

**REPORT TO ALA COUNCIL
OF THE
ALA BYLAWS COMMITTEE**

**2026 ALA WINTER MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2026**

TO: ALA Council
FR: Brian E. C. Schottlaender, *Chair*
ALA Bylaws Committee
RE: Information Report/Action Items

I. INFORMATION REPORT

During Summer and Fall 2025, the ALA Bylaws Committee worked on the following items:

1. Clarification of what happens when the position of ALA president-elect is vacated;
2. Clarification of the distinction between a Session and a Meeting of Council; and
3. Election of At-Large Members to the ALA Executive Board.

As a result of these deliberations, we have prepared the Action Items below regarding the first two of the items above. We plan on presenting an Action Item regarding #3 above in our report during Council III on January 28, following Council's discussion of the item during Council I on January 21.

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. MOTION 1

On behalf of the ALA Bylaws Committee, I ...

Move that the ALA Council approve the following revisions of Articles IV and V of the ALA Bylaws. As these are not editorial changes, after they are approved by Council, they will go to the ALA membership for a vote on the Spring 2026 ballot.

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article IV. Officers</p> <p><i>Section 3. Elected Officer Vacancies.</i> Upon a vacancy in the office of the president, the president-elect shall assume the office, thereby creating a vacancy in the office of the president-elect. The Executive Board shall fill a vacancy in the office of the president-elect or the treasurer within thirty (30) days of any such vacancy, subject to a confirmation vote by Council.</p>	<p>Article IV. Officers</p> <p><i>Section 3. Elected Officer Vacancies.</i> Upon a vacancy in: the office of the president, the president-elect shall assume the office, thereby creating a vacancy in the office of the president elect. The Executive Board shall fill a vacancy in the office of the president-elect or the treasurer within thirty (30) days of any such vacancy, subject to a confirmation vote by Council.</p> <p><u>A. the office of the president, the president-elect shall assume the office of the president to complete the unexpired term;</u></p> <p><u>B. the office of the president-elect, the Executive Board shall fill that office within thirty (30) days of any such vacancy, subject to a confirmation vote by Council; or</u></p> <p><u>C. the office of treasurer, the Executive Board shall fill that office within thirty (30) days of any such vacancy, subject to a confirmation vote by Council.</u></p>	<p>Article IV. Officers</p> <p><i>Section 3. Elected Officer Vacancies.</i> Upon a vacancy in:</p> <p>A. the office of the president, the president-elect shall assume the office of the president to complete the unexpired term;</p> <p>B. the office of the president-elect, the Executive Board shall fill that office within thirty (30) days of any such vacancy, subject to a confirmation vote by Council; or</p> <p>C. the office of treasurer, the Executive Board shall fill that office within thirty (30) days of any such vacancy, subject to a confirmation vote by Council.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 3. Executive Board Terms.</i> All elected officers and members of the Executive Board shall serve until the adjournment of the annual conference that follows the selection of their successors. The president-elect shall serve the first year after election as president-elect, the second year as president, and the third year as immediate past president.</p> <p>All other members of the Executive Board shall serve staggered terms of three (3) years or until their successors are elected.</p>	<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 3. Executive Board Terms.</i> All elected officers and members of the Executive Board shall serve until the adjournment of the annual conference that follows the selection of their successors. The president-elect shall serve the first year after election as president-elect, the second year as president, and the third year as immediate past president, <u>except that:</u></p> <p><u>A. a president-elect who fills a vacancy in the office of president shall complete the unexpired term of their predecessor as president during the first (1st) year and shall serve in office as president during the second (2nd) year, and shall serve as immediate past president in the third (3rd) year; and</u></p> <p><u>B. the person selected to fill the vacancy this creates in the office of the president-elect shall not assume the office of president upon completion of the unexpired president-elect term.</u></p> <p>All other members of the Executive Board shall serve staggered terms of three (3) years or until their successors are elected.</p>	<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 3. Executive Board Terms.</i> All elected officers and members of the Executive Board shall serve until the adjournment of the annual conference that follows the selection of their successors. The president-elect shall serve the first year after election as president-elect, the second year as president, and the third year as immediate past president, except that:</p> <p>A. a president-elect who fills a vacancy in the office of president shall complete the unexpired term of their predecessor as president during the first (1st) year and shall serve in office as president during the second (2nd) year, and shall serve as immediate past president in the third (3rd) year; and</p> <p>B. the person selected to fill the vacancy this creates in the office of the president-elect shall not assume the office of president upon completion of the unexpired president-elect term.</p> <p>All other members of the Executive Board shall serve staggered terms of three (3) years or until their successors are elected.</p>

Rationale

The proposed revisions of Articles IV and V do not represent a change in policy but, rather, are intended to make more explicit in the Bylaws current policy occasioned by the fact that, unlike some other institutions, ALA does not elect a president, but a president-elect. As a consequence, what happens when the office of ALA president-elect is vacated depends upon the circumstances under which it is vacated. See Attachment 1 for additional explication.

