

Council Minutes

June 11-12, 1999

Washington Hilton & Towers

Washington, D.C.

Friday, June 11, 1999

Vice President Hickerson called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Friday, June 11, 1999. Present was Treasurer Robert Sink, and Council members Fynnette Eaton, Anne Gilliland-Swetland, Dennis Harrison, Peter Hirtle, Karen Jefferson, Jane Kenamore, Helen Tibbo and Wilda Logan Willis. Also present were Executive Director Susan Fox and Meetings Director Debra Nolan (nee Mills). Due to a plane delay, President Luciana Duranti was unable to arrive before 1:30 p.m. that afternoon. Valerie Browne was unable to attend due to an illness in the family.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Hirtle presented additions and revisions to the agenda. He moved adoption as amended, Eaton 2nd. PASSED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 1999 MEETING

Hickerson moved adoption as amended. Kenamore 2nd. PASSED.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Hirtle presented the timing and schedule for the meeting over the next two days. He then formally presented items which Council voted upon electronically. There were three, proposed constitutional amendments on membership and dues to be presented to membership at the 1999 annual business meeting and published in the May/June issue of Archival Outlook; the Resolution on the Systematic Destruction of Archives in Kosovo and War-Caused Devastation of Archives Throughout Yugoslavia, also published in the May/June Archival Outlook; and the agreement for SAA to cosponsor a fall 1999 town meeting on copyright with the National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage. Hirtle moved formal endorsement of the three actions. Gilliland-Swetland 2nd. PASSED.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Duranti had reported to Fox in a telephone call the prior evening that she had no report. She sent her regrets for the plane delay which necessitated an overnight stay in Chicago.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hickerson said his principal item was appointments. He commended Debra Skaggs for doing a remarkable job as Chair of the Appointments Committee. He said he had in hand a list of members for all committees except for the subcommittees of the Awards Committee. He asked Council for help in developing a roster in that area. He said he would distribute a final list of appointments before August. Jefferson inquired about achieving diversity goals within the appointments. Hickerson said he would report back on diversity once all appointments were finalized.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Sink reported the results of FY99, which would not contain a deficit as projected at the winter Council meeting. Instead, FY99 would result in a net gain of \$11,128. In reviewing the FY99 line item for Council expenses, Hickerson noted that there were opportunities for Council to hold two rather than three-day meetings if the agenda so called. Kenamore suggested holding the meeting in Chicago since the following year most members would be from the Midwest. Jefferson suggested holding the meeting at less expensive hotels. Gilliland-Swetland said her institution complained about the length of SAA Council meetings and travel costs were difficult to accommodate. Hickerson said it was his sense of Council that they would assume that there would be two-day meetings which would include a Saturday night stay over to reduce expenses, rather than three-day meetings.

Sink presented and reviewed the projected FY2000 budget. He noted that if SAA had budgeted 3% of operating revenues to the reserve fund the Society would have had to budget an additional \$34,557 for FY2000, which would have given SAA a deficit of \$23,439. However, that contribution was not made in FY99 either. Hickerson said in the past reserve fund contributions were included. The fact that SAA has not done so recently presented a different look at the budget. He said Council needed to resolve the issue by either not budgeting the expense or explicitly budgeting for it, instead of dealing with it depending upon exigencies.

Hickerson questioned the proposed increase in the cost of the Employment Bulletin (which would be renamed Professional Opportunities to reflect the fact that it now was also published on-line) by 50%. He said it was a key member service. Why increase the cost when the net result would likely be a drop off in subscribers? Fox agreed not to increase the subscription cost.

Sink said he was still conducting research on the development of an SAA investment policy.

Sink reminded Council that at its last meeting he said he would poll past SAA treasurers on the issue of what amount to set aside in the reserve fund. He said in 1990 Council adopted a policy of setting aside an amount equal to 3% of expenses annually with the goal of having in reserve a fund equal to 50% of the expense budget. SAA made good steady progress toward this goal until three years ago. The current reserve fund was at 21 weeks, with an ultimate goal of reaching 26 weeks' reserve.

He said he did not receive consensus from the poll. The issue, therefore, remained with Council. Sink said that he was convinced of the need for a higher rather than a lower reserve and he recommended that Council not change the goal of attaining 26 weeks' reserve, but also not to change the actual practice of recent years of not specifically budgeting a percentage as a reserve fund contribution, but to allocate whatever small surplus was generated within the year to go into the reserve. He considered the reserve contribution an allocation of resources and that SAA's viability in the face of adversity must be factored into the equation. He feared that archivists were most at risk in a period of financial decline and therefore an economic downturn could have a significant impact on SAA. He said Council would have to balance the risk of a dramatic decline in membership versus using available funds for present or future causes. He recommended, however, that Council wait until the Chicago Office received advice from the auditors before making a final decision.

