement, unique role, and reputation. They then outlined the strategic focus and action areas. From Fawn's notes: "Recommendations:
  1. Enhance and expand OLA professional developmental opportunities and programs – there was a suggestion to add conferences such as SSD.
  2. Improve the means and effectiveness of OLA communication
  3. Strengthen OLA's leadership and advocacy role across Oregon. Still being developed; the Legislative Committee does a specialized form of advocacy different than other types of advocacy. Elsa would like to continue to flesh out this topic.
  4. Increase the engagement in OLA and enrich the membership experience.General agreement on these areas of focus. Suggestion of adding an 'exit survey' for people whose OLA membership lapses. Discussion of regional advocacy and support and how important it is. Discussion of how to engage new members versus member retention. Mention of targeting employers to engage membership. Deliberately populate committees with new members, or ask new members what their interests are and match them, actively look for volunteers"

The group discussed this, and operational planning elements: having clear ownership of initiatives, how this is a living document, and so on. There are a few edits to make, based on the group's discussions, which will be done before the August 26<sup>th</sup> board meeting, where the board will vote on this plan's adoption.
- **State Librarian Report:** MaryKay Dahlgreen reported on the State Library's 2017-19 budget submission process. They are asking for 2 additional management positions to replace 2 that have been lost. She discussed the Ready to Read Grant changes that will include teens through age 17. She also reported on the wonderful SSD conference, and congratulated Jane for a great year as president.
- **Conference 2016 Report:** Liisa Sjoblom gave her report: the theme was "Tell your story", there were 513 people in attendance with a net profit of \$43,000. Many changes this year, very positive.

- **Conference 2017 Report:** Michele Burke gave some details about the planning of the coming conference in Salem next year, April 19-22. We will add a Saturday to the conference this year to accommodate OASL members at the Salem Public Library. The theme is "Thriving Together". She is looking for representatives to serve on the program selection committee to review conference proposals. They will use Wordpress and Sched.org again, and considering using a Google form for session proposals. We are looking for suggestions for keynote speakers.

## Tuesday, July 26

After breakfast, people had their choice to attend a presentation about how to navigate Memberclicks, financial need-to-know info, and Parliamentary practices. Newest members were encouraged to attend, and those of us that need a refresher. Those that did not attend that session met in the meal hall to discuss calendaring.

- **Report from calendar breakout group:** Elsa Loftis reported that many people don't use the calendar on Memberclicks. We will try to encourage everyone to use OLA Gmail accounts for calendaring. Board and unit leaders can access the Gmail calendar. The Secretary will add events from others to the calendar. We hope to add the calendar as a widget to the OLA website so that general membership can view it. We identified that these things will go on the calendar: Conference deadlines, Meeting dates, Trainings, Other need-to-know events for the general membership.  
\*\*Someone on the Communications Committee will be assigned to head this up.
- **Financial Report:** Stephanie Lind reported that we are financially healthy. The treasurer's report is on OLA's website along with other financial documents. She highlighted that profits and losses document our dues income is well ahead of schedule, kudos to the Membership Committee and Conference Committee. The Finance and Investments Committee has been working with a couple investment firms, and doing quite well with investments, earnings off of our investments could be a fiscal resource for anything that comes out of the strategic planning that requires money.
- **Meeting Locations for 2016/17 board meetings:** Generally held Fridays from 10-3.
  - **August 26<sup>th</sup>, Hillsboro Public Library**
  - **October 7<sup>th</sup>, Columbia Gorge Community College in the Dalles**
  - **December 2, Eugene Public Library**
  - **February 3, virtual**
  - **April 19, OLA Conference in Salem**
  - **June 2, MCL**
  - **August 25<sup>th</sup>, Crook County**
- **Group discussions:** 6 groups were formed and each group was given 2-3 strategic planning initiatives to discuss. Identified 4 things: Stakeholders, Resources required, Priority/Urgency, and Timeline. The goal here was to workshop the initiatives, or action items, that came out of the strategic plan. When does these get done, and who does them? This is supposed to set our course for the next 3 years, so how do we want to proceed. The following are the group reports after breakout discussion.
- **Group 1: Assess and design a compelling annual professional development program offering:** the Leadership Development Initiative - scholarship to attend outside training, and another piece would be to develop curriculum for professional development. It would be nice to know training needs of rural library staff - work with material from survey from 7 years ago, need a committee or task force and look at and compare with recent surveys and we could possibly use NW Central to match training needs. Offer online webinars and look at training need surveys for content and ask divisions for that. Concrete action item - explore ability to offer meetings with GoToMeeting. We should

look at our account to see if we can offer bigger trainings using it. Evaluate attendees. Members only - added benefit/value proposition. Adding a Saturday to the conference is huge. Focus groups as a form of professional development as a way to network and grow as professionals. Priority/timeline - it's happening and we need to support it. NW Central Roundtable Chair could possibly delegate that task. Survey training needs of rural library staff and offering webinars. Lauren offered to help share trainings amongst rural librarians. Need to approach as a two way street with having rural staff sharing with us.

