

Council Minutes

August 30, 1997

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President William Maher called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Saturday, August 30, 1997. Present were Vice President Luciana Duranti, Treasurer Robert Sink, and Council members Valerie Browne, Bruce Bruemmer, Fynnette Eaton, Anne Gilliland-Swetland, Lori Hefner, Peter Hirtle, Karen Jefferson, and Helen Tibbo. Sharron Uhler was absent due to a death in the family. Also present was Executive Director Susan Fox.

President's Remarks

Maher said he was looking forward to working with Council during his presidential year. He said his experience with Council during his Vice Presidency proved the group to be businesslike, amiable and fun.

Task Force on Organizational Effectiveness Process

Maher requested that Council members write up their notes from the Leadership Luncheon held earlier that day and post them to the Council listserv. He said Council should identify from the comments received those items which would need further Council discussion and/or implementation. He distributed a TFOE Next Steps matrix which took the TFOE recommendations and parsed out a process of what needed to be done to address specific recommendations. He stressed the intent was not to necessarily enact what was recommended, but to flesh out the recommendations to enable Council to act upon them. Duranti agreed to coordinate the TFOE follow up items.

In reviewing the matrix, the question of the intent and purpose of the Membership Interest Groups (MIG) arose. Maher suggested that Fox work with Hirtle and Hefner to clarify the process on the Leadership listserv, once it was established, in order to describe both the TFOE and MIG proposals regarding Sections and Roundtables.

Council Operating Agreement

Fox introduced a draft Council Operating Agreement authored by Brenda Banks and gave context to its development. After discussion and revision, Hirtle moved adoption of the Agreement. Eaton seconded. PASSED.

Business Meeting Resolutions

Browne moved and Hefner seconded the motion to accept the Business Meeting resolution adopted in honor of Ruth Helmuth. PASSED:

The Society of American Archivists wishes to express its profound regret at the death on July 15, 1997, of Ruth Walter Helmuth, first archivist of Case Western Reserve University, and past President of the Society of American Archivists.

When she founded the Western Reserve University Archives in 1964, opportunities for formal archival education were very limited, and standards for such training were nonexistent. Helmuth developed the program at CWRU that became a model for similar efforts nationwide. That program, the nation's first double-degree archival program, combined archival course work with offerings from the School of Library Science and the Department of History. In addition, from 1970 to 1980, Helmuth developed and directed a Workshop on College and University Archives. This workshop, a forerunner of offerings now available through SAA or regional archival organizations, offered post-graduate instruction to professionals in the field.

Ruth Helmuth worked assiduously to advance the profession. An active participant in the Society of American Archivists since 1965, Helmuth served as President of the Society in 1980-1981. She was a member of Council when the Society established a headquarters office in 1974, and helped select the Society's first paid Executive Director. Helmuth served on the Editorial Board, and a number of SAA committees, chairing the College and University Archives, Education, and Professional Standards Committees. She helped prepare and secure acceptance of the Society's first guidelines for archival training programs. In recognition of her contributions to the profession, Ruth Helmuth was named a fellow of the Society in 1974.

During the effort to achieve independent status for NARA, Helmuth served on the panel which reviewed qualifications for the U.S. Archivist. She also served on a similar group reviewing qualifications of candidates for the directorship of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

A founding member of the Society of Ohio Archivists, Helmuth served for three years as its first secretary-treasurer. SOA awarded her a special citation for meritorious service in 1974. She also was a member of the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board.

In her SAA Presidential Address in 1981 Ruth Helmuth focused on the education of archivists. "People who come to us for instruction need archivists as role models, as competent, interesting, involved professionals...They learn more than theory; they acquire attitudes of dedication, concern, and obligation, if they are taught by professional archivists who work with dedication, concern, and obligation." For her colleagues and for those of us who were privileged to be her students, she exemplified those qualities. But most of all we remember Ruth's kindness and concern for us as individuals.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Helmuth received degrees from Radcliff and Smith Colleges. She was University Archivist for Case Western Reserve University until her retirement in 1985. Case Western Reserve University's archives endowment fund was named in Helmuth's honor in 1986. In retirement Helmuth served as an archival volunteer at the Archives of the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Surviving are her daughter, Ann Allard of Cleveland, and her brother, Armin Walter, of Columbus, Ohio.

Browne moved and Hefner seconded the motion to accept the Business Meeting resolution adopted on the Committee on the Status of Women. PASSED:

"Resolved: That the abolition of the SAA Committee on the Status of Women be postponed until the SAA Council, in consultation with the committee, shall have formulated and enacted an appropriate mechanism to ensure continuing SAA attention to and engagement with the issues embedded in the resolution presented to the 1997 Business Meeting concerning the continuation of the committee."

Hefner moved and Bruemmer seconded the motion to accept the Business Meeting resolution adopted on access to annual meeting facilities. PASSED:

"Whereas SAA annual meetings shall be accessible to all attendees,

Be it therefore resolved:

that SAA shall make every effort to meet in hotels whose facilities are American Disability Act (ADA) compliant

that SAA staff and host committee will acquire and use a standard checklist for meeting accessibility such as that used by the American Association for the Advancement of Science

that the SAA host committee shall include persons with disabilities whenever possible

that SAA staff and host committees shall use suasion with any site that is discovered to have shortcomings according to the checklist.

Post-Appointment and Continuing Education and Training (PACE) Guidelines

Browne moved and Bruemmer seconded the motion that Council accept the Standards Board recommendation that SAA adopt the PACE guidelines. PASSED.

Committee on International Archival Affairs

Bruemmer presented a memo from Tom Connors, chair of the Committee on International Archival Affairs, regarding TFOE's recommendation that the Committee become a Roundtable. Connors reported that while no consensus was reached, the overall sense of the Committee was that the openness and relative informality of a roundtable would be desirable to promote interest in international matters among SAA members. The Committee expressed concern about certain tasks the Committee undertook that were more appropriate to a committee rather than a roundtable. Bruemmer said that the Committee will consider the matter and will report back to Council with a recommendation.

Maher reported on meetings with Page Putnam Miller, Executive Director of the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History (NCC) and with Lewis Bellardo, Deputy Archivist of the United States.

Sink read the To Do list.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.