

## FLL Partner Resignation: Issues, Options and Recommendations

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Los Angeles Region FLL Operational Partner  
Los Angeles Robotics Treasurer

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Dear Los Angeles Robotics Board of Directors:

As you know, I have announced my resignation as FLL® Operational Partner effective May 1. This memo summarizes the issues confronting the LARobotics Board related to my resignation, some available options, some possible consequences, and my recommendations.

(1) The immediate issue confronting the Board is my resignation as FLL Operational Partner. Los Angeles Robotics is the FLL Affiliate Partner, and I am their appointed representative as the FLL Operational Partner. At the LARobotics Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) meeting last summer, we discussed my concern that the FLL and FTC® programs were outgrowing my capacity to support them as FLL Partner and also as the fiscal agent for both programs, since FLL and FTC team registrations and expenses were being processed through LARobotics accounts. Moreover, if I were incapacitated for an extended period, the FLL program would be severely impacted. The SPC agreed with my recommendation to look for new organizations with greater capacity to replace LARobotics as the FLL Affiliate Partner and as the fiscal agents for FLL and FTC. The fiscal agent issues for each program will be addressed separately below.

Now that I have resigned as FLL Operational Partner, the LARobotics Board could designate a new FLL Operational Partner if it chooses to continue as the FLL Affiliate Partner; however, the appointed FLL Operational Partner also needs to be acceptable to *FIRST*®. I invited the 49 members of the LA Region FLL Planning Committee to let me know if any of them were interested in taking on any part of the FLL Operational Partner's responsibility. The only person who responded positively was Liberty Naud, who resides approximately 100 miles outside of the four counties supported by LA Region FLL. The Board could appoint Liberty Naud as FLL Operational Partner, but I believe that this appointment would not be acceptable to *FIRST*. Moreover, I cannot recommend Liberty for this very stressful position because of geographic considerations, health concerns and financial reporting problems discussed below pertaining to her much easier role as FTC Partner. I do not see any other viable candidates to take on the role of FLL Operational Partner under the auspices of LARobotics as FLL Affiliate Partner. Therefore, I recommend that the Board notify *FIRST* that LARobotics will cease to be the FLL Affiliate Partner effective May 1. Dan Maggio of *FIRST* is responsible for recruiting a replacement FLL Affiliate Partner if LARobotics is not able to continue in this role and provide an acceptable FLL Operational Partner.

(2) The second issue confronting the Board is the responsibility of serving as the fiscal agent for FLL. As registrar for the FLL program, I processed over 700 registrations and over 400 payments for FLL events in 2013. As team grant administrator for the FLL program, I processed 36 grant applications and 44 payments, reimbursements and stipends for FLL teams. As FLL treasurer and fiscal agent, I processed over 120 additional income and expense transactions for the FLL program. I will not be providing any of this support for FLL after April 30. I estimate that the unencumbered FLL Account Balances will total approximately \$20,000.00 on April 30, which is approximately 30% of annual expenses. The 2014 FLL season starts at the beginning of May.

It is likely that any organization that agrees to be the FLL Affiliate Partner will also agree to be the fiscal agent. The fiscal agent must be a recognized nonprofit organization. I founded LARobotics to be the fiscal agent for FLL as well as for other local robotics programs. If LARobotics agrees to be the fiscal agent for FLL, FTC or any other program after April 30, I recommend that the Board require such programs to maintain their own financial records. The first step would be to elect the Partners or local representatives of such programs as members of the LARobotics Board. The next step would be to create separate LARobotics accounts for such programs, just as we created a separate bank account for FTC. The new step would be to require such programs to be responsible for maintaining financial records for all transactions in their accounts in a format that can be easily integrated with the financial records of LARobotics to produce consolidated financial reports. Furthermore, these financial records and all supporting receipts and documentation should be maintained online and should be viewable by all Board members and downloadable by the Treasurer.

