

Change is unavoidable and, as information professionals, we're no stranger to it—but that doesn't make change any less scary. According to ALA Treasurer Larry Neal, the July 2025 ALA operating budget showed a 14-million-dollar deficit for 2025 and the 2026 budget was likely to have an approximately seven-million-dollar deficit.¹ Needless to say, this financial situation is unsustainable. The ALA Executive Board has embraced critically reviewing the work of the organization at all levels to help cut costs and better align with ALA's Strategic Plan. In this column, I want to discuss how GODORT has been affected.

In August, ALA Council debated a recommendation from the ALA Executive Board, requiring that Round Table elected positions align with ALA elected offices.² The rationale for this change is that each elected office costs ALA staff time to run, and ALA is trying to save money wherever they can due to the above-mentioned financial instability.

For GODORT, this means that for the 2026 election cycle, the only elected positions will be Chair-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary.³ The positions of Publications Chair-Elect, Bylaws Coordinator, and Archivist would no longer be elected offices but would become appointed. The election of Councilors will be unaffected by this change and will still be elected by the membership. For 2026, I am happy to announce that GODORT's membership numbers have surpassed the threshold necessary for having a dedicated Councilor for 2026-2027.⁴

Careful, critical review of all offerings is another way ALA is trying to find financial stability. At the end of July, all Round Tables were tasked with pragmatically reviewing all of their Awards, Grants, Scholarships, Committees, and Products and submitting a completed rubric to our ALA Staff Liaison by the end of September. This undertaking was challenging for GODORT Steering. We were working within tight time constraints and it's daunting to objectively evaluate things that we care deeply about. With the results of the rubric, GODORT Steering will spend the next few months discussing ways that we can revitalize, reimagine, and reorganize our work in a manner that makes sense to our round table and helps keep GODORT sustainable and relevant. Already, members of GODORT Steering have kicked off inspiring conversations, sharing fresh ideas for reorganizing our committees that promise to make us even more agile, impactful, and sustainable.

The reorganization of GODORT's committees is nothing new. As time changes, our priorities shift and we must remain adaptable and modify the organization accordingly. It's important that we remain focused on why these changes need to take place. In March 2025, after 116 years, the Special Library Association (SLA) was dissolved, in part due to financial issues.⁵ We must remind ourselves that ALA is not making these changes to hurt round tables or hamper their work—they're doing so to ensure the organization's own survival, so that we can continue to benefit from the support of such an incredibly important professional organization, especially in these increasingly difficult times. Together, let's embrace this evolution with the innovative spirit that defines us, turning challenges into opportunities to build a stronger, more vibrant GODORT for generations to come.

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Notes

1. American Library Association, *ALA Virtual Executive Board Meeting Minutes*. Meeting minutes, Virtual, September 4, 2025. <https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/ebd%202.2%20Board%20Meeting%20Minutes%2004-Sept-2025%20-%20final%20edits.pdf>.
2. American Library Association, *ALA CD 55: ALA Policy Update Recommendations from the ALA Board*, Virtual Special Council Meeting, August 24, 2025, <https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2025-08/ALA%20CD%2055%20ALA%20Policy%20Update%20Recommendations%20from%20the%20ALA%20Board.pdf>.
3. Benjamin Aldred, ALA Councilor to Small Round Tables, email message to author, October 9, 2025.
4. Danielle Ponton, ALA Staff Liaison to GODORT, email message to author, October 8, 2025.
5. Special Libraries Association, "SLA Announces Dissolution," March 26, 2025, <https://sla.org/news/697073/SLA-Announces-Dissolution.htm>.