

Council Minutes

August 23, 1999

President Luciana Duranti called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m. Present was Vice President Thomas Hickerson, Treasurer Robert Sink, and Council members Valerie Browne, Fynnette Eaton, Anne Gilliland-Swetland, Dennis Harrison, Peter Hirtle, Karen Jefferson, Jane Kenamore, Helen Tibbo and Wilda Logan Willis. Also present was incoming Council member Mark Greene and Executive Director Susan Fox.

Adoption of the Agenda

Hirtle moved adoption of the agenda as modified by the Executive Committee. Eaton seconded. PASSED.

Approval of minutes of the June 1999 Meeting

Hirtle moved approval of the minutes. Eaton seconded. PASSED.

Report of the Executive Committee

Hirtle reported on electronic transactions by Council and the Executive Committee since the last Council meeting. The Executive Committee approved participation with the American Association of Museums and the Association of Research Libraries on a proposed planning grant to increase diversity within the professions. The Executive Committee also approved using SAA=s name in a proposal developed by Duke University to the Delmas Foundation in support of travel expenses for the EAD Working Group.

Report of the President

Duranti reported on the appointment of members to the Task Force on Continuing Education (Richard Cox, Chair; Paul Conway, Susan Davis, Tim Ericson, David Haury, Bill Landis, Wilda Logan Willis, Reneta Webb). Because of lack of feedback requested from sections on the issue of NARA=s Naval Research Laboratory Records, Duranti appointed Gilliland-Swetland to represent SAA in the matter.

Report of the Vice President

Hickerson reported on his committee appointments. He said that SAA had been asked to participate in a University of Maryland Electronic Records Conference. Hickerson moved and Eaton seconded the motion that SAA participate in the proposal and planning process with the University of Maryland, with the idea that SAA would be a co-sponsor of the meeting. PASSED. After a discussion regarding which other organizations would be asked to co-sponsor and about the intended audience for the conference, Tibbo agreed to represent SAA on the conference steering committee.

Report of the Treasurer

Sink said he would address three areas: an update on the budget, a review of his presentation to the business meeting regarding the dues increase, and a report on a conversation he had with Hickerson regarding fundraising for the Society.

He said there was not much new to report on the budget, since SAA was only in its seventh week of the new fiscal year. He did, however, have the final FY99 figures, which showed SAA with a surplus of \$12,632, which would be added to the reserve fund. If the Society had fully budgeted for the reserve, however, the budget would have reflected a deficit of approximately \$22,000.

Hirtle asked about the reserve fund policy. Sink said that the auditors were preparing an recommendation for Council about what they consider to be a proper reserve fund policy.

Sink said he wrote a column for the May/June issue of Archival Outlook explaining the necessity of a recommended dues increase. The column was also posted on the website. He received no comments. When he posted the recommended increase to the SAA leadership listserv he received two comments, both of which said they were persuaded by the need. He said he would hold an Aopen house@ during the annual meeting to solicit further comments.

Hirtle said he thought the dues increase should have an inflation factor built in so that it wouldn=t have to come to the business meeting every time.

Sink then reported on fundraising planning. He said it was important to look at fundraising as a broad category, from the current situation of an annual appeal to what might ultimately become a capital/endowment campaign. What was needed was a survey of the landscape of possibilities. The first and most important step was to develop a philosophy of support for SAA among

membership. That step was enhanced greatly by the fact that to date six Council members had contributed over \$1,000 since the last Council meeting in June when Council passed a resolution supporting 100% Council participation in the fundraising campaign. He said there was conflicting opinion on Council regarding the issue and he had had conversations with those individuals. The Executive Committee discussed the issue and reiterated support for the new policy. Nonetheless, future Councils would have the opportunity to revisit the issue if they so desire. The issue that came to the fore was the concern that the requirement not in any way put a barrier on any member wishing to agree to run for Council. Sink said that it would be important to emphasize to prospective nominees that there was no set dollar figure of support, it could be \$1 or \$5. If, however, the Nominating Committee found a candidate that could not meet that requirement (for example, a member of a religious order) then another Council member could step in and contribute in that person=s name.

Browne expressed high discomfort with the requirement, especially for the Council members coming on who did not know about it beforehand. She feared it would make it difficult for the Nominating Committee to recruit candidates.

Tibbo said people who belong to boards of directors are commonly asked to contribute to the organization. The difference in this case was that the SAA Council was not a philanthropic board. Administrative boards are often *not* asked to contribute and by doing so Council might be mixing apples and oranges, especially because SAA did not have a foundation to serve the development function.

