

**PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Friday, March 21, 2014**  
**DCS Office, 21 North Park Street, Madison WI**

Present: Patricia Becker (President), Greg Bell, Sybil Better, Bob Blitzke, Lewis Bosworth, Mary Boyd, Mary DeWolf, Scott Kolar, Aleta Murray, Barry Orton, Tim Otis, Frank Power, Don Reeder

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 by Becker.

**February 2014 Minutes**

Better recommended that the second sentence of section VII of the minutes be revised to read: "The category allows flexibility." On a motion by Power and a second by Murray, the revised minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report** – Tim Otis

A handout entitled "501(c)(3) Opportunities and Obligations" was distributed and reviewed by Otis. Among the opportunities are a sales tax exemption for purchases made by PLATO, and the tax-exempt status of donations made to PLATO. Otis will investigate whether some or all of PLATO member dues could be considered tax deductible. Among the obligations are a commitment to our mission and charitable purposes and somewhat increased scrutiny of our financial reporting. The obligation to "not engage in lobbying for political issues" nor endorse political candidates does not limit PLATO's ability to have speakers on political issues.

**President's Report** – Pat Becker

The president's issues were covered during other portions of the meeting.

**DCS Report** – Barry Orton

Orton reported that the project position is being advertised with an application deadline of March 25. Boyd, Orton and Laura Ingram will screen the applications and interview candidates.

**Nominating Committee Report** – Tim Otis

The nominating committee consisting of Otis (chair), Becker, Boyd and Blough presented the following slate:

- Mary Boyd - President, one year term
- Frank Power – President Elect, one year term
- Tim Otis – Treasurer, one year term
- Sybil Better – Secretary, one year term
- Mike Dilorio – At Large Board member, three year term
- Gail Gordon – At Large Board member, one year term

On a motion by Otis with a second by Murray, the slate will be forwarded for a vote by the PLATO membership at the May annual meeting. At this meeting there will be opportunity for additional nominations to be made from the floor and this fact will be well-publicized prior to the meeting. It was suggested that in the future, Board openings be advertised to the membership and then the Nominating Committee could screen applicants. This would help to address some concerns about the transparency

of PLATO governance. It was also suggested that all PLATO board and committee meetings be listed on the website calendar.

### **Annual Luncheon – Mary Boyd**

The annual meeting will be held on May 21 at the Nakoma Country Club. A forum focusing on PLATO finances will be held prior to the luncheon from 10:15 - 11:15 am. Otis will prepare some written materials on this subject that will be distributed to members prior to the forum.

There will be four meal choices and special dietary needs will be accommodated. Valet parking will be provided as needed. Wendy Kerr or her successor will handle the financial aspects of the luncheon. UW Police Chief Sue Riseling will be the speaker; she will have approximately 20 minutes for her presentation followed by a brief period for Q&A.

### **Reports from Standing Committees**

#### Curriculum and Facilities – Lewis Bosworth

The committee heard a report on the Spring Preview and established a planning subcommittee for the fall preview which will take place under new leadership. The first Arts Café had 37 attendees. The second, to be held later in March, will focus on the dramatic arts. The Committee's charge was reviewed and refined. A likely location for the luncheon for course coordinators has been identified.

#### Communication – Greg Bell

A subgroup is beta testing web-based software that will allow PLATO to improve its membership, events and financial management. A presentation on this software will be given at the April board meeting. This meeting will start one half hour earlier at 9 am to accommodate the 40 minute presentation. Orton recommended that printed materials describing the software be distributed to the Board prior to the April meeting. A decision on proceeding with such software will need to be made in April or May if it is to be operational at the start of the next membership cycle in July.

The Committee will develop a policy on accepting event announcements from other organizations for discussion at the next meeting.

#### Membership – Mary DeWolf

The committee is making personal contacts with individuals who requested information on senior learning opportunities from DCS. Committee members will help with the annual meeting mailing. A draft of a revised membership application was distributed for review and comment; the major change is the addition of a question about how the new member learned about PLATO. New venues for PLATO speakers are being identified and promotional materials that could be distributed at these sessions are being developed by the Communication Committee. Bell displayed examples of notepads and cards. It was noted that the Committee has a budget for printing such items.

#### Fund Development – Tim Otis

The committee recommended that \$10,000 from the PLATO Fund be spent in 2014-15 to support four scholarships for returning adult students at \$2,500 per recipient. This would be a \$2,503 increase over

the minimum level previously set by the Board (60% of donations to the PLATO Fund in the prior year). Assets in the PLATO Fund are used exclusively to support the organization's charitable mission; they have not been used for other operational purposes such as the Agora. On a motion by Power and a second by Bell, the motion to expend \$10,000 on scholarships was approved.

#### Special Events – Bob Blitzke

The committee recommended the following schedule of fees for nonmembers participating in PLATO special events: \$10 for programs costing less than \$50 and \$15 for programs costing \$50 or more. This increase from the present \$5 fee is intended to encourage frequent guests to join PLATO. On a motion by DeWolf and a second by Murray, the increased fees were approved with a start date of July 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Report form Ad Hoc Committees**

##### ByLaw/Policy Document – Mary Boyd

As a replacement for the resolution section of the Bylaws, a new policy/procedure document is being drafted. The charges of the standing committees (with the exception of Fund Development) were distributed. In some cases, the committees also identified the duties of the chair and/or other procedural matters. Comments should be submitted to Boyd or Better.

Social Opportunities/Arts Café – This topic was discussed as part of Curriculum Committee report.

#### **Old Business**

Midwest Lifelong Learning Conference – Bosworth indicated that the program content did not seem to address topics of interest to PLATO.

Agora Funding – In response to a question, it was noted that the Board had previously allocated \$2,000 for the Agora in 2014 and the same amount in 2015.

**New Business** – No new business was presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 pm.

**The next meeting is on Friday, April 18 at 9 am in room 301 of the Central Madison Public Library on E. Mifflin St. Please note the earlier starting time and the change in location.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Sybil Better