B. MOTION 2

On behalf of the ALA Bylaws Committee, I ...

Move that the ALA Council approve the following revisions of Articles V, VI, IX, X, and XVII of the ALA Bylaws. As these are not editorial changes, after they are approved by Council, they will go to the ALA membership for a vote on the Spring 2026 ballot.

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 2. Roles and Responsibilities.</i> The Executive Board shall act for the Council in the administration of established policies and programs, and shall report on its activities at the scheduled Council meeting following any such activity. The Executive Board has fiduciary responsibility for the Association, manages the affairs of the Association, and delegates management of the day-to-day operations to the executive director. The Executive Board shall make recommendations to the Council with respect to matters of policy.</p>	<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 2. Roles and Responsibilities.</i> The Executive Board shall act for the Council in the administration of established policies and programs, and shall report on its activities at the scheduled Council meeting <u>session</u> following any such activity. The Executive Board has fiduciary responsibility for the Association, manages the affairs of the Association, and delegates management of the day-to-day operations to the executive director. The Executive Board shall make recommendations to the Council with respect to matters of policy.</p>	<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 2. Roles and Responsibilities.</i> The Executive Board shall act for the Council in the administration of established policies and programs, and shall report on its activities at the scheduled Council session following any such activity. The Executive Board has fiduciary responsibility for the Association, manages the affairs of the Association, and delegates management of the day-to-day operations to the executive director. The Executive Board shall make recommendations to the Council with respect to matters of policy.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article VI. Council</p> <p><i>Section 5. Council Meetings.</i> The Council shall hold at least two (2) meetings each year, of which one shall be held during the annual conference of the Association and any other(s) shall be designated by the Executive Board or at the call of the president. A majority of the fixed membership of the Council shall constitute a quorum for all meetings.</p>	<p>Article VI. Council</p> <p><i>Section 5. Council Meetings Sessions.</i> The Council shall hold <u>meet in Session</u> at least two (2) meetings times each year, of which one <u>Session</u> shall be held during the annual conference of the Association and any other(s) shall be designated by the Executive Board or at the call of the president. <u>A single Council Session shall consist of at least one (1) meeting and all other connected meetings.</u> A majority of the fixed membership of the Council shall constitute a quorum for all such meetings.</p>	<p>Article VI. Council</p> <p><i>Section 5. Council Sessions.</i> The Council shall meet in Session at least two (2) times each year, of which one Session shall be held during the annual conference of the Association and any other(s) shall be designated by the Executive Board or at the call of the president. A single Council Session shall consist of at least one (1) meeting and all other connected meetings. A majority of the fixed membership of the Council shall constitute a quorum for all such meetings.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article IX. Divisions</p> <p><i>Section 2. Establishment.</i> The Council may establish a division with a minimum of five hundred (500) members of the Association who are interested in the same field of librarianship upon petition of such a group. Under exceptional circumstances, the Council may admit as divisions groups having fewer than five hundred (500) members. If, in the opinion of the Council, the usefulness of a division has ceased, the Council may dissolve a division by a majority vote at two (2) consecutive Council meetings. A division that is going through the process of discontinuance is entitled to Council representation until it is officially dissolved.</p>	<p>Article IX. Divisions</p> <p><i>Section 2. Establishment.</i> The Council may establish a division with a minimum of five hundred (500) members of the Association who are interested in the same field of librarianship upon petition of such a group. Under exceptional circumstances, the Council may admit as divisions groups having fewer than five hundred (500) members.</p> <p><u><i>Section 3. Merger. If, in the opinion of the Council, the Association and its members would be better served by merging two or more of its divisions into a new division, the Council may approve such a merger by a majority vote during two (2) consecutive Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart. Divisions that are going through the process of a merger are entitled to Council representation until the merger is complete.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Section 4. Dissolution.</i></u> If, in the opinion of the Council, the usefulness of a division has ceased, the Council may dissolve a division by a majority vote at two (2) consecutive Council meetings <u>sessions at least thirty (30) days apart.</u> A division that is going through the process of discontinuance is entitled to Council representation until it is officially dissolved.</p> <p>Renumber erstwhile Sections 3-5 accordingly.</p>	<p>Article IX. Divisions</p> <p><i>Section 2. Establishment.</i> The Council may establish a division with a minimum of five hundred (500) members of the Association who are interested in the same field of librarianship upon petition of such a group. Under exceptional circumstances, the Council may admit as divisions groups having fewer than five hundred (500) members.</p> <p><i>Section 3. Merger.</i> If, in the opinion of the Council, the Association and its members would be better served by merging two or more of its divisions into a new division, the Council may approve such a merger by a majority vote during two (2) consecutive Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart. Divisions that are going through the process of a merger are entitled to Council representation until the merger is complete.</p> <p><i>Section 4. Dissolution.</i> If, in the opinion of the Council, the usefulness of a division has ceased, the Council may dissolve a division by a majority vote during two (2) consecutive Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart. A division that is going through the process of dissolution is entitled to Council representation until it is officially dissolved.