SCRRF is the only program currently supported by LARobotics that would not need a separate account. I recommend that LARobotics continue to serve as the fiscal agent for SCRRF. I am willing to continue to provide this support for SCRRF.

(3) The third issue confronting the Board until today was the financial mismanagement of FTC funds. When we set up a separate LARobotics FTC bank account, the FTC Partner agreed to provide the LARobotics Treasurer (me) with copies of all receipts as they were reimbursed and to maintain and share with me a spreadsheet matching receipt amounts with payments and team registration checks with deposits. Theresa Klemme is the FTC treasurer, and she faithfully maintained this agreement through the end of June, 2013. However, I did not receive copies of receipts for \$13,637.53 of FTC expenses that were reimbursed between July and December of 2013 or the spreadsheet until today. Withholding receipts from the Treasurer for expenses of this magnitude for an entire six-month reporting period was a serious violation of the commitments made by the FTC Partner and the FTC Treasurer.

I have matched the expense receipts with the reimbursements and identified three expenses totaling \$411.81 that were reimbursed twice and one reimbursement of \$61.34 that is still missing a receipt. Another overpayment of \$85.33 in December 2012 has still not been corrected. These minor discrepancies will need to be addressed and some funds will need to be recovered from SMaRT Education, but none of this will interfere with completing the 2013 financial reports. The FTC financial reports for 2013 will be incomplete because the check for the Rockwell Collins FTC grant was deposited in a SMaRT Education account instead of in the LARobotics FTC account, and some of those funds were apparently used to pay for FTC expenses.

At the LARobotics Board meeting on 11/12/13, the Board approved Liberty Naud's proposal to transfer fiscal responsibility for FTC from LARobotics to SMaRT Education as of 11/30/13. However, the LARobotics FTC account continued to be used until 12/23/13, so the transfer of fiscal responsibility was not completed until 12/31/13. The actual closing of the account was delayed until the authorizing minutes from the 11/12/13 meeting were published today. The LARobotics FTC account was closed today, and the remaining balance of \$4,347.96 was transferred to SMaRT Education.

No further action by the Board is required at this time regarding this issue. LARobotics is no longer the fiscal agent for FTC.

(4) The fourth issue confronting the Board is how to deal with two new robotics programs.

(a) The Robotics Education and Competition Foundation (REC Foundation) expanded the VEX® program down to the elementary school level last year. The new program is called VEX IQ™. VEX IQ costs half as much per team as FLL, and VEX IQ events take half as much time and require half as many volunteers as FLL events. After April 30, I plan to help Nancy McIntyre support VEX IQ in the Los Angeles area. Nancy is the REC Foundation Regional Support Manager for VEX programs in California, Nevada, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines, and South Korea. I am willing to serve as the representative for VEX IQ on the LARobotics Board. I recommend that VEX IQ be added to the list of programs supported by LARobotics.

(b) Botball® expressed interest in being supported by LARobotics last May, but they could not identify a responsible local representative. Botball expanded its program down to the elementary school level this year. If Botball is able to provide a responsible local representative, I recommend that BotBall be added to the list of programs supported by LARobotics.

I request that the LARobotics Board meet as soon as possible to discuss these issues and to decide how to proceed regarding at least the first issue. We might have a quorum present at the SCRRF Scrimmage on Sunday February 16. If Board members are willing, we could schedule a one-hour Board meeting starting at 8:00 AM. If that is not sufficient, we could continue the meeting during lunch or at 6:00 PM.

LeRoy

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Revision History:

Version 4. 02/13/13. Distributed to Los Angeles Robotics Board of Directors  
Version 3. 02/12/13. Distributed to Liberty Naud, Los Angeles Robotics President and FTC Partner  
Version 2. 02/11/13. Distributed to Dan Maggio, FLL Partner Development Manager  
Version 1. 02/09/13. Distributed to Liberty Naud, Los Angeles Robotics President and FTC Partner