

Council Minutes

August 3-7, 2004
Boston, Massachusetts

President Tim Ericson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am on Tuesday, August 3. Present: Vice President/President-Elect Rand Jimerson, Treasurer Fynnette Eaton, and Council members Danna Bell-Russel, Frank Boles, Elaine Engst, David Haury, Kathryn Neal, Megan Sniffin-Marinoff, Christopher Ann Paton, Peter Wosh, and Joel Wurl. Also present were incoming Council members Richard Pearce-Moses (Vice President/President-Elect, 2004-2005), Mark Duffy, Aimee Felker, and Peter Gottlieb, SAA Executive Director Nancy Beaumont, Publishing Director Teresa Brinati, and Education Director Solveig DeSutter.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Sniffin-Marinoff presented proposed changes in the agenda, as well as estimated times for completion of each agenda item, per an Executive Committee discussion on August 2. Jimerson moved and Bell-Russel seconded adoption of the agenda as amended. PASSED.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Engst moved and Sniffin-Marinoff seconded approval of the June 4-6, 2004, Council meeting minutes as amended. PASSED.

REVIEW OF THE JUNE 2004 ACTION ITEM LIST

Council members reviewed the items listed on the June 2004 Action Item List and provided an update on completed and incomplete items.

CONVERSATION WITH BRUCE CRAIG OF THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR HISTORY

Bruce Craig, executive director of the National Coalition for History, provided Council with a brief update via telephone on various advocacy efforts. He reviewed the status of the nomination of Allen Weinstein to become Archivist of the United States, noting that no action would be taken during the Senate recess. Craig had met recently with Senate staff to discuss funding for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and had learned that maintenance of existing funding levels would be a "hard sell" on the Senate side. He urged that SAA inform its members of the situation and suggest that they contact Senate Committee members in favor of funding at not less than \$8 million (which is less than full funding at \$10 million, but more likely to occur).

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sniffin-Marinoff reported that Ericson had sent a letter to the *Washington Post* regarding the matter of former National Security Advisor Sandy Berger allegedly removing items from the National Archives and the fact that the Weinstein hearing had not been covered in the *Post*. Ericson suggested that SAA post on its Web site letters to the editor—whether or not they are eventually published—so that Web site visitors know that SAA has engaged the media on an issue.

Wurl noted that he had distributed via email his list of Council liaison appointments to committees, task forces, sections, and roundtables. (As the elected member of the Executive Committee, Wurl was responsible for naming liaisons to various groups.) In addition, he had circulated a document developed by Pearce-Moses on the responsibility of liaisons. Council members then addressed the difficulty of serving as liaison to more than one roundtable when so many of the roundtable meetings conflict during the Annual Meeting. Beaumont explained that there are limited time slots during the Annual Meeting and that she had queried roundtable leaders regarding their preferences within the available slots. She agreed to work with leaders and staff to identify possible solutions to this problem.

Following a brief discussion of the status of sections' and roundtables' transition to electronic-only newsletters, Council members agreed to "take the pulse" of section and roundtable leaders at the Annual Meeting to determine their reactions to the newly implemented policy.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ericson reported on a wide variety of items:

Archivist of the United States: Ericson reported on a conversation and several email exchanges that he had had with Archivist of the United States nominee Allen Weinstein. He noted that Weinstein had expressed his intent to join SAA.

USA PATRIOT Act Statement: He reported that SAA's "Statement on the USA PATRIOT Act" had been updated and posted on the SAA Web site.

Fundraising Letter: Ericson reported that \$2,940 had been received to date in response to his fundraising letter on behalf of the Pinkett Minority Scholarship Award. Beaumont noted that the figure had increased to \$3,270 with checks received in the office since her departure for Boston.

Diversity Appointments: Ericson indicated that, in response to Council adoption in June 2004 of a recommendation by the Diversity Committee calling for reporting on the diversity of presidential appointments, he had reviewed his own appointments and determined that 74% of his appointees are women and 39% are members of ethnic or racial minority groups. Bell-Russel noted that it would be important to consider the race and ethnicity of the individuals who declined appointment or were not SAA members and therefore did not qualify for appointment. She pointed out that some members of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable are not SAA members.

