

The Horace Mann League of the USA

Draft Minutes of the July 11, 2015 Board meeting

Chicago's O'Hare Airport, United Suite, C Concourse



Charles Fowler

Meeting Called to order by Charles Fowler, President of the League at 1:00 pm.

1. Members present: Charles Fowler, Gary Marx, Martha Bruckner, Carol Choye, Eric King, James Harvey (arrived at 2:00 pm), and Jack McKay. Special Guests: Bob Fortenberry (Past President). Van Jones, and Scott Lewis.



Bob Fortenberry

Dr. Bob Fortenberry, Past President of the HML, had requested that he be permitted to make a presentation to the board about the need to rebuild the high confidence level in the public schools, and a possible role for the Horace Mann League in supporting such an effort. His major points were:

- Our society must come together in of support public education in our nation.
- There has been a major effort to dispute the importance of, and discredit the success of public education.
- There are people who intentionally want to dismantle the public schools concepts.
- If public education goes, so goes our national character.

We must do three things:

- Handle the race issue. We need integration by design, not by choice.
- Build teams in the schools to stand up to and address the issues.
- Convince the public of the importance of strong public schools.

We can't wait for it to happen. We must step up about public education.

Summary statements:

- We can not “import” improvement. We must grow it from within.
- We cannot “fire” our way to improvement.
- We must be seen as “enablers”. We must help them acquire the necessary professional skills required by their jobs.
- We must educate children where they are sitting. There is not a “better” school to which to send their children.

There must not be a gap between old and new employees. We must utilize the wisdom of grey hair and vigor of youth.

- We must recognize that school improvement is a process of continuing growth which is never completed. There is no arrival point.
- When asked how he anticipated the Horace Mann League could help with such an effort, Bob indicated that he and his colleagues were hopeful to develop the support needed to begin training leaders at the school level, from a variety of school districts, who would be equipped through a series of seminars to develop new ways to teach and improve their systems and to advance the national view of public education. He provided a list of eight possible initial seminar topics and reported that William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Mississippi had already agreed to provide a location for the seminars. He is looking for assistance from the League in (a) identifying possible sources of funding to support such an initiative, and (b) identify educational leaders who could be seminar instructors.
- The Board agreed to take Bob's request under advisement, reflect upon its potential role, and provide a preliminary response following the Winter Meeting of the Board in Phoenix.
- Bob Fortenberry and his colleagues left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

2. Winter Board and Annual Meeting Minutes.

Motion by James Harvey, seconded by Martha Bruckner to approve the 2015 Winter Board Meeting and the Annual Meeting minutes.

3. The Board began a discussion of potential award recipients for the winter meeting of the League at AASA in Phoenix. All board members had an opportunity to provide suggested award recipients prior to the meeting and additional names were also proposed. Following a full discussion, a consensus was reached on the potential recipients for each of the following awards and the Executive Director was authorized, in consultation with the President, to finalize the award recipients for the Winter Meeting:

Outstanding Public Educator

Outstanding Friend of Public Education

Outstanding Global Public Educator



Gary Marx

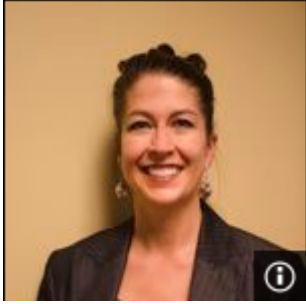
It was agreed that Gary Marx would be the recipient of the 2016 Outstanding Friend of the League award.



Eric King

4. Nomination for Vice President of the Horace Mann League. The board agreed to place in nomination at the Winter Meeting the name of Dr. Eric King as Vice President of the League.

5. Nomination for two vacancies as Director: The Board developed a list of fifteen potential nominees for two vacancies. Based on diversity and regional representation, a list of five candidates was developed. The Executive Director was directed to finalize the proposed nominees in consultation with the President.



Ember Conley, Supt. of Park City, Ut. has accepted the nomination.



Ruben Alejandro, Supt. of Schools, Weslaco, TX. has accepted the nomination.

Reappointments to the Board of Directors

Carol Choye (NJ)

James Harvey (WA)

Steve Ladd (CA)



James Harvey



Carol Choye



Steve Ladd

6. Membership and Recruitment Report

The Executive Director reviewed the membership data with the board. There are currently 586 members. Through June there are 16 new members, since January 1, 2015. Current activities to recruit are receiving ten to twenty names from each officer and director and following-up with letters of nomination. To date, 165 nomination packets have been mailed to potential members.

