

ARLIS Board Meeting; July 11, 2007

Conference Call

Attending: Deborah Ultan Boudewyns, Sue Koskinen, Marilyn Nasserden, Rebecca Price, Fran Scott, Ken Soehner, Amy Trendler, Ann Whiteside

Call to order: 4:09 pm EST

Agenda: Focus on Membership Feedback document

Ultan Boudewyns opened by asking board members' thoughts on the Membership Feedback document that she prepared and sent to the board via email.

1.) DSRTs

Whiteside noted that Soehner's summaries of the DSRTs feedback were very good; particularly the suggestions about making the round tables interest groups, but keeping some other groups in their current form. An important theme and concern voiced by almost all groups is that we need to provide or enable much better communication tools for the various group. This is especially true if a different structure is adopted and if there are different expectations for meeting at the conferences. It was also noted that if we eliminate round tables or reduce them to only a few, that will show the membership that we are serious about restructuring. It was remarked that we need strong leadership at section and division levels to make groups more visible. We can also use the section and division leadership to integrate them more fully into the fabric of ARLIS. It would be good for sections and divisions to include programming that appeals to broader communities and reduce the 'club-like' atmosphere of many of the sections and divisions. It was noted that the club atmosphere makes it hard for new members.

Could there be a single division meeting and a single section meeting where there would be updates from the various divisions and sections? This idea opens up communication across groups and thereby encourages groups to become more active between conferences. There is also need for group discussions about particular issues (resources, IT issues, licensing, etc.).

Themes:

- **Need to provide or enable much better communication tools for the various groups**
- **Eliminating or reducing round tables to only a few, will be a good first step to show the membership that we are serious about restructuring**
- **Use the section and division leadership to integrate them more fully into the fabric of ARLIS**
- **Encourage sections and divisions to include programming that appeals to broader communities and reduce the 'club-like' atmosphere**
- **Provide a single division-wide meeting and a single section-wide meeting where there would be updates from the various divisions and sections**

2.) Regional Representatives

There seem to be mixed feelings about the proposed changes to the regional representatives. Some want both the regional representatives as they are but also wanted the functional roles of the board. The proposed structure of board was to help the board members focus more closely on the functions of the society and the chapter coordinator could focus more closely to chapters. Not all the members seemed to understand that the Chapters' Coordinator could provide a strong tie to the board while also connecting the chapters better. People do like someone from board to visit – it doesn't have to be the Chapters' Coordinator, but could be anyone from board. Advantage of the Chapters' Coordinator is that chapters can communicate more easily with each other – at meeting and throughout year.

Some chapters want current structure – and some want change. Some chapters want a lot of structure and support from the regional representative and some need/want less chair needs less support. They all wanted clarity of message. It was noted that the ability for a chapter to move forward has to do with chapter leadership. Some don't depend so closely on their regional representative. The suggestion was made to survey the chapters in a year to see what their feelings are about this. The Chapters' Coordinator will need to help develop leadership at the local chapter level.

Themes:

- **Misunderstandings about the Chapters' Coordinator role persist**
- **Strong desire for board presence at chapter meetings**
- **Chapter desire a strong, clear message from board**
- **Need for strong chapter leadership (Chapters' Coordinator can be instrumental in developing this)**

a.) Canadian proposal

There are strong feelings about the board member position from the Canadian perspective. Nasserden suggests that we keep the Canadian position, because it gives the Canadians a sense that they do belong. Others are not clear on why the proposed structure (with a member on the board from Canada) would not work. In fact, in the current nomination process most people considered for that position turned it down. While they want a representative on the board, few seem willing to step forward. Perhaps the hesitation is because the Nominating Committee is asking nominees to take on a 'hybrid' position – two roles (as the current board is acting).

The Canadian group has suggested that we appoint a "Canadian ambassador." In the long term, if we have a Canadian ambassador would we also need a Mexican ambassador? It was suggested that one of the chapter officers serves as the Canadian ambassador. They would not necessarily sit on the board, but would act as a spokesperson to bring (Canadian) issues to the Chapters' Coordinator. Reduces need to add new members to the board. Nasserden feels one officer wouldn't be able to offer full Canadian voice. While we're thinking about this we should propose possible solutions and talk about them in the coming weeks.