Hickerson said he thought it was a strange way to budget to say that Council cared about the reserve fund but did not actually budget for it. He thought it seemed arbitrary, based on who happened to be sitting around the table at a Council meeting. The figures presented at a Council meeting should be as accurate a reflection of the Society's financial position as can be. He supported budgeting a commitment to the reserve at a much smaller percentage if need be, in order to institutionalize the practice.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

Fox welcomed Sarah Varner, Associate Vice President with Ghiorse & Sorrenti, a fundraising and public relations firm based in Washington, D.C. Varner gave an overview of association fundraising and the fundraising vehicles available to associations, such as exhibits, special events, annual campaigns, and planned giving. She said it was important that a professional society succeed in raising funds from its own members before soliciting more widely, in order to demonstrate internal commitment to the professional association. She also stressed the necessity of developing personal relationships with those from whom the association wishes to solicit, whether they were individuals, corporations or foundations.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fox distributed a report from Reneta Webb, Interim Education Director, describing the preconference workshops planned for the annual meeting and a report on plans to offer the on-line course in electronic records in the fall. Willis and Tibbo requested that they be able to also take the course as silent participants.

She also distributed a report from Teresa Brinati, Publications Director, who described progress made in developing a second generation website, marketing efforts on behalf of EAD publications, publications in the pipeline, and the goal to establish a 24-hour turnaround on all publications orders. Council suggested that in marketing EAD, Brinati contact cataloging faculty and members of AAM, among others.

Fox then described difficulties encountered with the conversion to new association management software, including a remarkable lack of responsiveness on the part of the vendor. She said she was putting contingency mechanisms in place in order to mitigate any difficulties that might occur in executing the annual meeting. She anticipated some bumps in the road but hoped to minimize any problems. She said that in spite of the difficulties she still expected the new software to ultimately help professionalize SAA operations and to help track membership and other data in a much more detailed manner.

Fox drew Council attention to a memo from Carroll Dendler, SAA's Finance Director, describing the result of her research into offering monthly credit card deductions for SAA members who might want to take advantage of this option. If SAA decided to adopt a system to automatically process the member dues on a monthly or quarterly basis, the estimated cost of acquiring that software was approximately \$15,000. Fox said the office could manually process the monthly dues payments, although she recommended that SAA do so first on a trial basis to assess its impact on staff time. Council recommended that Fox further investigate the issue by contacting the American Library Association and the American Society of Association Executives, among others, to see how they handled such deductions.

Nolan presented research on seven potential meeting sites for 2003. Council concluded that it would be best to meet on the west coast at that time, since it would have been several years since the Society had done so. They requested Nolan further investigate Los Angeles as a first priority, with Seattle as a second priority and report back on negotiations at the winter Council meeting.

MEETING WITH THE ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES

Having recently arrived at the meeting, Duranti welcomed Archivist of the U.S. John Carlin and Jerry George to the meeting. Carlin gave an update on current NARA issues and activities, which included the federal budget year 2000, facility needs, electronic records issues, facility standards, and archival training.

At the conclusion of his report and a question and answer period, Duranti thanked Carlin and George for taking the time to meet with Council. Carlin said he valued the opportunity to engage in the dialogue with Council.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

Eaton reported that the Standards Committee was preparing a report for Council to be considered at its next meeting. She noted a sense of despair on the committee because the process was not working. The committee had encountered a lack of response on the part of SAA groups so it is unable to move on issues. Many topics brought to the Standards Committee fell outside of archival concerns, so it was very hard for them to determine how best to proceed.

Hickerson said standards and how to engage in them should become an important part of the Society's's strategic planning discussions.

Gilliland-Swetland presented CEPD's proposal that Council establish a task force on continuing education. After general discussion of the need to think boldly and creatively about continuing education and programming opportunities, Duranti, Gilliland-Swetland, Tibbo, Kenamore, and Sink agreed to return to the meeting the next day with a proposed charge and composition for such a task force.

The meeting went into executive session to discuss the Executive Director's performance evaluation.

Saturday, June 12, 1999

Duranti called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

REPORT OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Hirtle said that less than 50% of SAA's committees submitted reports via the leadership listserv, as requested by Fox. He saw a need to emphasize the necessity of timely reporting and that in Pittsburgh Council liaisons should speak with their units to stress the importance of reporting activities. He said he was finalizing his 1999- 2000 list of Council liaison assignments and would distribute it before the annual meeting.

