

## PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

June 17, 2016

21 N. Park Street, Madison, WI

Present: Frank Power (President), Sybil Better, Mary Boyd, Janet Cabot, Mary DeWolf, Barb Friberg, Scott Kolar, Aleta Murray, Tim Otis, Michael Stevens  
Incoming Board Member: Ed Cothroll  
DCS: Louise Fowler

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Power called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. Power read a note from Lauren Blough expressing appreciation for the PLATO recognition award given to her at the annual meeting.
- II. **MINUTES – The Board minutes for May 2016 were approved with the following edits: correcting spelling of photographer’s name, revised wording of motion relating to formation of an ad hoc committee dealing with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and annual meeting, and referencing the Curriculum Committee rather than the Communications Committee in section IX.**
- III. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – Power announced that he had sent a letter of appreciation to Gail Gordon for her service on the finance committee, website team and board. He reported on a recent meeting of the Diversity Committee which 14 people attended. The group wants to be action oriented, and its initial focus will be to participate in this fall’s UW Big Read. Boyd commented that there needs to be a policy or understanding that the group cannot speak on behalf of PLATO.
- IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT** – Otis reviewed the proposed 2016-17 budget. The proposal includes several placeholders (e.g., additional administrative support services, additional bookkeeping services, 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration costs), but not the cost of long range strategic planning activities. **On a motion by Otis and a second by DeWolf, the proposed budget for 2016-17 was adopted.**
- V. **SUBSTANTIVE BOARD DISCUSSIONS**
  - A. **Fund Development Committee and PLATO Education Fund** – Otis reviewed the Committee’s history, responsibilities and challenges. Currently, approximately 10% of members contribute to the PLATO Fund. Stevens indicated that was a good response rate; however, he also indicated that “success” can be defined in at least two ways, amount of dollars raised, and percent of group donating. Otis indicated that the focus of the Fund Development Committee is to increase the number of members donating to the PLATO Fund. It was noted that at the last meeting, the Board approved the one-time expenditure of \$4,000 from PLATO operations to support youth (K-12) education. This \$4,000 may eventually be recouped from our UW Foundation account. During the ensuing discussion a number of questions were raised relating to PLATO and charitable giving; these were deferred to the upcoming strategic planning process
  - B. **Formation of a Long Term Planning Committee.** On behalf of the Executive

Committee, Power proposed the establishment of an ad hoc committee to oversee the planning process. **The Board approved a motion to establish a work group to do groundwork on identifying a long-term planning structure and process that will be recommended to the Board for implementation. The work group will be made up of 2016-17 Executive Committee members, Mary Boyd and Louise Fowler. The group will be authorized to spend up to \$1,000 on services to facilitate/assist them. The motion was approved.** The work group is expected to report back to the Board in October. During PLATO's last strategic planning process, a professional consultant/facilitator played a key role in the development of PLATO's long-range plan.

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Communications Committee** – Board members reviewed and discussed the draft statement of PLATO Communications Committee Responsibilities distributed by Stevens. Stevens stressed that the Committee will be available to assist all who are communicating to PLATO members and external audiences. He also noted that PLATO currently lacks a simple brand articulation. The Committee plans to develop PLATO brand articulation and messaging guidelines for Board approval.

**B. Diversity Committee** – As previously noted, the group's initial focus will be the UW's Big Read, and it wants to encourage PLATO members to read "Evicted."

**C. Hamilton Ticket Rollout** - Power reported on the process that led to a substantial number of tickets to *Hamilton* being set aside for the field trips team of the Special Events Committee without input from the entire Committee, the PLATO Executive Committee, or the PLATO Board. This raises many questions relating to process, trust/transparency and ethics. Questions were also raised about the number of tickets reserved for non-internet users and the decision to allow each member to bring a guest. At its meeting next week, the Special Events Committee will discuss the process used to distribute the much-sought after *Hamilton* tickets. Kolar announced that the Executive Committee would take the lead on this matter and recommend necessary changes in policy and practice for Board approval.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS** – Power reminded members of the Board transition celebration scheduled for later that day.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Number of Board Meetings** – The Board currently meets 10 times per year, although the bylaws only require 6 meetings annually. PLATO now has a fully functioning Executive Committee that handles many of the items formally brought to the Board for its consideration. However, at the last Executive Committee meeting, there was no consensus on whether the number of Board meetings should be reduced. Stevens suggested that Board minutes for the past year be reviewed to determine which are slow months. This proposal will be discussed further by the Executive Committee.

**B. Request for Funds for Videotaping** – This request by Rick Orton will be referred to the Curriculum, Communications and Technology Committees. The existing videotapes

on our website have not been heavily viewed, but it may be that we need to do a better job of letting members know of their availability. Otis urged that such requests not be considered in a piecemeal manner.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT – 11:55 am**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sybil Better, Secretary

*Approved by the PLATO Board on August 19, 2016.*