Ethics Forum: Ericson reminded Council members that an open forum on the revised Code of Ethics would be held from 4:00 to 5:30 pm on Wednesday, August 4, and he encouraged all to attend.

Mentoring Program: Ericson reflected briefly on his involvement with students and young professionals as a mentor, and he encouraged all Council members to consider participating in SAA's Mentoring Program.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Council Focus on Policy and Strategy: Jimerson indicated that, based on his own experiences as well as the important points that he and Beaumont had learned while attending the American Society of Association Executives Symposium for Chief Elected Officers and Chief Staff Executives, he would like to focus Council discussions and efforts on policy and strategy development during his presidential term. He stressed that he would like to address how to be more productive as a group and how to streamline and clarify the procedures for reporting groups to make recommendations or provide information to Council. He will continue to consider implementation strategies and will provide more specific information to Council at its winter 2005 meeting.

Appointments: Jimerson noted that the appointments process is very complex because of the desire to reflect diversity and coverage of constituent groups. Waverly Lowell and Alden Monroe had agreed to chair his Appointments Committee, with Tom Frusciano serving as the third member. He had begun on July 30 to contact individuals regarding their willingness to serve.

LIAISON REPORTS

Diversity Committee: Wurl reported on the brief meeting held by the Committee on Wednesday, August 4, from 10:00 to 11:30 am, the focus of which was to update members on actions taken since the Committee's April 2004 meeting.

Ethics Committee: Sniffin-Marinoff again encouraged Council members to attend the Ethics Forum on the revised Code of Ethics, in light of the fact that the Council had asked the Committee on Ethics and Professional Conduct to conduct an open forum.

- Science, Technology, and Health Care (STHC) Roundtable Issue Regarding Annual Meeting Program Proposals: Sniffin-Marinoff reported that the Roundtable had expressed concern that the procedures associated with the 2004 Program Committee review of section and roundtable rankings of session proposals were unclear, particularly when endorsed sessions were not accepted. Extensive discussion ensued. Wurl said that the Council should decide whether endorsements matter or don't matter and give direction to the Program Committee. Further, Council should ask sections and roundtables how they feel about endorsements and how they think the system should work.

Jimerson pointed out that if too much weight is given to section and roundtable endorsements, SAA runs the risk of focusing on narrower interests, whereas the point of the program should be to cross the lines that separate us and help to broaden people's perspectives. With 13 sections and 24 roundtables and just 60-65 sessions, how many sessions does each unit want? Engst noted that the units have the opportunity to do very specific presentations during their individual meetings. Jimerson then reported that he had heard complaints from one or more roundtables that they are given 1.5 hours for their annual meetings, while sections are given 2 hours. Council members agreed to have a broader discussion on these and other issues associated with the Annual Meeting at their winter 2005 meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

FY04 Audit: Eaton reported that she had spoken with the auditors, who had indicated that SAA's FY2004 audit was considered to be "very clean." She congratulated staff for their efforts.

Year-End Financials: Eaton noted that she would be giving a brief overview of FY2004 financial data at the upcoming Annual Business Meeting, and asked if Council members had any concerns about the financials that had been presented. No concerns were raised.

Financial Review for July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004: Eaton asked for any questions or concerns about the written explanations of variances between budgeted and actual amounts reflected in the FY2004 financials. No questions or concerns were raised.

FY05 Budget: Eaton noted that while the financial reports for FY2004 look very positive, the Society must consider options for increasing dues in the coming year or two. She asked Council members to provide her with their ideas for strategies and tactics for taking a reasoned approach to this issue, and asked that discussion of this issue be placed on the winter 2005 meeting agenda.

STAFF REPORTS

Council members reviewed staff reports addressing Headquarters Operations, Education, Publications, and the Annual Meeting.

Boles expressed concern that postponement of staff performance appraisals, as noted in Beaumont's Executive Director's report, had not been vetted through the Executive Committee.

Beaumont thanked Council members in advance for their willingness to visit with a pre-determined list of exhibitors to thank them for participating in Boston '04 and determine their reaction to a new exhibit hall schedule.

Continuing Education Content Advisory Group

Council members discussed a report prepared by DeSutter in which she proposed the creation of an "advisory group" to assist the director of education with continuing education program development. She noted that while the Committee on Education and Professional Development (CEPD) is well suited to provide strategic guidance, its members are not always available to provide content expertise in areas in which SAA may wish to expand its offerings.