</p> <p>Renumber erstwhile Sections 3-5 accordingly.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article X. Round Tables</p> <p><i>Section 2. Establishment.</i> The Council may authorize a round table of any group with a minimum of one hundred fifty (150) members of the Association who are interested in a specific area of library interest or field of librarianship not within the scope of any division, upon petition of such group, which shall include a statement of purpose. Each round table shall maintain at least one hundred fifty (150) round table members, which is calculated at the end of the Association fiscal year. Should a round table's membership count fall below one hundred fifty (150), the Committee on Organization shall present that round table with options to convert into or merge with another unit of the Association, or be dissolved. Based on the affected round table's determined action, the Committee on Organization shall bring the action to the Council for a vote. The Council may dissolve a round table by a majority vote at two (2) consecutive meetings. A round table that is entitled to a councilor and is going through the process of dissolution is entitled to Council representation until it is officially dissolved.</p>	<p>Article X. Round Tables</p> <p><i>Section 2. Establishment.</i> The Council may authorize a round table of any group with a minimum of one hundred fifty (150) members of the Association who are interested in a specific area of library interest or field of librarianship not within the scope of any division, upon petition of such group, which shall include a statement of purpose. Each round table shall maintain at least one hundred fifty (150) round table members, which is calculated at the end of the Association fiscal year. Should a round table's membership count fall below one hundred fifty (150), the Committee on Organization shall present that round table with options to convert into or merge with another unit of the Association, or be dissolved. Based on the affected round table's determined action, the Committee on Organization shall bring the action to the Council for a vote.</p> <p><u><i>Section 3. Merger. If, in the opinion of the Council, the Association and its members would be better served by merging two or more of its round tables into a new round table, the Council may approve such a merger by a majority vote during two (2) consecutive Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart. Round tables that are entitled to councilors and are going through the process of a merger are entitled to Council representation until the merger is complete.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Section 4. Dissolution. If, in the opinion of the Council, the usefulness of a round table has ceased,</i></u> The Council may dissolve a round table by a majority vote during at two (2) consecutive meetings <u><i>Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart.</i></u> A round table that is entitled to a councilor and is going through the process of dissolution is entitled to Council representation until it is officially dissolved.</p> <p>Renumber erstwhile Section 3 accordingly.</p>	<p>Article X. Round Tables</p> <p><i>Section 2. Establishment.</i> The Council may authorize a round table of any group with a minimum of one hundred fifty (150) members of the Association who are interested in a specific area of library interest or field of librarianship not within the scope of any division, upon petition of such group, which shall include a statement of purpose. Each round table shall maintain at least one hundred fifty (150) round table members, which is calculated at the end of the Association fiscal year. Should a round table's membership count fall below one hundred fifty (150), the Committee on Organization shall present that round table with options to convert into or merge with another unit of the Association, or be dissolved. Based on the affected round table's determined action, the Committee on Organization shall bring the action to the Council for a vote.</p> <p><i>Section 3. Merger.</i> If, in the opinion of the Council, the Association and its members would be better served by merging two or more of its round tables into a new round table, the Council may approve such a merger by a majority vote during two (2) consecutive Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart. Round tables that are entitled to councilors and are going through the process of a merger are entitled to Council representation until the merger is complete.</p> <p><i>Section 4. Dissolution.</i> If, in the opinion of the Council, the usefulness of a round table has ceased, the Council may dissolve a round table by a majority vote during two (2) consecutive Council sessions at least thirty (30) days apart. A round table that is entitled to a councilor and that is going through the process of dissolution is entitled to Council representation until it is officially dissolved.</p> <p>Renumber erstwhile Section 3 accordingly.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article XVII. Amendments</p> <p>Section 1. Amendments. All proposals for amending the Bylaws shall originate in the Council. An adopted amendment shall become effective when it has been approved by a majority of the members of the Council present and voting at a meeting of the Council of which a quorum is present, followed by ratification by the members of the Association. The Council, on approving a proposed amendment, shall direct the executive director to place the amendment on the annual ballot, for ratification by the membership.</p>	<p>Article XVII. Amendments</p> <p><i>Section 1. Amendments.</i> All proposals for amending the Bylaws shall originate in the Council. An adopted amendment shall become effective when it has been approved by a majority of the members of the Council present and voting at a meeting <u>session</u> of the Council of which a quorum is present, followed by ratification by the members of the Association. The Council, on approving a proposed amendment, shall direct the executive director to place the amendment on the annual ballot, for ratification by the membership.</p>	<p>Article XVII. Amendments</p> <p><i>Section 1. Amendments.</i> All proposals for amending the Bylaws shall originate in the Council. An adopted amendment shall become effective when it has been approved by a majority of the members of the Council present and voting at a session of the Council of which a quorum is present, followed by ratification by the members of the Association. The Council, on approving a proposed amendment, shall direct the executive director to place the amendment on the annual ballot, for ratification by the membership.</p>

