**Midlands Conference of Librarians**

**Serving the Blind and Physically Handicapped**

**Bylaws**

# Name

The full name of this organization shall be the Midlands Conference of Librarians Serving the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

# Purpose

The purposes of the Midlands Conference are:

1. To exchange ideas and materials.
2. To discuss and solve common problems.
3. To make recommendations to the National Library Service (NLS) for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
4. To work with the other three regional conferences, NLS, and other agencies and groups to improve service.

# Membership

All librarians on the staff of regional and subregional libraries, advisory and outreach centers, and directors of machine lending agencies are ex officio members of the Midlands Conference. Membership is also open to all staff from regional and subregional libraries, access and outreach centers, and machine lending agencies throughout the Midlands region.

The Midlands region consists of: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin.

Voting shall be by a simple majority of conference membership at a meeting which has a quorum. Each Midlands Conference member is allowed one vote. The Chair is responsible for determining an acceptable voting quorum at the time a call for vote is made.

Multistate Center personnel are excluded from elective office and voting membership.

# Officers

Officers shall include: Chairperson, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary. The executive committee shall include these officers and the Immediate Past Chairperson.

All offices are elective.

The Chairperson shall be responsible for conducting the business meetings of the conference, appointing committee members, appointing representatives to NLS ad hoc committees, planning the agenda for conference meetings, and making a report on conference recommendations at the national conference. Additional duties include: welcoming new members; review of the Midlands Conference bylaws; maintaining committee assignment rosters and rotations; participating in NLS activities as requested such as conference chairs meetings; and participation in the selection process for regional and sub-regional library of the year award.

The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect assumes the office of Chairperson at the close of each biennial Midlands Conference meeting or in the absence or resignation of the Chairperson. Other offices vacated by resignation shall be filled by appointment of the Chairperson. At the close of each biennial Midlands Conference meeting, members elect a new Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect serves as Vice-Chair for two years and then as Chairperson for two years.

The Treasurer shall maintain all financial records of the conference, preparing, at minimum, an annual fiscal report for the membership; shall receive all dues and contributions; shall make investments, if possible; and shall disburse funds with approval of the executive committee.

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of conference meetings, and assist with conference correspondence.

The Immediate Past Chairperson provides advice and leadership to the executive committee regarding past practices and other matters to assist the committee in governing the Midlands Conference. The Immediate Past Chairperson supports the Chairperson and the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect on an as-needed basis. The Immediate Past Chairperson performs the duties of the Chairperson in the absence or resignation of the Chairperson and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect.

The length of term of offices for Treasurer, Secretary, and Immediate Past Chairperson shall be two years.

The conference representatives to the various ad hoc and advisory committees organized by NLS shall attend meetings and give a report to the conference at business meetings. Representatives shall serve two years and shall be appointed by the conference Chairperson, based on input from the region. The Chairperson shall keep the conference informed of committees organized and representatives appointed.

# Elections

Officers will be elected at the Midlands regional conference in odd-numbered years and will serve for two years. At least three months prior to election, the Chairperson shall appoint a nominating committee of three persons. The committee shall prepare a slate and secure consent of a minimum of one candidate for each office.

The nominating committee shall present the names of the candidates at least forty-eight hours before the election. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor at the time of the election providing their consent has been obtained.

Elections shall be by simple majority vote of those members present and voting.

Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Chairperson.

# Meetings and Quorums

The regional conferences shall meet at the national conference in even-numbered years. In spring, during odd-numbered years, the Midlands Conference shall meet at a site selected by vote of the Midlands Conference membership.

The host librarian shall chair the conference planning committee for the Midlands regional conference. The members of the executive committee will also serve on the conference planning committee.

Invitations for the next Midlands regional conference meeting site shall be presented at the preceding Midlands regional conference. The membership will, preferably, vote on a site at the time of invitation at the Midlands regional conference or at the national conference the following year.

A Midlands meeting quorum shall consist of the number of members present at the time of the meeting, as they constitute the membership at that time.

Voting shall be by a simple majority of the voting members present at a meeting which has a quorum. As explained in Article III, the Chairperson is responsible for determining an acceptable voting quorum at the time a call for vote is made.

# Conference Fees

A registration fee may be charged for the Midlands regional conference. This fee will be determined by the host librarian based on projected conference expenses.

# Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws must be approved by a simple majority vote of members present at Midlands Conference meeting which has a quorum.

**Guidelines**

# Conference Meeting A regular membership business meeting is held at the national NLS Biennial Conference and regional Midlands conference.

# Midlands Conference, LLC

Midlands Conference was set up as an LLC to establish a banking account to hold monies collected from members and conference registration fees.