Jefferson said she would send a letter out to the leadership list thanking those who reported and she would encourage others to report before the August meeting. She also suggested that Council liaisons should remind those units engaged in standards issues of the policies and procedures of the Standards Committee. She and Harrison would also work on updating the Section and Roundtable FAQs.

COMMITTEE ON TASK FORCES, BOARDS, AND REPRESENTATIVES

Tibbo said that Phil Eppard had a request to change the submission date for Pease Award papers to May 31. Eppard made the request because the later submission date would better accommodate student schedules. After general discussion, Tibbo formally moved that Council change the submission date for Pease Award papers to May 31. Hirtle 2nd. PASSED.

Harrison presented a request from Scott Schwartz, chair of the Membership Committee to extend the term of the chair from one to three years.

After discussion of the pros and cons of one- versus three-year terms, Council did not reach consensus. Since the request came in too late to be adequately considered, Council asked that Willis request from Schwartz a memo outlining the types of problems encountered by the current policy of a one-year appointment for the chair.

Harrison moved that Council increase the term of the chair of the Membership Committee from one to three years. Tibbo 2nd. DECLINED.

Eaton said she had no final report from the Task Force on the Annual Meeting.

Jefferson presented the proposed SAA Position Statement on Diversity as drafted by the Task Force on Diversity. Kenamore moved that Council accept the statement. Harrison 2nd. PASSED.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Fox summarized discussions from the February Planning Day. After discussion, Council decided to craft the wording of the six goals agreed upon in February for presentation to the Membership Forum in Pittsburgh.

After discussing each of the proposed goals in detail, Council agreed to the following articulation:

Membership: SAA should build a diverse and cohesive membership and support those members by addressing individual professional needs as well as by developing a strong archival community.

Education: SAA should provide opportunities for professional and disciplinary growth by promoting graduate education and research, and by guiding and providing high quality continuing education programs.

Political Role: Exert active leadership on enduring and emerging archival issues by advancing archival concerns and perspectives on the critical challenges of the Digital Age, shaping public policy, and promoting funding for archival programs, research and development.

Publishing: SAA should be a primary force in the generation and dissemination of archival literature in the U.S. and worldwide.

External Networking: Define, establish, and enhance strategic relationships with archival and allied professions, associations, institutions, and coalitions.

Standards: Promote excellence in the archival enterprise through identifying, creating, promulgating, and supporting the use of standards important to sound archival policy and best practices.

Council agreed that each Council group originally tasked with developing the goal statement should add three or four objectives as examples for the goals. The objectives would be distributed via the Council list for further discussion and then presented to the Membership Forum for member review and feedback, as well as requesting new objectives or activities to support the established goals.

Council directed Fox to insert the proposed goals and objectives into the annual meeting packets.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Eaton presented the Guidelines for College & University Archives as developed by the College & University Section and presented to the Standards Committee. The Standards Committee now recommended Council approval. Hirtle moved approval. Eaton 2nd. PASSED.

Eaton said the College & University Section planned to submit the guidelines to the Publications Board for suggested publication.

NARA'S PROPOSED RULES ON FACILITIES

Hirtle said that NARA's call for public comment on proposed rules for archival facilities raised the issue of what does SAA do when such a call is issued and the membership does not respond? Is it SAA's responsibility to actively pursue comment? Is SAA obligated to respond to every request for comment that NARA issues?

Willis noted that there were two sets of standards under consideration, neither of which was considered particularly controversial.

Jefferson said Council should ask someone in SAA to look at the standards. Just because SAA members haven't responded did not preclude SAA's obligation to respond. At the very least Council should bring the proposed standard to the units and, if they do not respond, officially state there was no response from the archival community.

Sink recommended that the Standards Committee send the proposed standards to the Preservation Section, the ARMA-SAA Joint Committee, and the Records Management Roundtable and ask for their comment.

ARCHIVES LIST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Hirtle said last winter Council created an Archives List Advisory Committee to assist Bob Schmidt in list management. Schmidt was happy in his role as manager. The Advisory Committee was monitoring the "low signal to noise" ratio on the list, which could be a problem, however they were moving cautiously in terms of establishing procedures. At the moment the Advisory Committee was in dialogue with Schmidt, and he was happy with the fact that he could get advice from Council on an as needed basis.

Harrison asked if the list was growing, stable or shrinking. Hirtle said he did not know for sure but it was his sense that the list was growing.