Rationale

There has been confusion for some time now as to what constitutes a Council Session as opposed to a Council Meeting, and which is superordinate to the other. This confusion has substantive consequences when substantive Council actions are being contemplated, like mergers or dissolutions of Divisions or Round Tables. The proposed revisions are intended to codify in the Bylaws what constitutes a Council Session as opposed to a Council Meeting, which is superordinate to the other, and when “Session” is the preferable term.

C. MOTION 3

On behalf of the ALA Bylaws Committee, I ...

Move that the ALA Council approve the following revisions of Articles V and XIV of the ALA Bylaws. As these are not editorial changes, when they are approved by Council, they will go to the ALA membership for a vote on the Spring 2026 ballot.

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 1. Composition.</i> The Executive Board of the American Library Association shall consist of thirteen (13) members including: the four (4) officers of the Association, the immediate past president, and eight (8) councilors elected by Council to three-year (3-year).</p> <p>All Executive Board members must be active members of the American Library Association. Executive Board members elected by Council must be current Councilors and, as appropriate, current members of the division, round table, chapter, or association from which they are elected or appointed.</p>	<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 1. Composition.</i> The Executive Board of the American Library Association shall consist of thirteen (13) members including: the four (4) officers of the Association, the immediate past president, and eight (8) councilors <u>Association personal members</u> elected by Council to three-year (3-year) <u>terms</u>.</p> <p>All Executive Board members must be active members of the American Library Association. Executive Board members elected by Council <u>shall be limited to</u> must be current <u>Councilors members who are serving on or who have served on Council, or in an elected leadership position of either an Association Division or an Association Round Table, or as a chair of a Standing Committee of the Association within the past five (5) years of their nomination.</u> and, as appropriate, current members of the division, round table, chapter, or association from which they are elected or appointed.</p>	<p>Article V. Executive Board</p> <p><i>Section 1. Composition.</i> The Executive Board of the American Library Association shall consist of thirteen (13) members including: the four (4) officers of the Association, the immediate past president, and eight (8) Association personal members elected by Council to three-year (3-year) terms.</p> <p>All Executive Board members must be active members of the American Library Association. Executive Board members elected by Council shall be limited to members who are serving on or who have served on Council, or in an elected leadership position of either an Association Division or an Association Round Table, or as a chair of a Standing Committee of the Association within five (5) years of their nomination.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article XIV. Elections</p> <p><i>Section 1. Nominating Committee.</i> Prior to each annual conference of the Association, the Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee to nominate candidates for elective positions. The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates from among the personal membership for the position of president-elect; for the position of treasurer; and for members at-large of the Council including any vacant member at-large positions. No member of the Executive Board shall serve on the Nominating Committee.</p>	<p>Article XIV. Elections</p> <p><i>Section 1. Nominating Committee.</i> Prior to each annual conference of the Association, the Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee to nominate candidates for elective positions. The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates from among the personal membership for the position of president-elect; for the position of treasurer; and for members at-large of the Council including any vacant member at-large positions. <u>The Nominating Committee shall also nominate candidates for at-large positions on the Executive Board of the Association from among the personal membership who serve on or who have served on Council, or in an elected leadership position of either an Association Division or an Association Round Table, or as a chair of a Standing Committee of the Association within five (5) years of their nomination.</u></p> <p>No member of the Executive Board shall serve on the Nominating Committee.</p>	<p>Article XIV. Elections</p> <p><i>Section 1. Nominating Committee.</i> Prior to each annual conference of the Association, the Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee to nominate candidates for elective positions. The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates from among the personal membership for the position of president-elect; for the position of treasurer; and for members at-large of the Council including any vacant member at-large positions. The Nominating Committee shall also nominate candidates for at-large positions on the Executive Board of the Association from among the personal membership who serve on or who have served on Council, or in an elected leadership position of either an Association Division or an Association Round Table, or as a chair of a Standing Committee of the Association within five (5) years of their nomination.</p> <p>No member of the Executive Board shall serve on the Nominating Committee.</p>