MOVED THAT the SAA Education Office work with an ad hoc advisory group, approached in consultation with the Executive Committee, to assist the Office in developing SAA's seminar and workshop offerings. The group will exist on a one-year trial basis, at which time the process will be reviewed and modified as necessary. [Moved by Bell-Russel, seconded by Boles] PASSED.

Support Statement: The Continuing Education Content Advisory Group will assist staff in developing ideas for new education programs; creating curricula in appropriate areas; monitoring the effectiveness of offerings in light of professional needs and developments; reviewing education programs to ensure high quality (joint responsibility with the CEPD); and compiling a set of educational opportunities that rounds out gaps in the existing curriculum. Creation of a short-term solution will provide flexibility, enable staff and Council to evaluate the effectiveness of the group, and determine whether a board modeled on the idea of the Editorial Board might be appropriate in the long term.

SAA's Information Technology Infrastructure

Council members discussed a report prepared by Brian Doyle in which he provided a broad overview of recent information technology enhancements made at SAA Headquarters, particularly in relation to recently proposed and/or implemented electronic publishing and communications projects. As the discussion progressed, staff emphasized critical technical limitations in the association management software system that drives SAA's "master" database, and the impact of these limitations on the interface between the database and the Web site and on staff productivity.

MOVED THAT staff develop a draft request for proposal outlining considerations for replacing the existing association management software system with another database system or with an outsourced service, with a report to Council at its winter 2005 meeting. Staff should consult with the Electronic Publishing Working Group in developing the RFP. [Moved by Engst, seconded by Bell-Russel] PASSED.

Support Statement: SAA's current association management software (AMS) system, now 6 years old, lacks the flexibility and power needed to take the Society to the next step in its growth. With increasing reliance on communication with members and nonmembers via the Internet and a growing need to segment audiences, it is critical that the membership database provide a more "nimble" environment in which to conduct the Society's business. With a draft RFP in hand, Council and staff will be able to determine the next steps in updating or replacing the existing system.

APPOINTED GROUP REPORTS

Electronic Publishing Working Group

Rob Spindler, chair of the Task Force on Electronic Publishing (2001-2002) and the Electronic Publishing Working Group that stemmed from the Task Force, asked Council for time to discuss a series of questions and recommendations from the Working Group. Spindler participated in the discussion via speaker phone. Following the discussion, Council members voted on several of the recommendations put forward by the Working Group.

Recommendation 1: That Council support the open access model for the *American Archivist* back-file, specifically a moving wall model similar to JSTOR in which the current year's AA issues are restricted to members only and past issues are made available to the public at no charge.

MOVE THAT SAA support the "open access" model for the *American Archivist* back-file, restricting the most recent two years of issues to members and paid subscribers and making past issues available to the public at no charge. [Moved by Wurl, seconded by Eaton.] PASSED.

Support Statement: The Working Group had queried Council regarding its support for the open access model for the journal back-file, specifically a moving wall similar to JSTOR in which the current year's journal issues are restricted to members only and past issues are made available to the public at no charge. Council determined that it would prefer to restrict access to members and paid subscribers for two years.

Recommendation 2: That SAA focus on a longer-term, standards-based solution to the issue of *American Archivist* retro-conversion of the existing electronic back-file (i.e., 1999-2003) and seek external (gifted, granted, or appropriated) funding.

In its discussion of journal retro-conversion, and whether SAA should look at a lower-cost interim solution (eg, PDF or HTML, which would cost approximately \$3,000 for all content from 2000 to 2004) or a higher-cost, longer-term solution utilizing available standards such as TEI Lite/XML, Council determined that the issue should be tabled until such time as contact was made with JSTOR to determine whether that entity might propose some innovative solutions. Boles agreed to approach some colleagues regarding how *American Archivist* might be retro-converted by JSTOR.

Recommendation 3: That the Electronic Publishing Working Group continue to work with SAA staff on infrastructure issues and attempt to secure sufficient facilities to enable SAA to host its own content.

MOVED THAT the Electronic Publishing Working Group continue to work with and advise the SAA staff on infrastructure issues. [Moved by Wurl, seconded by Eaton] PASSED.