OLD BUSINESS

DATABASE LEGISLATION

Hirtle directed Council to a background paper, "The End of History," which described issues contained in the Collections of Information Antipiracy Act, H.R. 354. He said that while this did not seem like a central issue for SAA, there may come a time when Council would be asked to write a letter in support of allied professions promoting a particular piece of legislation addressing the matter.

US COPYRIGHT OFFICE LONG DISTANCE LEARNING REPORT

Hirtle said the US Copyright Office recently issued a report addressing distance learning issues contained in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. One of the areas the Registrar of Copyright identified as problematic was the clearance of copyrights for "orphaned works." The Registrar recognized that this issue needed to be resolved and therefore SAA may be in a position to have the law clarified to archivists' advantage. He said it would be good for SAA to identify a response to the issue and give it to the Digital Future Coalition to take forward to get written into legislation. Hirtle said he would report further on the issue at the August Council meeting.

FUNDRAISING

Sink said that at the winter meeting Council did not act on the Task Force on Dues and Member Benefit's recommendation that SAA develop an annual giving program. Sarah Varner had described some options: special events which people like, but with a not particularly high return rate, annual giving, planned, giving, and soliciting major gifts. He thought the obstacles to success in the major gifts category were fairly large for SAA at that point in time. Special events did not sound like a big payoff, but he would be willing to explore that direction. He asked if Council felt ready to move forward on planned giving as recommended by the task force.

Jefferson said she saw a need to enhance the annual giving campaign. The current level of annual giving was not particularly high. Were there better means to solicit rather than the fairly passive action of simply sending out a letter? She noted that Varner had stressed how important it was for the profession to support itself. Perhaps SAA could target a couple of sponsors and see if potential funds were there.

Eaton said that Varner further noted the importance of identifying what SAA wanted to do with the funds, develop a clear message. What then does SAA want to accomplish?

Hickerson said it was important never to go out and ask people for money without giving them a menu of items that can be attractive to them and allowing them to choose.

Willis asked, what does SAA do among the membership currently? She saw a need to identify what SAA can do first, have strategies in place and be more specific so that the Society can conduct a successful campaign.

Hickerson said five years ago personal giving was more than twice as high as its current level. Leaders in the Society accepted donating to SAA as the expected thing to do. He said the first priority should be to re-establish a culture of giving so that while it might not be a big step forward, it would help the Society lay the groundwork for larger endeavors. Then SAA could move into developing better case presentations around particular possibilities. He was willing to use one of his Presidential columns as a vehicle to communicate this message.

Tibbo said SAA needed a few large gifts from SAA leaders and members to set the example for others.

Sink noted that the SAA Fellows represented a distinct leadership body that had both the funds and the commitment to the organization. If SAA could get five fellows to agree to contribute a matching fund that could help jumpstart a campaign.

Jefferson said people could pledge over time. It was up to Council to encourage people to make the commitment. Other organizations expected their board members to contribute.

Gilliland-Swetland saw the need for people-to-people solicitation. Leaders needed to ask for the donation. The expectation should be there that that's what you do to support your national professional association.

Hickerson said that while there were some improvements which could be accomplished within Council and the Chicago office, the fellows were an excellent body to pursue, perhaps by creating a Leadership Committee.

Gilliland-Swetland noted that retired educators were another body worth pursuing, especially those who had mentored and who still had a large network of relationships in place.

Hickerson said SAA could move on the annual giving issue in the fall. He thought the Chicago office should create a card listing all the funds which could be enclosed in the solicitation and in dues mailings. He said Council should identify ten fellows to form a Leadership Committee convened at the annual meeting, and gain knowledge from them as a focus group and have them help define the purpose. Eaton offered to participate with a subgroup of Council to convene the focus group.

Jefferson asked whether or not SAA was ready to take on a major gift or planned giving campaign. What would SAA have to do if we wanted to get into major gifts? If we were to proceed what would be the next steps? They needed to be codified.

Hickerson said Council needed an instruction packet and should get advice from someone who could provide legal and financial information. SAA should think about approaching industry suppliers and current exhibitors. He proposed that he visit with some potential Denver area vendors prior to the 2000 annual meeting. This would also give him an opportunity to see what kind of response such a solicitation would receive.

Hirtle asked about next steps.

Sink said that in terms of the capital campaign Council needed to energize and focus a group of people to help lead the effort. Hickerson, Sink and Fox agreed to do so. Eaton agreed to convene a focus group of SAA fellows at the Pittsburgh annual meeting. Council needed more information on what steps to take to develop a planned giving or major gifts campaign. Fox said she would search association literature and provide Council with a capital campaign outline. Jefferson offered to work with Nolan to expand the number of exhibitors. Hickerson said the Chicago office needed to develop a polished brochure for the annual giving campaign.

