

Council Minutes

*August 20, 2002
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama*

President Steve Hensen called the meeting to order at 8:26 a.m. Present: Vice President Peter Hirtle, Treasurer Elizabeth Adkins, and Council members Thomas Battle, Danna Bell-Russel, Tom Connors, Jackie Dooley, Mark Greene, Becky Haglund Tousey, David Haury, Richard Pearce-Moses, Megan Sniffin-Marinoff. Also present were incoming Vice President Tim Ericson, and incoming Council members Elaine Engst, Frank Boles, and Joel Wurl and Executive Director Susan Fox.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Council adopted the agenda as amended.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Council approved the minutes as amended.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Connors reported that the Executive Committee had no official business between Council meetings and had met the night before to discuss the Council agenda.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Hensen reported that Fynnette Eaton resigned as SAA representative to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission due to taking a new position at the National Archives. Lee Stout agreed to serve the remainder of Eaton's term. Hensen also reported on his representation of SAA at a meeting in Italy.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hirtle reported on the status of appointments. He had additional appointments to make to the Publications and American Archivist Boards. He found the state of the Awards Committee to be very confusing, but was grateful that Alexandra Gressit, Awards Committee Chair, and Danna Bell-Russel agreed to revise the Awards Committee guidelines in time for the winter Council meeting. Hirtle commended both Gressit and her co-chair, Bill Brock for their excellent work in managing a complicated awards process. He said he would be representing SAA in Beijing at the Chinese National Society in September. In November he would again represent SAA at ICA's CITRA meeting in Marseilles.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fox said that registrations for the Birmingham meeting were quite strong. She expected at least 1,100 delegates in the final count. She attributed the meeting's draw to strong programming and especially attractive tours, which sold out almost immediately.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Adkins reported that, despite the report of a healthy gain at the last Council meeting in June, the stock market plummet in the ensuing weeks resulted in a drop in projected income on interest and investments from \$38,000 to an actual amount of \$6,800. The stock market collapse also significantly decreased the balances of the long-term reserve funds. In spite of these losses, the Society was still able to transfer \$5,000 in surplus revenues to the newly established survey fund. However, no additional monies existed to transfer to the online education initiative. Unless balances in the reserve funds improved dramatically in the next four or five months, she did not recommend transferring any monies from them toward special projects. She said Council would need to reassess the fund balances during the winter meeting to see if the Society could afford to fund surveys or an online education initiative.

The good news was that in spite of taking a major hit on the budget, SAA was still able to transfer \$5,000 to the survey fund and obtain a \$9,500 net gain for the year.

Draft Investment Policy

Adkins introduced her revised draft of a proposed SAA investment policy. Council engaged in a discussion of the advisability of remaining in stocks as opposed to mutual funds. Adkins said the policy would give that option. She said the finance group would

investigate fees involved with stocks vs. mutual funds and report back to Council at the winter meeting. Adkins moved adoption of the policy. Hirtle seconded.

Council discussed social investment issues and requested copies of the portfolio to review once or twice a year. Hirtle moved to amend the motion to include language under annual reporting indicating Council portfolio review. Sniffin-Marinoff seconded. PASSED. Hensen called the question on the motion as amended. PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS

Welcoming International Archivists

Connors said that the SAA annual meeting often has a large contingent of delegates from other nations. At the Washington, D.C. annual meeting there were over 70 international archivists. The International Archival Affairs Roundtable hosted a reception for the delegation and thought that this activity should be standard at all annual meetings, with support from SAA. The Roundtable was willing to raise funds for sponsorship, but believed that even a small amount of support from SAA would help encourage donations from others.

Council discussed other groups within SAA that also desired receptions and support from the Society. Connors said he would discuss the issue of an international archivists' reception with the Roundtable and come back to Council at the winter meeting with a more detailed proposal.

SAA Representative to ICA Section on Professional Associations

Connors distributed the Council Handbook policy on SAA representation to the ICA Section on Professional Associations (SPA). He noted that the current representative held that position for much longer than the specified four-year term. He thought the length of term should be clarified.

Bell-Russel moved that the language in the Council Handbook describing the term of the representative to ICA SPA be amended to read "appointed to a four-year term that shall be reappointed once." Adkins seconded.

Hirtle said there was no guarantee that SAA would have a seat on SPA. SAA would need to make Society policy mesh with ICA's. He saw an interesting question about who would be qualified to serve on SPA – it might be a representative, it might be the President, or it might be the Executive Director. He did not know enough about the issue to make a recommendation at that time.

Battle said he would want to know what other nations do for their representation on SPA. Greene supported Hirtle's point that SAA would need to differentiate between representation at ICA writ large versus representation on SPA. The current Council Handbook guidelines did not make this distinction. He said he would also like to investigate whether it was worthwhile for the Society to have a representative on SPA as opposed to allocating that support to other international initiatives. He questioned whether there was a reason why, if the President represented SAA at CITRA, that SAA needed representation on this committee.

Connors said he would come back to the winter meeting with more information on SPA and its activities.

Bell-Russel withdrew her motion.

Council Annual Meeting Resolutions Committee

Hensen appointed the incoming sophomore class of Council, Bell-Russel, Haury, and Sniffin-Marinoff, as the annual meeting resolutions committee. He noted that it would be better to designate the committee at the winter meeting so that it could be adequately publicized prior to the annual meeting. Fox said that since it was tradition that the incoming sophomore class served as the committee, this information was indeed routinely published in the program.

