

PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2016

DCS Office, 21 North Park, Madison, WI

Present: Frank Power (President), Sybil Better, Lauren Blough, Lewis Bosworth, Mary Boyd, Janet Cabot, Mary DeWolf, Mike DiIorio, John Koch, Scott Kolar, Tim Otis
DCS: James Campbell, Louise Fowler

- I. **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME** – Power called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. He introduced James Campbell, the new DCS liaison. Campbell noted that he had previously served in this capacity and would be a strong supporter and advocate for PLATO.
- II. **MINUTES** – On a motion by Bosworth seconded by DiIorio, the minutes of the January 15th meeting were approved.
- III. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – Power reported that the political scientist Charles Franklin had agreed to speak at the annual meeting. The social hour following the recent Preview was attended by 12-15 persons.
- IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT** – Otis reviewed the December 2015 financial statements. He reported that PLATO is in good financial shape with a surplus projected for the end of the year. Otis and Gail Gordon are meeting with a new bookkeeping service, Numbers for Nonprofits, this afternoon.
- V. **DIALOGUE WITH THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**
Blough, the Curriculum Committee co-chair, identified several challenges facing the committee (and ultimately the Board) including a growth in the number of courses, additional one-term offerings, member interest in different courses such as skill-based courses, and expansion to additional locations. These developments add complexity and require greater coordination. In the future additional funding may be needed to cover additional staff. Otis also suggested that rental costs might increase too. Committee goals for the year include more attention to diversity issues in courses, identifying course locations that are acceptable to coordinators and members and also accessible by public transportation, and greater use of the website by the Committee and course coordinators.

Blough noted that few PLATO classes are totally filled. The art museum course which is very popular now allows students to register only once per year. Other popular courses have been encouraged to set aside 10 percent of places for new students. Bosworth noted that the Committee has also advocated for a spinoff model. When a course has many students, someone should be encouraged to offer a second section.

The initial focus of the coordinators’ luncheon was recognition. Now it is a vehicle for discussion among coordinators.

Power thanked Blough for her dedicated service to the Curriculum Committee. Bosworth announced that a luncheon to thank Blough for her leadership will be held on June 3. All Board members are invited to attend.

The March board meeting will focus on the Membership and Communication Committees.

- VI. **COMMITTEE REPORTS** – DeWolf indicated that PLATO will take a ¼ page ad in the program for the Senior Games.

Boyd reported that Nancy Schultz has expressed interest in providing leadership for future Previews. Attendance was lower at the recent Spring Preview and parking near the Senior Center remains problematic and could get worse in the future.

Otis reported that 2015-16 donations from the PLATO Fund totaled \$13,200. Although contributions to the Fund amounted to \$13,970 in 2015, the Fund fell in value by approximately \$4,000 due to the declining stock market. ***On a motion by Otis with a second by Cabot, the Board approved continuing support for the Odyssey Project and returning adult students at the current level for 2016-2017. The Board also approved a motion offered by Otis and seconded by DiIorio authorizing the expenditure of up to an additional \$2,000 for other educational initiatives with the Board voting on the specific initiative at its May meeting.***

VII. OLD BUSINESS - None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS –

A. Nominations - The Nominating Committee consisting of Boyd, Kolar and Otis has held two meetings. ***The Board approved a motion by Boyd offered on behalf of the Nominating Committee to change the title of President Elect to Vice President in Article IX, Section 1 – Officers and throughout the Bylaws wherever the term is used.*** This change makes it clear that there is an annual election for President.

The Board approved a motion offered by Boyd on behalf of the Nominating Committee to revise Article IX, Section 2 – Officer Election and Terms of Office and Article X, Section 5 – Election of At-large Directors to delete the requirement that the elections be held “at each annual all-member meeting” and that “if there is only one nominee for each office, election may be by voice vote.” The phrase “if there are multiple nominees” is also deleted from each section. These changes make it possible to hold on-line elections for PLATO officers and board members.

Boyd reported that a call for nominations will be sent to members next week. Board members are encouraged to provide the Nominating Committee with the names of potential candidates for office.

B. Public TV Auction Participation. Last year, PLATO donated six memberships to the Wisconsin Public TV Auction. All were purchased, although only four were used by the purchasers. ***On a motion by DeWolf and a second by Otis, the Board approved PLATO donating six memberships to the 2016 auction.***

IX. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sybil Better, Secretary

Approved by the PLATO Board on March 18, 2016.