

# **VALE Executive Committee**

## **Minutes of the February 6, 2009 Meeting**

### **Brookdale Community College, Bankier Library**

Present: F.W. Chickering, A. Ciliberti, John Cohn, Judy Cohn, C. Daze, B. Nebeker, T. Pavolvsky, D. Pinto, M. Gaunt, C. O'Connor, A. Scrimgeour, R. Sweeney, B. Whitham

1. Pinto called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the minutes of the December 16, 2008 "virtual" meeting. He explained that the document consists of reports provided by the members of the Executive Committee although there was no actual meeting. After review, all present approved the minutes.
2. Ciliberti provided a review of the December and January budget reports. She noted that the last vendor invoice was received just after completing the January report and has been processed for payment. Vendor contributions to the Users' Conference totaling \$4,800 are being received. The net cost of the Conference to VALE will be \$2,800. There was brief discussion about the Reserve Account balance (\$114,800) and the likelihood that it will increase when FY09 carry forward is added. Pinto reminded the group that the auditor had recommended that the balance be limited to about two years' of operating costs, which would be about \$130,000. He noted that VALE might reach this level by the end of FY09.
3. Whitham reported on efforts to find a suitable business arrangement for financing and contracting the Web Committee's proposed Drupal project. He explained that because contracting the project to Rowan University was complicated, he had turned to INFOLINK for assistance. He and O'Connor shared two documents representing draft agreements that would provide the foundations for management of the project. One was a proposed agreement between INFOLINK and VALE, whereby INFOLINK would act as VALE's fiscal agent, receiving funds from VALE and disbursing them to the contractor at VALE's direction. The second document was a draft agreement between INFOLINK and the proposed contractor.

After discussion in which several amendments to the documents were proposed and accepted, it was agreed that:

- a. The proposed contractor will be contacted to determine his continued commitment to the project and for assurance that there is no ethical impediment to his participation, since he is an employee of a NJ public university and a VALE member.

- b. Sweeney requested that the meeting minutes state that he was not involved in the selection of the contractor and that he advised the contractor to seek ethics approval. Sweeney stated that he would recuse himself from the vote on this matter.
- c. Pinto summarized the next steps, indicating that the documents would be revised as discussed and sent to members for final review before a vote to move forward was taken. The online vote will take place no later than February 20.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Ciliberti requested that the minutes reflect the group's appreciation to Whitham and O'Connor for their work on finding a resolution to this problem.

- 4. Chickering summarized a document itemizing the pros and cons of becoming a tax-exempt non-profit corporation. During the discussion, several additional questions emerged which Chickering and Ciliberti will try to answer after seeking legal advice. The group also discussed the potential of seeking an organizational relationship with NJEdge and the need to revise the VALE Bylaws, both with respect to seeking 501 C 3 status and more generally to accurately reflect the practices now in place. In conclusion, the following assignments were made:
  - a. John Cohn and Sweeney will explore the possible advantages and disadvantages of seeking a formal relationship with NJEdge.
  - b. Ciliberti will obtain a cost estimate for Directors' and Officers' liability insurance
  - c. Chickering will compile a list of Bylaws inconsistencies that would need to be addressed prior to applying for non-profit status
  - d. Pinto will update the Bylaws to reflect current practices
- 5. Scrimgeour suggested that VALE could be more active in fundraising, either from grant or foundation sources or from private philanthropists. He is personally interested in pursuing these possibilities and stated that having non-profit status might facilitate the process of seeking and obtaining external funding.
- 6. Scrimgeour also reported on the efforts of the Resource Sharing Committee. The group reports that the number of institutions participating in the reciprocal borrowing program has increased and that they are currently exploring a variety of interlibrary loan topics, including copyright issues and the RAPID electronic delivery program. Whitham noted that if there were 6 or 7 NJ RAPID participants, they could form their own delivery "pod," within the RAPID program.

7. Pinto summarized a report from Andrea MacRitchie on the results of the Users' Conference evaluations. Based upon 101 evaluations, the survey indicates that attendees were very positive about the keynote address and the substance of both the poster and breakout sessions. They were less pleased with the space allotted for the posters and the allocation of time throughout the day, desiring more time for the posters and an additional breakout session. Some respondents also felt that the business of VALE should be provided in a breakout session, not during the lunch period.

The group discussed these findings and the problem that extending the afternoon programs does not prevent many attendees from leaving early. Next year's planning committee will need to consider this issue. Pinto will send the complete report to the members.

All present expressed their gratitude and appreciation to Marianne Gaunt for her excellent and thoughtful keynote address and to the conference planners: Jan Skica (UMDNJ), Richard Kearney (WPUNJ), and Judy Avrin (VALE). Pinto will send each a formal letter of thanks and appreciation.

8. Pinto referred to a document summarizing recommendations for VALE's further consideration excerpted from Gaunt's conference address and asked how the group would like to proceed to review them. All present agreed that the topics are noteworthy and strategic and that a planning retreat may be necessary to fully consider their potential. A task group of Judy Cohn, Gaunt, Chickering and John Cohn volunteered to recommend a process for exploring Gaunt's recommendations.
9. Pinto announced that Chickering will be the new liaison to the Cooperative Collection Management Committee.
10. With respect to the future of VALE databases, it was agreed that there is no specific advocacy campaign for NJKI at the present time, although this may change after the Governor's budget is announced in March. Given the uncertainty of State Library or NJKI funding for VALE's basic general database, Pinto will reach out to the NJ State Library for the development of a strategy, should all funding for this resource be curtailed in FY10 due to budget cuts.
11. Judy Cohn will contact Elsevier for information about the changes in their regional representatives to VALE libraries and to remind them about the necessary preparation of holdings information prior to next summer's UTL swap.

12. Pavlovsky clarified that the recent survey sent to VALE libraries for input on OLS functionalities is not restricted to one response per library.
13. Pinto stated that the VALE Report is nearly ready for printing and that the number of copies to be printed will be reduced to 2,000 from 3,000. The Report will also be available on the VALE website.
14. Sweeney initiated a discussion about the importance of supporting and advancing the open access publishing movement, especially given present and anticipated future budget cuts. He suggested that VALE take a formal position on the topic and develop a “white paper” to describe this commitment and possible strategies of support. After discussion, the group agreed that:
  - a. Sweeney will draft a paper articulating the problem and the variety responses that are evolving in research institutions around the world. Several suggestions were offered for locating documents and information from the ACRL, NIH and ARL websites.
15. Pinto inquired if the planned March 10 meeting with the VALE Committee chairs is a conflict for those attending the ACRL conference and most present indicated that it was not. He welcomes agenda items for that meeting.
16. Nebeker reported that the Reference Committee is pleased with the content and attendance of its program at the Users’ Conference. The group plans to survey the membership this spring for information about how reference service is being provided in VALE libraries.
17. Ciliberti proposed that if Rutgers University intends to participate as an OLE “builder” site, VALE consider funding some or all-of the dedicated programmer this would require. There was interest in the group on this recommendation and Gaunt indicated that she would be exploring whether Rutgers would be participating and what support it might need to do so.
18. The next meeting will be on March 10, 2009 at Middlesex County College.

Minutes prepared by Ciliberti