

ASOR Chairs Coordinating Council

Conference Call March 17, 2016, 1:00 EDT

Present: Andy Vaughn, Susan Ackerman, Sharon Herbert, Laura Mazow, Geoff Emberling, Randy Younker, Danielle Fatkin, Tom Levy, Britta Abeln

1. Approval of Minutes

There were some questions about the February minutes (in particular, the comments from the COP Chair, since he was not, in fact, on the call), so they will be redistributed for approval during the April conference call.

2. Committee Reports as Needed

Awards Committee

The committee has received a handful of early book nominations. This is promising because it indicates that ASOR awards are on peoples' minds. Andy suggested that a description of awards could be sent to publishers and included in News@ASOR. The chair suggested they coordinate this outside of the call.

Committee on Archaeological Policy

The committee is working on a website for submissions for CAP-affiliated projects. It will be ready within the next few days. Feedback given at the meeting in November will be incorporated into the finished product. The website will highlight ASOR and CAP principles. Seven members of CAP will test the site and provide feedback.

Andy asked if the site is ready to be released internationally. The chair said they are holding off for now, as it is still in beta.

Committee on Publications

The chair reported, in a memo circulated by e-mail, that the review of *Near Eastern Archaeology* is moving forward.

Program Committee

The chair reported that the abstract submission period has closed. 528 abstracts have been submitted. Last year at this time, 478 abstracts had been submitted. Two years ago, 520 had been submitted. The location outside of San Antonio seems to have had little impact on the number of submissions.

There are 105 sessions planned, but logistics will only allow for 96 sessions. (Eight sessions can be run concurrently, in four time slots, over four days.) However, many sessions are under-enrolled.

The new Appearance Policy has been approved, with an exception for the two panels on careers outside academia, for this year only.

Holly Pittmann's hard work on bringing in Iranian scholars for the Archaeology of Iran session was lauded, as was Helen Dixon's work with Lebanese scholars.

Sharon asked if Holly Pittman should perhaps be considered for an award. Andy mentioned that the Awards Committee has been successful in soliciting nominations from ASOR members. Andy reminded the committee that several people are rotating off of committees and may be good award nominees.

3. Discussion Items

Strategic Plan (Susan)

The Strategic Planning Task Force met in January and revised the plan. That version was posted in News@ASOR in February and March with a March 15th deadline for feedback. The goal is to have a final version for the board to vote on in April.

Regarding the goal to make more published material available via open access, the Publications Committee raised the point that the current material available though open access is out of print, so it does not generate income. Making more current material available could have a negative impact on journal and book income.

Andy mentioned that this is a question facing many learned societies. Patrick Alexander has been helpful in this discussion.

Possible Name Change

The Strategic Planning Task Force addressed the question of whether the name of the organization should be changed. A list of name change proposals from the 1980's was shared with the committee for comment.

Looking at the list, it was observed that the perspective has changed. The issue of the word “Schools” does not loom as large today. The emphasis was more on studying the Middle East rather than presenting ASOR as a group of overseas actors.

Several comments were made about the current name reflecting the organization's long history. Questions were raised about whether “American” is necessary, and how the organization’s geographic scope can be defined.

Susan mentioned the option of highlighting the acronym, but accompanying it with an explanation of the name.

Some chairs were in favor of changing the name, suggesting that the people who appreciate the organization’s history are already members. A fresh name would be good for growth.

Other observations: the term “Middle East” is understood by everyone, while “Near East” is only used by scholars; in the past there were staunch reservations about changing the name, but that does not seem like the case within the CCC; it would be important to maintain “ASOR,” as it has been included in the title of our flagship publication for a century.