7. Financial Report

The Executive Director reviewed the budget status through June 2015. As of June 30, 45% of the revenues have been received, while 47% of the budget has been expended.

It was agreed that the President would consult with legal counsel regarding the appropriateness of an independent contractor rather than employee providing the services of Executive Director.

8. Annual Dues

The Board reviewed the dues structure of the League. After reviewing operating expenses of the League, an increase in dues was considered.

Motion by Martha Bruckner, seconded by Carol Choye, that the annual Regular

membership dues for the League increased by \$15.00 to \$100.00 per year. (Dues have not increased in four years). Further, that an ad hoc committee composed of Martha Bruckner and Eric King review the dues structure of similar professional associations and provide a report and recommendations for the Board's consideration at the winter meeting. Approved.

9. Term Limits

The board reviewed the idea of term limits for board members. After a discussion of term limits, the following motion was made:

Motion by James Harvey, seconded by Carol Choye, that a Constitutional amendment be proposed limiting the term of Horace Mann League Directors to two consecutive three-year terms, effective with those elected in 2016. The terms of currently-elected Directors would be unaffected by the amendment. Approved

10. The Board reviewed the HML Road Map of Activities developed at the 2014 Summer Board Meeting and agreed it should be reviewed and adjusted at each future meeting of the Board.

Summary of Activities, A Roadmap Drawn from HML Committees

The Process. At the Horace Mann League's summer planning session at Stanford University, three committees were formed. Their purpose was to identify ideas and shape recommendations for activities that would support goals directly related to membership, communication, and funding. The committees have generated excellent ideas.

Officers were charged with reviewing and summarizing the many recommendations and notes that were generated both during and since that Stanford meeting. In some cases, committees included similar recommendations. Combinations of those ideas, coupled with further realities and needs facing the League, triggered additional possibilities.

Since the beginning of September, officers have received copies of reports and summaries and have held a conference call to further discuss suggestions for moving forward.

1. Activities that have been identified are crucial for the sustainability and success of the organization. Some might appear to be new. Others reflect adjustments in what the League is already doing. Clearly, the League needs an ongoing commitment to initiate products and services that will add value for present and future members, clarify the important role of public education in society, and lead to enhanced sources of revenue. Some of these activities can be accomplished with adjustments in conditioned behavior, since expectations are dynamic, not static, in a fast-changing world. One officer suggested that whatever HML produces should be sound enough to withstand the scrutiny of the severest critic, since what the organization does or does not do reflects on public education and on the League's leadership and membership.

2. While these activities will likely be woven into a more formal and comprehensive plan, they will serve as a roadmap as we move forward during the coming months. All appear to be consistent with Bylaws and Policies. As we all know, the League continues to deal with the need to establish its status as an entity while facing urgent needs in membership, funding, and communication.

Engaging HML's Wealth of Talent and Experience. Reinforcement is needed for a mentality that accepts HML as an honorary and as a volunteer organization whose talented and experienced members can be engaged in getting important things done. We are aware that many would welcome the opportunity to help us further shape our future.

Keep in mind that the items included contribute to HML's revenue, service, membership, recognition, and leadership.

Communication

Basic: (The HML president and immediate past president will work with the executive director in pursuing communication needs. Others may be enlisted to engage their talents.)

- **Identity.** For communication purposes, the committee suggested a statement similar to the following, which is consistent with HML's mission: The Horace Mann League is an honorary society of educators and thought leaders who are deeply committed to sustaining and improving a high-quality public education system for all students. **(Done)**
- **Clarity and Quality of Communication.** All written or online communication from HML should be clear, concise, informative, compelling, accurate, appropriately attributed, and reflect professional design. All communication originating with HML reflects on the League's identity, on the public education enterprise, and on members of the public education community **(On going)**
- **HML Update.** A heading will be developed to encourage and provide a format for sending electronic and print messages to members about HML activities. That communication will help keep all informed, emphasize the value of membership, and build a sense of community and ownership. **(Ongoing – as needed)**
- **HML Post.** The weekly *HML Post* will continue to bring attention to ongoing education articles that reflect the needs and successes of public education. **(On going)**
- **HML Blog.** The *HML Blog* will include invited, voluntarily submitted, and existing articles that are published with permission of the source. **(On going)**
- **HML Board Update.** A periodic online update from the president and/or executive director to keep members of the board informed about HML developments, activities, needs, etc. **(As needed)**
- **HML Annual Meeting Promotion.** The HML president and executive director will establish an effective strategy for promotion of the League's Annual Meeting. **(On going)**
- **News Media List.** A news media/press list will be developed for use in communicating newsworthy information from HML. **(The current HML president will provide a basic list of contacts.)**