Council on State Historical Records Commissions Report

Haury brought to Council attention the recently issued report from the Council on State Historical Records Commissions (COSHRC). He said Council needed to pay close attention to the report since it contained many recommendations involving SAA. Ericson said he would compile a summary of anticipated actions from the report for the winter meeting.

Archives on the Radio

Fox introduced a concern from membership about the adverse characterization of archives on a recent National Public Radio report. Hensen said this concern corresponded to the issue of how SAA responds to public issues raised by membership. Hirtle

said he would be discussing this in a future column, asking that members draft a response for Council to consider, rather than asking Council to draft a response. Connors said there was also the issue of order of importance.

Sniffin-Marinoff suggested putting a link on the web site with a form for members to fill out when requesting Council response to issues of concern.

Student Benefits Survey

Adkins inquired about the status of the student benefits survey Dooley initiated in the spring. Dooley said she would be sending Council a message soon after the annual meeting discussing next steps. Dooley said she would also discuss the survey at the student chapter meeting later in the week.

OLD BUSINESS

Museum Archives Section Guidelines

Battle introduced the revised Museum Archives Guidelines. Sniffin-Marinoff said she still had concerns about the document. She said she was worried that the guidelines set up a scenario where an archivist for a museum might be working in conflict with the repository for the broader organization.

Greene moved adoption of changes to the preamble to add the sentences, "These guidelines are primarily directed toward independent museums. If a museum is contained within a larger institution, the museum should be encouraged to place its original records within the larger institutional archives and to develop cooperative policies and programs." Dooley seconded. PASSED.

Council agreed that the Council liaison to the Museum Archives Section, Thomas Battle, should review this revised wording with Section. If the Section has no concerns about the revisions, Council will consider the guidelines passed. If not, Council will consider alternative wording as submitted by the Section. DISCUSSION WITH JOHN CARLIN, ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES

Council discussed a range of issues via conference call with John Carlin, Archivist of the United States. These issues included, among others, a status report on the recruitment of a new director for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, progress of legislation relating to the Executive Order on presidential records, the status of the NARA budget in Congress, the GAO Electronic Records Act report, the NARA web site, and status of the rotunda renovations.

Proposed SAA, COSHRC, NAGARA Dinner

Pearce-Moses introduced a letter from Timothy Slavin, President of COSHRC, encouraging a "close and mutually beneficial working relationship with both SAA and NAGARA." Slavin requested time on the winter Council agenda, and said the COSHRC Board of Directors was considering holding its mid-year meeting at the same time in order to facilitate initial discussions. He also proposed that COSHRC sponsor a dinner for the SAA Council, COSHRC Board of Directors, and the NAGARA Board of Directors. Council said that they would welcome such a meeting and dinner. Fox said she would coordinate.

Working Group on Intellectual Property Membership

Hirtle reported that at the last meeting he had said he had issued invitations for additional members and had done so, but had not yet received a response.

Task Force on Electronic Publishing

Haury introduced the Exposure Draft for Comment of the Task Force on Electronic Publishing. In reviewing the report, Council expressed concern about the amount of detail in the report and the lack of prioritization of recommendations. Hirtle spoke in favor of the report, saying that it pointed out the possibility of establishing an aggressive electronic publications program and that it gave framework from which to consider the issues. He agreed that it needed prioritization and an implementation plan.

Greene said he saw it as Council's responsibility to establish priorities and implementation. Adkins said she saw the need to identify the fiscal impact of the recommendations. Pearce-Moses said it would be important to identify the low hanging fruit, those items most easily accomplished at little to no cost. Greene recommended prioritizing e-commerce separately from other issues. Hensen recommended that Council set up a subcommittee to develop a set of recommendations from the report.

Council Guidelines for Online Voting

Greene said he did not have an opportunity to draft guidelines for online voting. Since his term on Council concluded at this meeting, he said the task would need to be taken up by others on Council.

Proposal for a Fellows Steering Committee

Hensen introduced a proposal for a permanent Fellows' Steering Committee as drafted by Bill Joyce. Adkins moved acceptance of the proposal to establish a Fellows' Steering Committee. Greene seconded. PASSED. Greene noted that the proposal should substitute the words "SAA By-Laws" for the words "SAA Constitution." Adkins said she would accept that recommendation as a friendly amendment to her motion.

Code of Ethics Commentary

Hensen discussed a memo prepared by SAA's lawyers further elaborating on the issue of SAA's Code of Ethics and an aspirational vs. a proscriptive code, and the legal risk involved in both. Hensen said he, Hirtle and Ericson would meet with the Committee on Ethics and Professional Conduct to discuss the memo and an earlier memo drafted by legal counsel and how SAA ought to proceed in enforcing the code.

Hirtle said he would report back at the winter meeting.

Open Archives Initiative

Dooley distributed an analysis of the Open Archives Initiative as developed by Chris Prom. She reminded Council that they had asked the Standards Committee to follow the initiative and this was their response. She commended Prom for his analysis and recommended the report.

Recommended Council Participation During Annual Meeting

Hensen read a list of events recommended for Council to attend.

To Do List

Adkins read the to do list resulting from the meeting.

Hensen then thanked Fox, the SAA staff, and Council for their support during what had been a watershed year for the Society, especially in the public policy arena.

Greene said that on behalf of Council he wished to thank Hensen for his dedication throughout the year. It was easier to work hard on issues because Hensen was able to devote so much time to them. Greene also thanked Connors for his willingness to travel to New York City on a number of occasions, which also contributed greatly to SAA's success. It was a team effort.

Dooley called for a round of applause for the three incoming Council members.

The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.