Hickerson said he saw it very differently. What Council voted on was the fact that it was in favor of a fundraising campaign for the Society, and that Council, to feel open about soliciting from colleagues, would need to say, Awe have given. @ Previous Councils had had this in place. If Council wanted to vote in January to rescind the resolution, it certainly could do that. But this was an effort to create cohesiveness, a mutual agreement. He suggested that was the spirit in which the resolution was adopted. The minimum really is a minimum, \$5 or less.

Jefferson said it would be possible to have Council vote every year to support 100% participation so that each Council member could confirm or reconfirm their commitment. This approach would reaffirm the concept and bring the new Council members up to speed on fundraising and expectations.

Greene concurred that each new Council should have a formal opportunity to revisit the donation issue. He was uncomfortable with the requirement because it seemed to overlook the out of pocket expeneses that most Council members already made above and beyond their normal membership expenses, such as extra days at the annual meeting and the cost of travel and lodging for one of the two additional Council meetings. Shouldn=t these personal expenses, made to further the work of SAA, be considered donations? To then ask Council members to contribute more seemed excessive.

Sink said he thought it was important to ask Council to contribute to the annual giving campaign because philosophically it would be difficult to ask people to give when leadership did not. SAA=s success was the volunteerism of membership. Many members gave in many ways, both in time and money. Council needed to take the lead with 100% participation. It wasn=t the amount that was important, it was the fact that Council needed to take the lead. It was also important that no one be prevented from running for Council because of this expectation.

Hickerson noted that Council voted to raise the profile of fundraising within SAA, of doing a better job of encouraging participation. He said it was entirely possible that at every winter Council meeting resolutions would be offered to suspend actions or motions of prior councils. He saw it as important, however, to introduce the concept of a philosophy of support SAA.

Hirtle returned to the FY2000 budget and noted how close to the line SAA operated, especially given the fact of the recent economic boom had buoyed the economy overall. He applauded the recent institution of program area cost accounting, which he said would allow Council to make informed decisions about resource allocation and possible downsizing.

Hickerson said the new strategic plan would help Council focus on priorities when looking at cost centers.

Duranti stressed it was important for SAA to be involved in research so it could identify new intellectual resources, such as EAD. One big problem with the dissemination of research, she said, was how slow the process was within SAA, especially with Scarecrow Press. She said SAA should be firm in participating in groundbreaking research, but should engage a faster production cycle. A book with Scarecrow took three or four years to be published. By the time a reader had a book in hand everything in it would be out of date. Duranti recommended that Council communicate to the new Scarecrow Press editor this displeasure and, if no action occurred to rectify it, find another publisher.

She said the key issue of how SAA identifies areas important to the profession and makes money for the profession raised interesting questions about how to internationalize the practice. Gilliland-Swetland said it was also tied to SAA=s image as a leader in the profession. If the Society was able to establish that foothold, it would attract more professionals.

Report of the Executive Director

Fox gave an update on the statistics for the annual meeting. She said that she expected over 1,000 people to attend and noted that for the first time ever there were no canceled tours. She reviewed key annual meeting events that required Council attendance.

She then gave a brief report on her research into implementing a system of monthly or quarterly automatic credit card deductions of member dues. After posting a query to the Association Executive listserv and speaking with individuals in allied associations she determined that those associations who use automatic deductions were able to do so because their banks provided the service to larger associations as an added incentive to do business with their bank. SAA keeps most of its funds in interest bearing money markets (Merrill Lynch) and used the bank as a pass-through account only. Therefore, the bank had little incentive to offer the service free of charge. The fees for implementing the service were very high and would have to be recovered as an added service charge which would, in turn, be a disincentive for members who might wish to take advantage of it.

Fox concluded her report by noting that she had a demonstration CD of the newly redesigned SAA Web site due for September launch. She encouraged Council members to borrow the CD to see the many improvements in store.

Council Committee on Committees

Gilliland-Swetland reported that the EAD Working Group had applied to have EAD become an SAA standard. The Standards Committee had reviewed the application and would send it on to Council with a recommendation that Council approve the request.

Conference Call with the Archivist of the United States

Archivist of the U.S. John Carlin joined the Council meeting via speaker phone, as did his colleagues Lewis Bellardo and Lori Lisowski. Carlin apologized for not being able to attend the Council meeting in person, explaining that August was always peak season in the federal budgetary process, which necessitated a conference call. He said he was looking forward to coming up to the annual meeting in a few days= time. He then described the budget and appropriations process in some detail, expressing optimism for a positive outcome for the agency.