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED REVISION	NEW LANGUAGE
<p>Article XIV. Elections</p> <p><i>Section 5. Committee on Committees.</i> There shall be a Committee on Committees composed of four (4) councilors elected for one-year terms by the Council. The president-elect shall be the fifth member of this committee and its chair. The four (4) elected members of the Committee on Committees shall be elected by ballot of the councilors present and voting at the annual conference. Additional nominations for the Committee on Committees may be made by councilors from the floor. The Committee on Committees shall nominate annually from among the current members of the Council candidates for nomination to the Executive Board to serve three-year terms. Upon election to the Executive Board, members shall continue to serve as councilors for the duration of their terms.</p>	<p>Article XIV. Elections</p> <p><i>Section 5. Committee on Committees.</i> There shall be a Committee on Committees composed of four (4) councilors elected for one-year terms by the Council. The president-elect shall be the fifth member of this committee and its chair. The four (4) elected members of the Committee on Committees shall be elected by ballot of the councilors present and voting at the annual conference. Additional nominations for the Committee on Committees may be made by councilors from the floor. The Committee on Committees shall nominate annually from among the current members of the Council candidates for nomination to the Executive Board to serve three-year terms. Upon election to the Executive Board, members shall continue to serve as councilors for the duration of their terms.</p>	<p>Article XIV. Elections</p> <p>DELETE <i>Section 5. Committee on Committees.</i></p> <p>RENUMBER <i>Section 6</i> accordingly.</p>

Rationale

The proposed revisions reflect the changes approved by Council in CD34, Motion 1 amended as amended and Motion 2 at its meeting on January 21, 2026.

As always, I want to thank the other members of the Bylaws Committee, including our new Executive Board liaison Larry Neal, all of whom are wonderful colleagues to work with, as are our staff liaisons Sheryl Reyes and Adrian Stratton.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian E. C. Schottlaender, *Chair*
Colby Jean Cilento
Gregory Dachille
Emily Daly
Jessica Miller
H J Pedelty
Andrea G. Stanfield
Larry Neal, *Executive Board Liaison*

Committee Staff:
Sheryl Reyes
Adrian Stratton

ATT 1: SUCCESSION SCENARIOS FOR PRESIDENT/PRESIDENT-ELECT

The Actors:

PERSON A, President

PERSON B, Elected President-Elect

PERSON C, Appointed President-Elect

PERSON D, Elected President-Elect

Scenario 1:

PERSON A steps down as President

Then ...

1. PERSON B steps down from their position as the elected President-Elect in order to complete PERSON A's term as President, thereby creating a vacancy in the position of the elected President-Elect.
2. Within 30 days of that vacancy, ALA Executive Board appoints PERSON C *only* to fill and complete the term of the vacant elected President-Elect position. (PERSON C will not subsequently go on to fill the roles of President or Immediate Past President.)
3. While PERSON B is completing PERSON A's term as President, ALA membership elects new President-Elect, PERSON D, in regularly scheduled election.
4. After PERSON B has completed PERSON A's term as President, they take up their own term as President and Person D takes up their term as President-Elect.
5. After PERSON B has completed their own term as President, they become Immediate Past President, and PERSON D becomes President.

Scenario 2:

PERSON B steps down as sitting Elected President-Elect

Then ...

1. Within 30 days of that vacancy, ALA Executive Board appoints PERSON C to fill and complete the term of the vacant elected President-Elect position.
2. While PERSON A is completing their term as President and PERSON C is completing their term as the appointed President-Elect, ALA membership elects new President-Elect, PERSON D, in regularly scheduled election.
3. After PERSON A has completed their term as President, PERSON C takes up their term as President, PERSON D takes up their term as President-Elect, and PERSON A becomes Immediate Past President.

Scenario 3¹:

PERSON B steps down as not-yet sitting Elected President-Elect

Then ... see Scenario 2 above.

¹ This scenario represents the specific circumstance—in which Ray Pun, a not-yet-sitting Elected President-Elect, resigned his position—that prompted the Bylaws Committee to discuss this set of issues.