- **Group 2:** *Evaluate and elevate the OLA website's form, function and user experience:* highest priority, a lot the strategic planning flows from website, resources, takes time, need to hire this out, focus groups need to happen, could be volunteer based, investigate analytics, Shirley will reach out to Member Clicks, mapping online presence, content scan. This comes first above all else. *Ensure higher levels of communication performance with dedicated resources:* Flows from the website being improved. *Improve active marketing and promotion of OLA's brand and benefits:* Member groups, nonmember groups, vendors, exhibitors, potential request money for marketing initiatives, brand ambassadors, reach out to library directors. Potentially ask ALA to point new members to home state's library association site. Hiring out for marketing plan/communication plan: one time hire. We have a style guide on our website. We have a brochure for new members but a reprinting is being held back until after the strategic plan.
- **Group 3:** *Advocacy:* To get a corps of champions we need to educate membership. We are already quite good at legislative work, go to their meetings, partner with organizations that are laying the groundwork that create communities, communities that are having troubles maintaining their libraries at a level, we need to support the local supporters of libraries and we need to know who they are. We need a division for Friends and Trustees. We used to have one but the interest and involvement fizzled. We need to analyze the data that we already have on the importance of libraries.
- **Group 4:** *Build Broader OLA Access Opportunities for Lib Support Staff: Develop Implement Targeted Outreach program* - rural libraries and staff, support staff, new members, diverse staff, OASL and school libraries, unemployed, recent grads, lapsed members and unengaged. *OLA Institutional Knowledge* - look at what we already have and what we need, do an inventory, have transitional meetings within units, training and standardized document management system. Leads to website makeover which is extremely high, start now and rest would flow from that.
- **Group 5:** *Build a Quick Strike project capability for OLA Members to provide easy and simple ways to participate* -students, new members, lapsed members, rural, future leaders, support part time positions. Infrastructure needed, help from units, need a sustainability plan, priority is dependent on other things, communication methods, *Reimagine the Hotline and the tools we use to deliver information*- all members, potential members, resources needed are dynamic unique content, coordination by communications committee, lower priority, various divisions content could be aggregated. *Establish an Eastern/Rural advocacy position and support:* non Willamette valley libraries, money is a big needed resource and people willing to collaborate,

possibly designated positions, high priority. Approval of new Board member position. Possibly regional versus rural.

- **Group 6: Build and Improve Interregional Network Relationships** - stakeholders: special libraries, WLA, southern Oregon libraries, LEO, SAGE, tribal libraries, create liaison positions for other associations.

**Sticker Exercise: Top Priorities** There were 5 identified top priorities:

- Website
- Eastern/Rural/Southern Libraries Support and Advocacy
- Advocacy
- Institutional Knowledge
- Develop/Implement Targeted Outreach Program

**Action items:**

- Address the website - last year Sara did environmental scan other nearby association websites, a new, larger scale environmental scan with laid out criteria should be done. Content, news feed, back end, project where we potentially hire out someone to do this and their work would involve some of this. We also need to figure out what we want it to do. The basic functionalities that have been identified above are some of those things that we need, In addition to environmental scan it would be important for us to do some phone interviews with other associations about their websites. Candice already has done some of this via email and we should look at that. We need to analyze our own site to figure out what we need. Nonprofit association of Oregon might be a good resource. Even if we hire it out we need to be able to make changes and have control, which will require training. We need to get feedback from units that have moved away from Memberclicks, Bring a proposal to the Executive Board meeting in August to approve a taskforce/special committee to figure out the process group and then the implementation group. It would be good to get someone from outside the room involved. Sue will reach out to Crystal. Sara, Elsa, Uta. The committee will form in August, end in December.
- Eastern/Rural/Southern Libraries Support and Advocacy – Taskforce needed. Possible candidates are Buzzy, Kathy Street, Jackie Ray, Karen Clay, Ted Smith, Esther Moberg, Lou Kralik, Angela Arena, Christy Davis, - Elsa and Jane will check with Buzzy about process and rollout of strategic plan and then to contact this group about how to engage and support.
- Communication: Elsa will report of the retreat to post to the Hotline. Reach out to focus groups about how the strategic plan is going and how their input impacted the plan.
- Advocacy: on the Board level before we roll out the strategic plan, create a list of action items that encompass advocacy. Jane and Brooke will work together on this. Look at advocacy taskforce report.
- Institutional Knowledge - have a group figure out what is institutional knowledge, intranet, figure out the how and how developed, we need a best practices and to survey units for their best practices. Form a new group with a liaison on the website group and vice versa. Place to tap past presidents, having age diversity, DIGOR, Bethany
- Develop Targeted Outreach - Program Planning Committee could do outreach to groups who don't normally present, contact library directors and managers (Buzzy). Check

conference committee from SSD for any turnaways. When doing a call for proposals have unit heads, also ask to resubmit any proposals that got turned away last year. Contact units with proposal calls. Sue from the Legal Reference Roundtable will do some targeted outreach. Elsa will contact ORSLA about targeted outreach. New Member Round Table can target. When the call goes out the unit chairs should forward the message to their targeted outreach. Create a webinar on how to submit a proposal and/or presenting.

Thank you to everyone who participated in these great discussions. We will be editing and reviewing the Strategic Plan to reflect the changes we wanted to make as per our discussion, and bringing it to the board on August 26<sup>th</sup> for a vote. If approved, we will unveil the finished plan to our members very soon, along with a proposed timeline for some of the action items and a call for volunteers to serve on some of these projects. I'm looking forward to a productive and exciting year ahead based on our goals and ideas brought forth at this retreat!