The Treasurer acts as custodian for the account.

As of 2015, the Midlands bank account is managed by Scott Norris from the Michigan Braille and Talking Book Library (MI1A). He is Treasurer of Midlands until the end of the Midlands Regional Conference in 2017.

Along with the bank account, Midlands Conference also operates as a non-profit. The non-profit status requires an annual renewal. Anne Mandel from Michigan (MI1M) has been overseeing submitting the renewal forms and paying the fee ($20.00).

If a new treasurer is elected, then the bank account and non-profit paperwork need to be set up in their respective state.

# Committee Assignments

The Chairperson makes appointments to the NLS Collection Development Advisory Group, Public Education Advisory Group, the Reading Technology Advisory Group, and any other ad hoc or standing committees that NLS requests a representative.

Library representatives can include all Midland Conference members, and are not exclusive to regional and sub-regional librarians, or heads of machine lending agencies or advisory and outreach centers.

The Collection Development Advisory Group requires one library and one consumer representative. Both appointments are two year terms.

The Public Education Advisory Group requires one library representative. More than one representative can participate. NLS does not specify a term limit when serving on this group. Two year term limits are recommended to allow other members an opportunity to participate.

The Reading Technology Advisory Group requires two library representatives and one consumer representative. All appointments are two year terms.

The bylaws specify that the Chairperson make the committee assignment appointments, but they do not specify the selection process. During the 2015 business meeting in Indianapolis, membership expressed interest in requesting a call for volunteers to serve during committee vacancies. Committee assignments in the past have also rotated alphabetically through all the states, including library committee representatives as well as consumer representatives. A Library may request to be skipped in the rotation for any open committee assignment. The next state listed alphabetically fills the position left vacant by the skipped state. The Chair is responsible to keeping a roster of active committee representatives.

# Continuity

Each outgoing Chair should provide the incoming Chair with a brief report on the Midlands Conference provide information about committee assignments and their term expirations, and any new or tabled business or discussions that will need to be addressed during the next regional conference meeting.

# Regional Communication

The Illinois State Library hosts the Midlands list-serv. It is moderated by the Talking Book and Braille Service information services technician. Join the list at: http://www.islemail.org/mailman/listinfo/midlands.

# Regional Conference

A regional conference occurs in the odd numbered years.   
  
Conference Site - The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect consults with the Chairperson and the Immediate Past Chairperson to recommend conference sites at the Midlands Conference biennial business meeting.   
  
Program - The Chairperson plans the program and conducts the Midlands Conference meeting. The Chairperson and host-site regional or sub-regional librarian work closely together to arrange programs, speakers, panel discussions, pre-conference, etc. The Chair may also create a program committee to assist with the development of the conference program.   
  
Budget - The chair, in conjunction with the host regional librarian, plans the budget for a given conference. Seed money for the conference, if there is any, is passed along to the next Regional Librarian whose library is hosting the conference.

Business Meeting - A business meeting for the region is conducted at both the national biennial conference and the regional biennial conference. The Chairperson sets the agenda and leads the meeting. Minutes of the meeting are taken by the Secretary. The minutes are then sent to the Chairperson who distributes them to the members of the region. Resolutions are solicited from members, discussed and voted on by attendees, and submitted to NLS by the Chairperson.Nominations for the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect for the upcoming 2 year term are accepted and voted on by the attendees.

## Conference Continuity – The Immediate Past Chairperson should advise the Chairperson and host-site regional or sub-regional librarian with any past conference planning and serve as a reference for best practices when planning the conference.

## Fees - The host library or its designate collects registration fees to pay for meals, field trips, and other incidentals associated with hosting the conference. An appropriate designate can include library friends group or foundation that can collect and disperse funds accumulated from conference fees.

## Local Arrangements Committee - Members of the regional library in the hosting state participate on the local arrangements committee and provide for accommodations, meals, fieldtrips and social gatherings.

# Appendix A: Roster of Midlands Conference Chairs

The roster of Midlands Conference Chairs since 1983:

**Years State Person**

17-19 MI Sue Chinault

15-17 OH Will Reed  
13-15   IL Sharon Ruda

11-13   MN Catherine Durivage

09-11   KS Toni Harrell

07-09   MO Richard Smith

05-07 IA Karen Keninger

03-05 MN Catherine Durivage

01-03 OH Judy Bow

99-01 IN Lissa Shanahan

97-99 IL Barbara Perkis

95-97 OK Geraldine Adams

93-95 MI Pat Klemens

91-93 MO Beth Eckles

89-91 IA Catherine Ford

87-89 OH Carol Heideman

85-87 MI Barbara Goral

83-85 IN Barney McEwen