Hirtle moved that Council assume there would be 100% participation on the part of Council members in the annual giving campaign. Jefferson 2nd. PASSED.

Eaton moved that the income generated by Council's contributions to the calendar year 1999 annual giving campaign be used to support the initial steps for a giving campaign. Willis 2nd. PASSED, with Hirtle voting Nay.

NEW BUSINESS

PROPOSED FREDRIC M. MILLER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Sink presented a proposed Fredric M. Miller Scholarship Fund. He said Miller's mother had decided to write into her will a bequest to establish a scholarship fund, with the caveat that she could need the funds for medical assistance in the future. Miller's wife had devised a donor agreement, which was now before Council for consideration.

Gilliland-Swetland expressed reservation about a clause in the agreement which stated that "Scholarships will support graduate archival education of students in United States universities which meet the criteria for graduate education set forth by the Society of American Archivists and which place emphasis on archives as historical repositories rather than concentrating on records management." She said there weren't any programs in the US at the moment which met the SAA criteria. She also thought making the differential between historical repositories versus records management to be problematic.

Sink discussed the proposed amount of the fund and the financial issues that needed to be addressed in order to manage the fund so that the value of the award would not be eroded by inflation. He saw a need for a clause in the agreement addressing the need

for financial management of the fund to maintain its value, the need for some flexibility in its stated purpose in case conditions in the field change, and the issue of the standards for criteria of the M.A.S. guidelines as articulated by Gilliland- Swetland.

Hirtle moved that SAA welcome the opportunity of a Fredric M. Miller endowment with enthusiasm, that the Society express its appreciation for the generosity of the donors, and communicate that the Society's believes the fund would provide wonderful recognition of the important role Fredric M. Miller played in the archival profession. Council further authorized Sink and Fox to negotiate the details of the endowment. Harrison 2nd. PASSED.

Hickerson said it would be good to recruit some of Jerry Ham's former students to contribute to the Ham Scholarship fund and that this should be accomplished by the end of the calendar year.

ELECTION OF A COUNCIL MEMBER TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

By ballot vote Council elected Jefferson to serve on the Executive Committee for 1999- 2000. Tibbo and Eaton would serve on the Nominating Committee.

TASK FORCE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

Duranti introduced a proposed charge for the Task Force on Continuing Education: The Task Force on Continuing Education would study SAA's continuing education options and recommend new, creative, flexible, productive approaches and delivery systems and funding, and the most appropriate infrastructure to support these recommendations.

She proffered suggested names for the task force and said she would contact those individuals to ascertain their interest in serving.

She said the task force should be constituted as soon as possible, first meet in Pittsburgh, meet again in winter, prepare a report for the 2000 summer meeting at which time Council would act on its recommendations.

Gilliland-Swetland moved acceptance of the Task Force on Continuing Education. Tibbo 2nd. PASSED, with Hickerson and Gilliland-Swetland abstaining.

ACA COMMISSION ON THE ARCHIVAL PROFESSION

Hickerson distributed a draft document proposing a "Commission on the Future of the Archival Enterprise." The document was developed by members of the Academy of Certified Archivists who had also brought the draft to the ACA board for their consideration. He said the ACA was an allied association on par with regionals and that SAA should be working with them in areas of effective partnerships. He said the document discussed the future of the profession from the standpoint of professional needs. David Gracy, incoming ACA President asked Hickerson if SAA would be interested in becoming a participant in the proposal and the Commission. At this point both the document and the proposal were very much in draft stage, which he distributed more as a discussion point rather than as a finished concept. The discussion among Council should be directed solely on the idea of whether or not to participate.

Jefferson expressed concern that she had not had time to fully consider either the document or the concept. She proposed that Council members read it and comment via the Council listserv. Kenamore asked if Council members could respond by the SAA annual meeting, if that would give sufficient lead time to the ACA. Hickerson thought it would.

Hirtle said he saw a strong alignment of the ACA proposal with the revised SAA strategic plan. Hickerson suggested that Council members respond within the next 30 days.

ADOPTION OF THE FY00 BUDGET

Sink presented the FY00 budget.

Hirtle moved acceptance of the FY00 budget to reflect the changes in the annual meeting budget which would change the overall bottom line to a \$250 deficit. Tibbo 2nd. PASSED.

Sink read the To Do List.

The meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.