

PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2016

21 N. Park Street, Madison, WI

Present: Frank Power (President), Mary Boyd, Aleta Murray, Scott Kolar, Tim Otis, Don - Reeder, Pat Herrling, Mary DeWolf, Barb Frieberg (new co-chair curriculum committee), Kathy Brown (new co-chair curriculum committee), John Koch, Janet Cabot
DCS: Louise Fowler

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Power called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Power welcomed Kathy Brown and Barb Frieberg (new co-chairs for the curriculum committee). They will decide who will assume the role as Board member.
- II. **MINUTES** – *Reeder made a motion, seconded by Murray to accept the April 15th Board minutes as presented. Motion passed.*
- III. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – Power referred to the written report submitted with Board materials. He added that he had attended a number of meetings. In particular he met with the new Communication Committee to discuss the committee’s focus. He also reported that Marty Jenich who took pictures at the luncheon will send them to Fowler at our PLATO office. He also reported that the Diversity Committee has met twice to focus on its future and will again meet on June 8th. Anyone interested in the committee’s focus is welcome to attend. Finally, Power indicated that he had met with Bob Blitzke to discuss equitable distribution of tickets to the production of Hamilton since there will likely be a large demand.
- IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT** – Otis reviewed the financial documents in the Board packet. He summarized by indicating that PLATO is financially healthy. As of March 15, 2016, PLATO had \$63, 053. He then reviewed revenues and expenses by cost center. He estimated that by the end of the fiscal year, PLATO should probably expect to have a surplus of \$18,000--\$19,000.

Otis expressed an opinion that as an organization we should study the issue of our infrastructure and increase our budget accordingly in the future. Particularly, he listed, software needs, meeting and/or classroom space, equipment for classes and support staff time as possible future needs.

Otis also reported that the bookkeeping agency, Numbers for Non-profits, a division of the accounting firm, **Kolath**, has been hired to provide bookkeeping support to PLATO. He has also reviewed the preliminary budget based on requests made and reminded the Board that the budget is really just a point in time. He assured the Board that if something comes up, the Board has the ability to respond financially, depending on the request. New requests added to approximately \$12,730. Otis passed out a copy of his report on how dues are spent which he had previously made available at the annual meeting/luncheon on May 18th. It will be published in the next *Persimmon*.

V. **ANNUAL MEETING/LUNCHEON REVIEW** – Comments supported that having the meeting and speaker before the luncheon was well-received, but Board members attending indicated that perhaps in the future we should start at 11:00 a.m. so that the lunch itself would be served closer to 12:00 noon and/or have some snacks available. Fowler indicated that we received 88 evaluation responses from a total group of 190 which was received as a very good response level. Almost all responses were “glowing.” Power indicated he had made the rounds to each table and got a few ideas for making the screen presentations a bit more effective. Comments from Board members indicated that having a quality speaker was key to drawing a good-sized crowd.

VI. **ELECTION PROCESS REVIEW** – There were approximately 150 votes cast in support of the slate. One opposed. Reeder observed that the election information should be more prominently placed on the website and in weekly announcements. Murray observed that pictures should accompany each biography of candidates. Herrling indicated that a single slate does not usually generate large participation because the election is viewed as a done deal.

VII. **DISCUSSION ABOUT FUTURE OF ANNUAL MEETING/LUNCHEON – Question: Is the event still useful? Should it continue in its present format or in another format?**

Executive committee members suggested that they believed there was still a need for an end of year event to celebrate the end of a successful PLATO year. Comments suggested that we would need to find a new site if the number of participants increased very much. Kolar suggested that the key issue should be –what purpose does the event have? If it is an annual celebration, should it include recognitions—volunteers, scholarship recipients, etc. Otis indicated that it is a way to promote our organization to our members who may not come together except to attend a class or take a trip with a relatively small group of people. Power reminded the Board that 2017 would be the 30th Anniversary for PLATO.

After discussion, a motion was made by Kolar, seconded by Reeder to form an ad hoc 30th anniversary and annual meeting committee which is to report back to the Board with its recommendations at the September meeting. Motion passed. Power volunteered to chair the event with help from Murray and Cabot.

VIII. **PLANNING FOR JUNE’S SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION**—Otis reported that Fund Development would provide a report for the June meeting. They are also looking to set up a long term planning effort to be completed by October 2016. He also indicated that the committee was recommending a charitable giving plan totaling \$4,000 funded from our reserves to support youth (K-12) education. Two possible organizations they are considering are the Lussier Education Center on Gammon Road next to Jefferson Middle School and Memorial High School, and the Boys and Girls Club on Taft Street, near Park St. on the south side of Madison. *Otis made a motion, seconded by Murray to approve involvement with youth education by meeting with the above organizations to*

explore possible goals for giving in the amount of \$2,000 each in support of youth education for the 2015-16 year. Motion passed. These meetings would also explore possible volunteer/collaborative opportunities for interested PLATO members. Boyd suggested an academic focus rather than giving to a general education fund. Otis asked if anyone would be interested in visiting these organizations with him. Boyd volunteered. They will report back later this summer.

- IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS** –Speaking on behalf of the Curriculum Committee, Kathy Brown asked that the Board be patient and requested that communication be open as she and Barb Freiberg adjust to their co-chair duties. She gave the Board an invitation to come to lunch on June 3rd at the Weary Traveler at 11:30 to celebrate Lauren Blough’s service to the committee and her retirement from those responsibilities.
- X. ANNUAL SURVEY** –DeWolf reported that she is working with Mike DiIorio and the survey should be on-line on June 1 through September 30th. Power indicated that he found the analysis and discussion of the results very fruitful last year and recommended that this take place again in the fall of 2016.
- XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS** –
- Power reminded those present of the Board Transition Event on June 17th. Power and Murray are planning the event.
 - Power and Otis reported that Patricia Becker wrote a grant on behalf of the Agora and received notice that the Agora Board had received the grant in the amount of \$3,000.
 - Herrling reminded Board members that articles for the Persimmon are due on July 15th,

Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Minutes are submitted by Mary Boyd, substituting for Secretary Sybil Better.

Approved by the PLATO Board on June 17, 2016.