- Online member surveys, mentioned in other parts of this roadmap, and historically conducted by the League, will engage members and immediately or eventually produce information of interest and value to members. Some of that information may be newsworthy and/or potentially lead to service-providing, revenue-producing products or services. **(In formative phase)**

Communication

Other Communication:

- **HML Cornerstone.** The executive director may wish to continue this service provided it is of interest to members and content is presented in compliance with Fair Use. **(On going)**
- **HML Printed Newsletters.** An HML print newsletter has been issued from two to four times each year distributed by nonprofit mail. Budgetary considerations, the need to provide visible services, and communication and/or promotional needs will guide frequency. **(Limited budget)**
- **HML Web Site.** The executive director has undertaken efforts to further develop the HML web site and is urged to continue that progress. An ongoing aim will be to continue ensuring highly readable, appropriate content enhanced by compelling design, and electronic prompts to move readers from one segment of the site to all others. **(Upgraded)**
- **Social Media Presence.** HML's social media presence might be strengthened through periodic sharing of Horace Mann and other public education quotes on Twitter. **(Not completed)**
- **Critical Conversations and Engagement Activities with Educational Influencers.** Board members suggested that HML initiate critical conversations and/or engagement activities with *educational influencers*. A goal might be to make them more familiar with the role of HML and/or help them experience the organization at work. (Some of these influencers will be contacted for testimonials in release of the indicators project. HML will also do a presentation for top elected and appointed leaders of national education leadership organizations during that release process. Award recipients who are *thought leaders* generally attend HML Annual Meetings. They can be consistently updated on HML activities and their counsel solicited. Some may be invited to serve on an HML Advisory Council. When possible, *thought leaders* may be asked to meet with the HML Board. In some cases and when appropriate, these *thought leaders*, whether individuals or organizations, could be engaged in joint projects. **(In progress)**

Membership

Basic: (Consistent with recommendations from both the membership and communication committees, the League has a need to immediately address membership recruitment, engagement, and retention issues.)

- **Formation of an HML Membership Task Force.** This group will work toward developing and pursuing plans to increase and retain membership. Those plans will

move beyond the immediate to the longer-term membership needs and goals of the League. The current vice president of the League has expressed a willingness to provide guidance for this effort working with the HML president, executive director, and others. **(Done)**

- **Every-Member-Get-A-Member Campaign.** Initial stages of an “Every-Member-Get-a-Member” campaign have been launched, leading to greater current member engagement and the identification of an even broader range of excellent nominees. This campaign might be conducted twice a year. (Will be promoted on the HML Post site)
- **HML Board Nominations.** Each active officer and member of the HML Board should be asked to nominate from 15 to 20 potential members each year. Current practice calls for each to annually nominate a minimum of 20. Past-Presidents will be asked to nominate from 5 to 10, perhaps more, possible members each year. (In progress)
- **Recruitment Letters and Materials.** Recruitment letters, while possibly shaped specifically for some individuals and groups, should be consistent with and build on the basics included in a prototype message attached to recent board nomination requests. Letterhead will need to be fully accurate, neatly designed, and allow ample space for this generally one-page letter. All names and other identifying information for those whose names are listed should be correct. A high-quality set of information and recruitment materials, both print and electronic, should be one important part in this process. (On going)
- **List of 100 Non-Members.** A list of 100 non-members, who have been targeted by board members and officers, will receive appropriate invitations to become members of HML. This process was begun during the 2014 Stanford meeting, and follow-up will be needed. (Planned during fall of 2015)
- **Horace Mann League Recruitment Hall of Fame.** Declare a Horace Mann League Member Recruitment Hall of Fame made up of all who have received Ambassador Awards during the past 15 years. Invite each one to recommend or recruit at least five new members each year. (Fall of 2015)
- **State Association Recruitment.** Invite each state association of school administrators executive director and perhaps leaders of other associations, to nominate from one to five (or more) educators or public education advocates for membership in the Horace Mann League each year. **(Fall of 2015)**
- **Membership Retention.** Member retention should be examined and processes/messages developed to address any concerns, to encourage continuing membership for those who are past-due on dues payments, and to make any needed adjustments in the process for rebilling. Surveys might indicate how HML could more effectively attract and retain members. While rebilling is done regularly, a more thoughtful and magnetic approach might be developed. **(Current practice)**
- **Member Surveys.** The value of member surveys, which have traditionally been conducted by HML, is reinforcement of member engagement. These surveys draws from the knowledge and experiences of a talented membership base and emphasize the importance of an HML network. One specific service might focus on identifying and reinforcing the principles of public education, while producing a member service and possible revenue for the League. (Fall of 2015)
- **2014 New Member Target.** The League will aim to recruit a total of 80 to 100 members during 2014.

