

PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

April 15, 2016

DCS, 21 N. Park St., Madison, WI

Present: *Board:* Frank Power (President), Sybil Better, Mary Boyd, Janet Cabot, Mary DeWolf, Mike Dilorio, Patricia Herrling, John Koch, Scott Kolar, Aleta Murray, Tim Otis, Don Reeder
DCS: Louise Fowler
Special Events Committee: Bob Blitzke, Eileen Rabson

- I. **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME** – Power called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. He welcomed the Special Events Committee members attending this meeting.
- II. **MINUTES** – On a motion by Reeder seconded by Dilorio, the minutes of the March 18th meeting were approved.
- III. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** – Power reported that Lewis Bosworth had resigned from his leadership positions and membership on the Curriculum Committee and the Diversity Committee and his seat on the Board. Power will be seeking Board concurrence at this meeting for his appointment of 4 committee chairs/co-chairs. He will also be seeking Board approval for the establishment of a standing technology committee.
- IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT** – Otis reported that the 2016-17 budget is under development with the Finance Committee doing the initial vetting at its May meeting. Committee chairs have been asked to submit budget requests. He is particularly interested in information on new expenditures (e.g., infrastructure). Otis also suggested that more long-range planning is needed. Third-quarter financial reports should be available by early May.
- V. **COMMITTEE DIALOGUE – SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE**
Cabot reviewed the overview of the Special Events Committee that had been previously distributed to Board members. The Committee’s mission is to “extend opportunities for education and engagement beyond the classroom that address the interests of members and support the PLATO vision.” This includes lectures, field trips and social events. This fiscal year, the group has already coordinated 18 for-fee and free events with 11 more scheduled. Very few trips have had to be cancelled due to insufficient interest. Most of those attending are members and members have first priority in signing up for special events. In some cases, nonmembers participating in special events have subsequently become members. New developments this year include: partnering with the UW Retirement Association on trips, hosting luncheons before the Global Hot Spot lectures, and creating the role of trip assistant. Under consideration for the future are emergency response training for trip leaders and the creation of special interest groups (e.g., theater).

The subsequent discussion touched on:

- New activities, such as local tours/walks.
- Possibly charging a fee for all activities, as free events tend to have more no-shows.
- Refund policy, particularly when fees for some programs are very low.
- Possible need for additional PLATO staff time as the number of special events increases.
- Internal synergy, such as field trips in conjunction with a course.
- Additional external alliances.
- Scope/size of the Special Events Committee and the possibility spinning off social

opportunities.

- Whether income expectations for the Special Events Committee might limit its "ability to fail" (i.e., try out new and different activities).
- Future committee leadership.
- Software enhancements.

Next month's dialogue will focus on the Annual Meeting.

VI. TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

On a motion by Kolar and a second by DeWolf, the Board approved the establishment of a standing Technology Committee. This committee will provide technology services, operate the PLATO website and assist with surveys and data analysis. Kolar will serve as initial chair, while also considering long-term leadership for the group. Otis raised the possibility of the future use of an outside service to meet some of PLATO's technology needs.

VII. OTHER COMMITTEE MATTERS

Curriculum Committee: **On a motion by Otis and a second by Reeder, the Board confirmed the appointment of Kathy Brown and Barb Friberg as Curriculum Committee co-chairs.** The two will decide who serves as the Board representative. Lauren Blough will ensure that everything is ready for the fall semester prior to stepping down from her leadership role. Terese Stevens has agreed to do minutes for the committee for the next three months.

Diversity Committee: The four remaining members of the Committee will continue to meet.

Communication Committee: **On a motion by Reeder and a second by Murray, the Board confirmed the appointment of Michael Stevens as Communication Committee chair.** Hedy Lukas has agreed to serve as a member of the group.

VIII COMMITTEE REPORTS

Member Survey: DeWolf provided the Board with copies of last year's member survey and the new one proposed for this year. Although some members expressed interest in asking additional questions, Power stressed the importance of being able to compare 2016 responses with those given in 2015. DeWolf requested comments on the proposed survey by the May 20 board meeting.

Nominations: The on-line election ballot needs to have an option for the member to reject the slate.

Annual Meeting: Charles Franklin will provide a summary of his talk for those attending.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sybil Better, Secretary

Approved by the PLATO Board on May 20, 2016