

PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2016

Pinney Library, 204 Cottage Grove Road, Madison, WI

Present: Frank Power (President), Sybil Better, Lewis Bosworth, Mary Boyd, Mary DeWolf, Mike DiIorio, John Koch, Scott Kolar, Aleta Murray, Tim Otis, Don Reeder
DCS: Louise Fowler

- I. **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME** – Power called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. He thanked Boyd for arranging for this alternative meeting site.
- II. **MINUTES** – On a motion by Bosworth seconded by Murray, the minutes of the February 19th meeting were approved as corrected.
- III. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** – Power reported that a proposal relating to the Membership and Communications Committees will be presented later in the meeting.
- IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT** – Otis reported that Numbers for Nonprofits had been engaged as PLATO’s bookkeeping service. The cost of the basic service will be approximately \$400 per quarter. Costs will increase if Numbers for Nonprofits is asked to provide additional services.

Otis reported that PLATO currently has 1090 members. He will be paying rent of approximately \$6000 to course location sites. Power requested that a financial summary be prepared for use at the annual meeting.

V. COMMITTEE DIALOGUE

A. Membership Committee. DeWolf described the ongoing activities of the Membership Committee. The Committee’s goals for the year are to (1) identify new places to publicize PLATO, (2) encourage volunteerism, (3) identify additional promotional materials, and (4) analyze member and survey data. It is generally difficult to measure the efficiency of visits because new members usually join at a later date. Having a computer at the Preview has been helpful with 6-8 people joining at that time.

The Executive Committee recommended that PLATO members be surveyed annually at least for the next few years. It was suggested that the timing of the survey be linked to membership renewal which starts on June 1st. The Membership Committee was asked to review last year’s survey, identify the key questions, and determine the length of time that the questionnaire should be available to members. DeWolf recommended possibly reducing the number of questions, while retaining a core set of questions from last year. She also noted that the open-ended questions used last year yielded many diverse responses which could not be readily categorized.

DiIorio recommended that PLATO develop a certificate of some type to be used when PLATO memberships are given as gifts. Kolar and DeWolf will develop a plan to accomplish this.

Next month’s dialogue will focus on the Special Events Committee.

B. Rebuilding the Membership Committee. Power reviewed the history of the Communication Committee and stressed the need to clarify the role of the Committee before asking someone to assume the leadership of the group. Kolar distributed a draft proposal clarifying the roles of the Membership and Communication Committees and establishing a new Technology Committee. The Communication Committee would provide strategic direction for PLATO communications and the

Technology Committee would provide technology services for the organization. DeWolf recommended several changes in the description of Membership Committee activities. The proposed placement of the AGORA under the Communication Committee was the most discussed change with members speaking in opposition and in support. Power will discuss this issue with the AGORA editor. The Executive Committee will refine the proposal for further consideration at the April board meeting.

C. Linkages between Committees. Power noted that these linkages are occurring spontaneously as individuals serve on multiple committees.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Questions for Chairs. Bosworth asked the Membership Committee to clarify its report to indicate that the Diversity Committee would be active for at least one year.
- B. Nominations. Boyd announced the proposed slate of Scott Kolar (President), Janet Cabot (Vice President), Sybil Better (Secretary), Tim Otis (Treasurer), Kevin Gould (At-Large Board Member) and Ed Cothroll (At-Large Board Member). **A motion by Kolar on behalf of the Nominating Committee to accept the Committee's report and 2016-17 slate was approved.** The election will be conducted online from April 20-May 4 with paper ballots sent to those needing them. The results will be announced at the annual meeting/luncheon in May.
- C. Annual Meeting/Luncheon. The event will be held on May 18 at the Nakoma Golf Club. Professor Charles Franklin will speak on the 2016 election in Wisconsin. Boyd presented a detailed cost analysis of luncheon costs which are considerably higher than last year. It has been PLATO policy to (1) subsidize some of the luncheon costs and (2) impose an additional charge for nonmembers. **On a motion by Boyd seconded by Koch, the Board approved an increase in the fee for luncheon attendance to \$22 for members and \$27 for nonmembers.** Despite the higher charges for attendance, PLATO will need to substantially increase its subsidy of the luncheon. It was suggested that alternative options for celebrating the end-of-the-year be explored and Power volunteered to work on this.

Each year, PLATO honors members who have made major contributions to the organization. **On a motion by Otis and seconded by Boyd, PLATO will honor Lauren Blough and Helen Aarli in 2016.**

VII. OLD BUSINESS – None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS – None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sybil Better, Secretary

Approved by the PLATO Board on April 15, 2016.