Membership

Moving Forward:

- **Membership Goals.** The Membership Committee called for development of plans to increase HML membership by 15 to 20 percent per year in each of the next five years (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019).
- **Flash Mob Membership Drive, Horace Mann's Birthday.** Members of the board suggested a possible "May 4th Be With You" membership drive to commemorate Horace Mann's birthday, May 4, 1796, in Franklin, Massachusetts. The suggestions included a sponsored ad in the *New York Times* or another national newspaper commemorating Horace Mann and his contributions to public education and democracy. (No action)
- **HML Chapters.** A goal recommended for the League is establishment of HML Chapters within or surrounding Schools of Education at Colleges and Universities. Specific plans would need to be developed. A goal would be to familiarize educators in preparation programs with the work of Horace Mann, public education, and the Horace Mann League. (No action)

Funding

Basic: The following approaches to funding are consistent with suggestions of both the communication and membership committees and reflect HML's need to offer opportunities, products, and services that lead to needed income for the organization. (The HML president-elect has been invited to be the point-person for this effort, working with the president and executive director in pursuing efforts to meet the League's funding needs.)

- **Funding Clusters or Packages.** Funding clusters or packages will be identified, including a description of what needs to be funded and the amount required. A catalog or list of these discrete funding opportunities will serve as a basis for sponsorships, contributions, and potentially for collaborative and partnership activities. (List of potential partners with letters)
- **Funding Task Force.** A funding task force should be identified. Those directly involved would include members and perhaps others, based on successful fundraising efforts on behalf of the League or experience in fundraising outside the League. The efforts must be coordinated. (No action)
- **Sale of HML-Related Products.** Plans should be made to offer additional copies of the Indicators pamphlet in bulk for sale to members and others. A public education booklet or pamphlet, based in part on a member survey and the work of Horace Mann, might also produce member service, recognition for public education and the League, and perhaps significant revenue if sold in bulk. (Done)
- **Recognition of Sponsors/Contributors.** HML's policy devoted to partnerships includes a description of how sponsors and those who contribute to various activities will be recognized. (Current Practice)
- **Overhead.** Unless a sponsorship involves direct payment by a vendor for in-kind services, something like a luncheon, an appropriate fee should be included in the sponsorship payment to cover overhead. Payment of actual cost as an in-kind

contribution is valuable to HML. However, overhead for HML should be included in an appropriate amount, whenever possible, to help cover operational costs. (Current practice)

- **Surveys.** The need for surveys is included in all three categories of this report. Information produced by surveys of members has value that extends from membership engagement to use of ideas and information generated to produce salable products or services. The public education survey, mentioned earlier, is an example.
- **Funding for International Indicators for Education Release.** An immediate need is funding and other support for release of the International Indicators for Education.
- **Organizational Funding Conference Call.** While some of the above projects will need to begin immediately as a matter of practice, HML officers and the executive director will hold a conference call to discuss these and other possibilities for organizing funding clusters and recruiting members of a funding task force.

Funding

Moving Forward

- **Initiating Prominent Projects.** Board members have reinforced the need to initiate two prominent projects that will positively focus attention on education issues and the work of HML. Those projects could include after-release bulk sale of pamphlets associated with the International Indicators for Education and the public education publication mentioned earlier. Both are likely to be fundable and revenue-producing. (No action)
- **Advertising.** As with other associations, the League might offer the opportunity for appropriate advertising in its online publications, consistent with HML policy guidelines. Those ads might be sold at a yearly fee. Examples might include a banner ad and a few ad insertions on the periphery. Specifications, ad rates, appropriateness, and clarification of advertiser identification would need to be worked out. (A banner ad, for example, in the *HML Post*, might be priced at \$3,000 for six months or \$5,000 for a year.) Yield could be ongoing. (No action on this)
- **Major Media Ad.** The task force might include among funding clusters sponsorship of an appropriate *New York Times* or other major media ad to reinforce the importance of Horace Mann and public education. Any funding channeled through HML should include sufficient overhead for the League. (This item was also mentioned earlier.) (Still under consideration)

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Jack McKay, Exec. Dir. of the Horace Mann League