

VALL Executive Minutes

August 23rd, 2021

Zoom Meeting

Present: Rebecca Tomlinson, Ronit Barenboim, Beth Galbraith, Katherine Melville, Jen Brubacher, Joni Sherman, Kurtis Kolthammer, Rachel Carlson, Clare Finegan, Allyssa McFayden,

Regrets: Alexandria Everitt, Natalie Rocheleau

1. VALL Executive meeting minutes for July 19, 2021, approved.
2. President (Rebecca)
 - a. Welcome and review of standard Executive processes. Rebecca provided an overview of the typical VALL workflow:
 - i. The President will circulate the meeting agenda in advance. Executive and Committee members should, if possible, submit their reports in advance of the monthly Executive meeting. Minutes will be taken by the VALL Review co-editors, and sent to the Executive for review and amendment following the meeting.
 - ii. Larger / complicated discussions may be moved to a separate meeting, discussed via email, or brought forward to future meetings as needed.
 - iii. Approvals for payments, contracts, or other significant business should be discussed at the Executive meetings; if approval is needed prior to a meeting, it can be submitted to the Executive via email, and then reported on for the minutes at the next meeting.
 - b. Review of the past year's Executive decisions and projects:
 - i. The VALL Executive set up the Lawbster forum for the VALL membership via the Courthouse library. This platform will need to be reviewed each year, due to the funding arrangement on the Courthouse's end. Management has been transferred to Alex, as VP, and so far, the uptake among membership has been positive.
 - ii. The VALL Executive decided to extend the Peter Bark application deadline in response to Covid-19 restrictions and event cancellations. Awards from the 2019-2020 season were also held over for the recipients, one was used, and two remain pending. The 2020-2021 season had one successful applicant, who used their award.
 - iii. The VALL Executive decided to add bios, with optional photo, to the VALL website. These will need to be updated for the incoming executive members; please submit your bio, and photo if desired, to Kurtis.
 - iv. Joni worked with Steve Matthews to set up Google analytics for the VALL website, and has been reporting regularly on our various page views.

- v. Still pending work includes completion and uploading of the VALL Executive job descriptions; Beth is in the process of completing this project.
 - c. Discussion re: the procedure for taking, posting, and approving the VALL minutes. Currently, the minutes are distributed, amended as needed, and then the final version is posted to the VALL website. These are then formally approved at the following meeting.
 - i. Suggestion to continue this process, but to circulate the final version in advance of the next meeting, and formally post them to the VALL website subsequent to the meeting where they are approved.
3. Past President (Beth)
- a. Beth reported on the 2020-2021 Programming Survey which was distributed to the VALL membership; the results were published in the VALL Review and circulated to the Executive.
 - i. We received limited suggestions for programming, however, valuable feedback was collected regarding VALL members' preferences for in-person, virtual, or hybrid programming. This feedback will need to be solicited again in the future, as the Covid circumstances and restrictions change.
 - ii. We also gathered information regarding the idea of charging a small fee for recorded VALL programming content. There is the possibility that we may need to collect a small fee to support offering recorded programming, and it will be key to be transparent with the VALL membership as to the need for a fee. Other organizations also have explored this idea, VALL may wish to connect to seek advice and suggestions.
 - b. Beth reported on the survey process and the VALL Survey Monkey account. The free version is now very limited, and does not allow for the types of questions we typically need. Beth used the free SoGo Survey platform instead, which allowed for more question options, including comment boxes and ranking questions.
 - i. Both platforms are comparable in price if we were to pay for an account, both are prohibitive.
 - ii. Programs will download all our data from Survey Monkey for posterity, and will explore other potential survey platform options, including connecting to the VALL website, with the Web Editor's help.
4. Vice President (Alexandria)
- a. No update in absentia.
5. Treasurer (Ronit)
- a. Expenses – no new expenses. Ronit confirmed that we will not be purchasing gift cards for outgoing Executive members.

- b. Income – 2 membership payments (\$40) via PayPal, 16 membership payments via cheque (\$320) deposited to VALL operating account.
 - c. The VALL Peter Bark Memorial Fund Non-Redeemable Annual Term of \$11,500 matures on September 4th. There are three options to re-invest:
 - i. 1 year non-redeemable at 1% - current investment structure, automatic rollover in absence of instructions.
 - ii. 30 day cashable deposit at 0.3%
 - iii. 3 year escalating deposit at average 1.33% over 3 years.
 - iv. The VALL Executive decided to reinvest \$8500 in a three-year escalating term, and the remaining \$3000 will be reinvested in a one-year non-redeemable as of September 2022.
6. Programs (Allyssa, Rachel, Natalie)
- a. Programs has met with last season’s committee and Rebecca, and have access to the essential documents and passwords needed; they have also met regarding planning ideas for the upcoming VALL season.
 - b. Some potential ideas included:
 - i. Irwin Law transition to VLex; potentially repetitive, as they recently offered training.
 - ii. Aiming for a “holiday” event in person in January, with an online “event” in December, such as a photo contest.
 - iii. Legislative research refresher; the Courthouse may have a possible speaker, potentially Susannah Tredwell
 - iv. Adrienne Smith regarding transgender issues
 - v. Possibility to pay for a speaker; will also need to reconfirm with Thomson and Lexis regarding their commitment to sponsor a session
 - vi. Host Consulting regarding indigenous law, decolonization.
 - c. Programs will coordinate with Kurtis regarding an index on the VALL website of past recorded sessions, and upcoming, and will explore and investigate what might be needed to record hybrid sessions in the future.
7. Web Editor (Kurtis & Joni)
- a. Joni will be transitioning to Assistant Web Editor, with a focus on developing VALL’s website manual, she will report to the Executive on this when it is completed, for review.

- b. Kurtis and Joni have gone through training on the website. Kurtis is finishing up editing the website for the new Executive, and asked that the new Executive members submit their bios for updating.
 - c. Report included 3 new users added, 1 request for assistance, edited various dead links, created a table format for Executive information page, drop down for Archives page, added “Members Forum” to the Member’s Only resources drop down, and moved the “login” button to the top of the page. Login link will also be made more accessible when sending eblasts / messages.
 - d. Google analytics included 124 homepage views, 107 job postings views, and 37 Exec Bios views.
8. Membership Secretary (Clare)
- a. New Members
 - i. Three new members – Nancy Li, Blakes, Cynthia Ram, Harper Grey, Christine Babec, The Justice Institute.
 - b. Current total members – 85
 - i. Paying Members – 66
 - ii. Lifetime – 14
 - iii. Honoured – 5
 - iv. Honourary – 1
 - v. 34 members have not renewed from last season.
 - c. Three eblasts sent out to membership – VALL Review, Lawbster reminders, Programming Survey reminder.
 - d. Fiona and Clare completed the Membership Secretary transition, and new business included a discussion of when to send a follow-up Membership renewal reminder. The Executive decided a reminder should be sent in September.
9. VALL Review (Jen and Katherine)
- a. Summer issued was published; ended up being quite more substantial than planned.
 - b. The next issue will be in late October or early November.
10. New Business - none
11. Next Meeting – September 2021, Rebecca to send a Doodle poll to schedule.