Council engaged in a brief status report discussion with Carlin on issues of declassification, archival education, the definition of an archivist, and data standards.

Duranti thanked Carlin for his time.

Committee on Sections and Roundtables

Jefferson said she would be meeting with the Business Archives Section at their request to discuss issues of concern that had built up over the year. Hickerson and Sink said they would join her at the meeting.

Committee on Task Forces, Boards, Representatives

Council engaged in a general discussion about the pros and cons of having a Standards Committee liaison from each section and roundtable. The Standards Committee expressed a need to filter incoming standards so that only those with explicit archival impact are distributed for comment. Council concluded that Kris Kiesling, incoming Standards Committee chair, should be asked to propose a restructuring of the committee. Council also decided to solicit feedback from sections and roundtables about the idea of establishing a formal liaison with the Standards Committee.

Willis gave a brief report on the plans of the Task Force on Continuing Education to meet with CEPD and others during the annual meeting.

Jefferson inquired about Council=s intentions for the recommendations from the Task Force on Diversity. She said SAA needed some kind of reporting mechanism on diversity issues. Even though Council adopted a position statement, it was important to communicate the true nature of the Society=s commitment to diversity. Perhaps an annual progress report from the Vice President, President, or Executive Director? Have units include diversity issues in their annual reports? She opened the floor for discussion.

Browne thought it was important to build diversity into the new strategic plan. Gilliland-Swetland said SAA should publish brochures in Spanish. Greene said CEPD was gathering information on archival publications in other languages as a resource. Duranti said that Lodilini had been translated into Spanish, perhaps SAA should add this to the publications catalog.

Willis saw a need to address diversity on SAA committees, such as the Program and Host Committees. Perhaps a session on how to develop program proposals was needed in order to encourage more diversity.

Sink said he saw that promoting diversity was Council=s job and an important first step before soliciting reports and engaging in evaluations. Council needed to develop a statement that could be read to all groups, reiterated at various fora. He recommended thinking in terms of promotional steps before thinking in terms of reporting.

Hickerson said what was needed was an objective for the new strategic plan that would help develop select criteria that would need to be reported upon as representative of SAA=s diversity efforts. He saw a need for a specific agenda item on activity lists.

Archives List Advisory Committee

Greene and Pearce-Moses agreed to serve on the Committee, with Eaton as Chair. Fox said she would add the committee to the leadership list.

Fellows Focus Group

Eaton said that all Fellows asked to participate in a Fellows Focus Group agreed, and that she and Jim Fogerty were looking to identify how the funds would be used and would be soliciting ideas from the group about what kind of fundraising event to plan for Denver.

Old Business

Hickerson introduced the proposal from the Academy of Certified Archivists to establish a Commission on the Future of the Archival Profession. He said he was generally supportive of it, but he thought it could be stronger if developed as a joint proposal between SAA and ACA.

After general discussion, Tibbo and Kenamore agreed to work with ACA President David Gracy in developing the proposal for submission to the NHPRC. Council agreed that SAA desired that the study not establish a permanent Commission, but that it be established to perform the study an to explore how best to accomplish research in the field. SAA participation in the commission should be in equal partnership with other participants. The funding could be administered through the SAA central office and would be used to hold meetings, hire research, and publish results. The proposal should include an invitation for NAGARA, the Association of Canadian Archivists, and other allied associations to also participate.

Sink recommended that enhancement of the role of graduate archival educators should also be built into the proposal as a resource or to be in specific reference. In other words, have at least two graduate archival educators serve on the commission.

Hirtle said he was concerned that the draft proposal expressed goals which went beyond the Academy of Certified Archivists mission as a certifying organization and blurred into the SAA organizational mission. He said he was uneasy that SAA might be aiding the ultimate development of yet another competing organization.

Greene introduced a draft letter to the Senate objecting to proposed legislation, S.217, a bill to amend the IRS Code of 1986 to remove the ambiguity of the tax consequences of donating personal papers to libraries and archives. After discussion of the pros and cons of the proposed legislation and its impact on the profession, Council recommended that Greene revise the letter to make explicit SAA=s belief in equal access to materials.

New Business

Hirtle moved that Fox update the Council Handbook to reflect the idea that the President serves in ceremonial capacity throughout the annual meeting but that the new Council and officers take office officially at the close of the annual business meeting. Eaton seconded. PASSED.

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 pm