Themes:

- **Important to preserve a Canadian voice on the board.**
- **Consider creating a “Canadian ambassador” – not a board position, but an advisory position for a cross-Canada voice, perhaps reporting to the Chapters’ Coordinator? (see Ideas for Change below)**
- **Brings up issues of other ambassadors (Mexico?)**

3.) Committees

Most committees want to stay intact.

Public Policy Committee had voiced the idea to split into two groups (advisory and educational). This was questioned and Amy clarified. The idea was to scale back to focus on core issues and to better distinguish the educational role of the committee from the advisory role. Board members felt that there is probably not enough interest to create two groups. They could work with PDC on educational programming.

It was noted that we want to keep a Canadian perspective on these committees: particularly the International Relations Committee and the Public Policy Committee. One member noted how this is similar to the concerns of the Visual Resource community a few years ago and how we just tried to include VR in all aspects of ARLIS. Not all understand why the Canadians feel they’re not represented and accepted. It was noted that it’s more that they feel something is taken away. So they’re putting more energy into it and seeing what more should be done by a Canadian representative (or ambassador).

Themes:

- **Committees maintain current structure.**
- **Public Policy committee remains as one group – addressing both advisory and educational roles, but working with PDC on education programming.**

4.) Ideas for Change

a.) Canadian Ambassador

The **Canadian Ambassador** would report to various committees in order to keep the Canadian perspective in the fore. **We need to develop a more thorough description of what that person might do.** Otherwise we’ll continue with the plan of doing away with regional representative positions and turning them to functional roles.

b.) Conference Scheduling

As far as the issue of the **DSRTs**: we need to begin **creative conference scheduling**. Start modestly by changing the round tables to special interest groups that meet at their own inclination. **The Communications Coordinator and Conference Coordinator should work with Division leaders on leadership and determine how those moderators can work more effectively for their groups.** The Communications Coordinator can help blogs and other communications tools with (in advisory role, not tech role). The Conference Coordinator could work with them to have **joint sessions** where their interests intersect. Committees will stay intact

(Deborah and Marilyn are continuing their action item (#17) to define committees: terms of service, reporting, etc.).

c.) Leadership Development

The discussion returned to the need for **leadership development** and the idea that we do need to create ways to develop leaders and think how our society structure can help develop leadership skills in our members. While we can provide leadership training and conference sessions or workshops, **the idea is to have a culture where leaders are developed.** Chapters' Coordinator could also play strong role in developing leadership at the chapter level. Conference planning provides another great opportunity for leadership (particularly at the chapter level).

d.) Translation of Canadian Chapter notes

Nasserden raises issue of an **honorarium for a translator** (into French) for the Canadian Chapter meeting minutes. The minutes have to be in both French and English and it has been difficult to get a French translation. It was suggested that since we pay someone to do this: not by the hour, but a set fee. A person could be designated for a specific time. They could add the duty to their annual reports and get a small stipend. It was suggested that we think about a sponsorship for this, since we don't have the funds at present. It raises the issue of needing a translator for Spanish speakers. It is expensive, so we need to be clear on the extent of what is being translated. For instance are we talking about translating Art Doc or the website? Nasserden clarifies that the need is more basic: Canadian representative's report, chapter minutes from Canadian chapter meeting, and Dwyer Award announcement. Scott suggests that someone could write something up for Publications Committee to include in their budget request. Deborah asks if there are Canadian students would benefit by taking on the responsibility, or a sponsorship (university could sponsor the student). Nasserden will take back to Canadians to see what the budget might be. The request could go either to Publications Committee or to Development Committee.

Action Item 23: Nasserden will go to the Canadians to ask for a budget request for translating chapter minutes, board representative report to the chapters, and the Dwyer Award Announcement. Deadline: July 30

Meeting adjourned 5:21 EST

Approved 9/17/07

Submitted: Rebecca Price, ARLIS/NA Secretary