Support Statement: Council wishes to retain the expertise of the Working Group members in providing advice and counsel. On the matter of securing sufficient facilities to enable SAA to host its own content, however, Council asked Wurl to seek more information at the upcoming Working Group meeting and report back on his findings. [ACTION]

Recommendation 4: That Pease Award nominees' submissions be considered for Web publication by the Pease Award Subcommittee of the Awards Committee.

Based on significant discussion regarding issues associated with this recommendation, Council members did not put this recommendation forward for a vote.

Recommendation 5: That Council review the report of the Task Force on Electronic Publishing and identify for the Electronic Publishing Working Group those items that should not be pursued and the priority level of remaining items.

Wurl, who is Council liaison to the Working Group, agreed to discuss with the group how its members might participate in the ongoing process of establishing priorities.

Recommendation 6: That Council consider whether Council liaisons might assist the Electronic Publishing Working Group in monitoring and facilitating progress by various SAA groups toward the goals outlined in the Task Force on Electronic Publishing report, or whether the Working Group should be disbanded and hand off initiatives regarding current content to existing SAA groups.

Recommendation 7: That Spindler step down as chair of the Electronic Publishing Working Group in January 2005 but remain as a member of the group.

Spindler indicated that he wishes to be relieved of the chairmanship and to open up participation on the Working Group to new "faces." In particular, he believes that while he has focused on the technical aspects of the work, a new chair who is better acquainted with how to get things done within SAA would be a great champion for the work.

Council accepted Spindler's resignation with regret, asked him to remain on the Working Group, and thanked him for his remarkable efforts in moving forward the various items in the Task Force on Electronic Publishing report.

Membership Committee

Council reviewed the “Key Contact Summary Report and Annual Membership Trends (2nd Quarter 2004)” prepared by Membership Committee Chair Scott Schwartz, noting that membership figures continue to improve.

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee had proposed creation of a new award, tentatively titled the “Unsung Archivist Award,” to honor the contributions of individuals or groups of individuals who have displayed outstanding service to the profession at the local, regional, or national level. Council members were sufficiently unclear about the proposed selection criteria and administrative procedures that they agreed to return the proposal to the Awards Committee for additional development. Committee Liaison Kathryn Neal will discuss Council’s comments with the Committee; Pearce-Moses agreed to assist in crafting language for the award.

OLD BUSINESS

“Gray Literature”

Due to time constraints, Council members agreed to postpone a discussion of “gray literature” to the winter 2005 meeting. The issue had been raised in the context of a question posed by the Electronic Publishing Working Group regarding whether SAA should publish “gray literature” on its Web site. Chief among the items for discussion will be: What is the scope of “gray literature”? (That is, does it include book reviews, research in progress, and working papers?) What will it take to maintain “gray literature” on SAA’s Web site? Whose input (e.g., student, new member) should be sought in making a decision about the value of “gray literature”?

Section/Roundtable Fundraising Policy

MOVED THAT the Council Handbook, Section X. Money for Section Activities, and Section VIII. Money for Roundtable Activities, be revised to reflect the following changes (underscored): 1) annual reports must include not just budget requests, but also a list of expenditures for the previous year; 2) sections/roundtables must receive authorization from Council to spend any monies or commit any monies to be spent over \$100; 3) if a section/roundtable wishes to seek resources over \$100 (in cash or in kind) from any source outside of SAA, Executive Committee approval must be obtained before approaching the source. Any request to obtain grant funding, obtain a sponsor for an event, or start extensive fundraising must be approved by the Executive Committee. [Moved by Eaton, seconded by Bell-Russel] PASSED. [**ACTION:** Revise Council Handbook; liaisons to share information.]

MOVED THAT the changes adopted in Council Handbook, Section X. Money for Section Activities, and Section VIII. Money for Roundtable Activities be effective in the next budget cycle (i.e., FY 2006). [Moved by Sniffin-Marinoﬀ, seconded by Boles] PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS

Creation of Continuing Education and Graduate Education Committees

Stemming from previous discussions in February 2004 and June 2004 about the roles of various appointed groups, Council discussed the merits of changing the focus of the current Committee on Education and Professional Development to that of continuing education and creating a new committee to focus on graduate education. Current members of CEPD have indicated that continuing education should be their focus given the constraints of time and a full list of activities. Jimerson noted that a graduate education committee would likely be less active except when reviewing graduate education guidelines. Wosh cited the benefit of having a more focused committee to deal more directly with graduate education. Jimerson suggested that the idea be discussed with CEPD and the Archival Educators Roundtable to solicit feedback.

Effort to Change Government’s Document Classification System

MOVED THAT SAA support efforts by the American Library Association, the Federation of American Scientists, the National Security Archive, and OMB Watch to convince Congress to establish 1) a classification review board with the statutory power to declassify documents, and 2) a national classification center located at the National Archives and Records Administration to monitor agency classification policy and practices. [Moved by Wosh, seconded by Sniffin-Marinoﬀ] PASSED.

Support Statement: In a letter to Senators Roberts and Rockefeller on the Senate Intelligence Committee, the aforementioned groups wrote the following: “We strongly encourage you to help implement long-overdue reforms that were identified years ago by the congressionally mandated Commission on Protecting and Reducing Government Secrecy that was chaired by Senator

Patrick Moynihan, with the participation of Senator Jesse Helms and a bipartisan panel. The Commission's unanimous 1997 report comprehensively evaluated the classification system. In particular, we recommend that you push to adopt two of the critical and necessary reforms the Commission identified: 1) Establish a bipartisan national declassification review board with statutory authority to overrule federal agency classification decisions. This model was used to declassify millions of documents related to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and significantly improved public understanding of that fateful event. In cases in which an agency's classification decision is in dispute, the board would hear appeals of classification decisions by federal agencies and render decisions *available to the public*. 2) Establish a national classification center located at the National Archives and Records Administration to coordinate, implement, and oversee the declassification policies and practices of the federal government. The center should report to Congress and the president on its activities and on the status of federal agencies' declassification practices. By instituting these reforms Congress will be building on the recommendations of the 9/11 Congressional Joint Inquiry by promoting an informed public armed with information to protect our families and communities from terrorist and other threats to public health and safety."

Council Exemplary Service Award

MOVED THAT Archivist of the United States John W. Carlin be awarded the Council Exemplary Service Award at the Closing Plenary Session of the 2004 Annual Meeting:

Whereas John Carlin has served with distinction as Archivist of the United States since 1995; and

Whereas he has enhanced communication with the Society of American Archivists, including preparing a regular column for *Archival Outlook*; and

Whereas he has fostered a new mission/vision statement that defines the National Archives and Records Administration as an agency that is essential in our democracy for protecting citizens' rights, holding government officials accountable, and documenting the national experience; and

Whereas he has set priorities and new directions for NARA by developing and institutionalizing a ten-year strategic plan; and

Whereas he has secured record agency budget increases that have protected ongoing operations and funded new strategic initiatives, and has championed increased funding for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission; and

Whereas he has promoted access to records by reducing the agency's processing backlogs; has raised the public profile of the National Archives; and has dramatically increased NARA's online services via a robust Web site that includes a catalog of NARA's nationwide holdings and online access to electronic records; and

Whereas in partnership with other government entities and the private sector he is developing solutions for long-term preservation of and access to electronic records through the Electronic Records Archives program;

Therefore Be It Resolved That the Council of the Society of American Archivists recognizes John Carlin for his exemplary contributions to the archival profession.

[Moved by Jimerson, seconded by Bell-Russel] PASSED.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

AUGUST 7, 2004

As is customary, Council members reconvened for a brief meeting on Saturday, August 7, 2004. President Rand Jimerson called the meeting to order at 7:00 am. Present: Vice President/President-Elect Richard Pearce-Moses, Treasurer Fynnette Eaton, and Council members Frank Boles, Mark Duffy, Elaine Engst, Aimee Felker, Peter Gottlieb, Kathryn Neal, Christopher Ann Paton, Peter Wosh, and Joel Wurl. Also present were Archivist of the United States John Carlin and Executive Director Nancy Beaumont.

Carlin thanked Council members for the opportunity to address the group and briefly shared his perspective on the transitions that will be occurring in the Archivist of the U.S. position.

Council members reported on the meetings of the groups for which they serve as liaisons. In response to a special request to "take the pulse" of section and roundtable leaders to determine their reactions to the newly implemented policy on electronic-only newsletters, Council members indicated no discomfort with the policy.

Following a review and update of the Action Item List, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 am.