

The American Schools of Oriental Research  
Executive Committee Meeting  
October 9, 1999 - Cambridge  
Minutes

PRESENT: Chairman P.E. MacAllister, President Joe Seger, Al Leonard, Jr., David McCreery, Ingrid Wood, Nan Frederick, ex-officio: Rudy Dornemann, Billie Jean Collins, Holly Andrews  
NOT PRESENT: Eric Meyers, Gerald Vincent, James Strange, Holly Hendrix, Victor Matthews

The meeting was called to order at 9:02am.

1. **Approval of the minutes** of the Executive Committee meeting on May 1, 1999.

2. **Report from the President** - Joe Seger

President Seger reported that he has sent out the Trustee Appeal letter for the 1999-2000 year and that we have already had a response from nearly one-third of the Board. The combined donations and pledges thus far total about \$10,000.

The campaign efforts of the Development Committee are moving forward. Holly Andrews' position in the Boston office has been upgraded to "Assistant Director" with the help of Ingrid Wood and Joe Seger and with the consent of the Personnel Committee. Her responsibilities are now broader and she is focusing more on development issues.

ASOR received a letter this summer from Kent Richards and Scholars Press indicating that they are restructuring the business and will no longer be able to provide Member/Subscriber and Publishing services for ASOR. ASOR needs to find new arrangements and Billie Jean Collins is currently researching options with the help of the Executive Committee of the Committee on Publications (COP). They hope to make a recommendation soon and have a new location by the end of the year.

At the Spring Board meeting, an action was initiated to amend the By-Laws. This action will remove officers from the official mix of Trustees in order to open up slots into which additional members can be elected.

3. **Financial Reports** - Ingrid Wood

Treasurer Wood covered the most recent financial reports. She mentioned that we are waiting for the reports (with any supplements) from Creelman & Smith, our auditors, once their audit is complete sometime in late October. These reports will be distributed to the Executive Committee as soon as they are available. The biggest change since the Spring is an additional \$50,000.00 added to the Centennial Fund thanks to P.E. MacAllister.

The Annual Meeting is shaping up in terms of the numbers of registrants and income. We expect to have a record Meeting this year.

There was discussion on the presentation of the financial reports. They appear confusing and Ingrid has suggested re-structuring them so that they are easier to read and understand. She is looking into the FASBI 117 presentation. The suggestion of adopting this format as a standard accounting practice was unanimously agreed upon by the Executive Committee. One of the major reasons for this action is that the report is mis-leading. It appears that ASOR is in good shape financially when we are actually in the red. In reality there is a deficit and we have been invading other accounts to make up the difference. We will re-visit the budget at the next meeting.

Billie Jean commented that Publications has brought in well over the projected income, about \$33,000 more than projected but it has been an expensive production year. Expenses are higher because production volume is up. \$8,000 needs to be deferred in the way of expenses in addition to the \$62,231.50 in deferred revenues for NEA.

Ingrid pointed out that all of ASOR's accounts have been transferred to Salomon Smith Barney in Boston except for two: there is one remaining account at Mercantile Safe Deposit and the Lazard Fund.

ASOR has historically been reporting that we hold over one million dollars in assets. Unfortunately this is false. We continue to have funds held by Citibank that need to be controlled by ASOR. Citibank controls nearly \$426,000 of ASOR's assets which we need to take control of. This fund was set up prior to World War Two for ASOR's Baghdad School by a Nies bequest. This foundation was set up so that ASOR received a certain portion and also the remainder of the amount that exists after all distributions were made in the will and the original executors were deceased. It is essential that this fund be set up under ASOR's jurisdiction.

The accuracy of the budget reports needs to be looked at in detail. About \$45,000 should be subtracted for moving expenses and depreciation which has not been reflected in the past three years, except in the audit report.

The financial situation has compelled the Finance Committee with Executive Committee approval to seek out some new investment opportunities... something that is relatively safe but that provides growth. SalomonSmithBarney has suggested four different mutual funds to consider with relatively few expenses and penalties. They are suggesting that about 15%-20% of our assets be moved which are now sitting in SSB Money Market accounts and making under 5%. These new accounts should bring in about 20% to 25% return. The Executive Committee urged Ingrid to go ahead and move these assets. Ingrid agreed to move them after once more consulting with Gerry Vincent of the Finance Committee.

The previously agreed upon budget for 2000 was circulated, the Executive Committee conceded that modifications will be made and the new proposed budget would be sent to the Board members for review before a vote at the November meeting.

Joe Seger summarized the three main objectives before the November Board Meeting:

1. Re-format Budget Reports
2. Refine the Budget (make break-outs more explicit)
3. Move a portion of the SSB Money Market accounts to more aggressive suggested mutual funds.
4. Report on the Development Committee – Joe Seger for Holly Hendrix

President Seger re-capped the Development Committee meeting held the previous day at the Cambridge Marriott and the initiatives of the development campaign. He presented the “Case Statement” and explained that it is to be used as an endowment fund-raising tool over the next three years, not as a marketing tool. He will be revising it one last time then it will be available for review and vote by the Board.

President Seger noted that different kinds of fund-raising thrusts will have to be made to different constituencies. He then ran down the schedule of events that need to occur between now and April 2000 in order to achieve our goals.

ASOR will need to hire some additional support to assist with these objectives and help us to focus on these assignments. The question now is whom do we hire or contract with to help us with the tasks of fundraising, soliciting, the Centennial and other major events and activities.

We are currently looking into contacts suggested by Boston University and Ingrid Wood, Deborah Stern and we are contemplating hiring ex-Smithsonian associates Ruth Ann Stolk and Johleen Cannon. We are relatively on target at this point with our proposed workplan but we need help from the Trustees and Committees during this preparatory phase.

Chairman MacAllister then made a motion to approve the Centennial Fund Raising Campaign. It was unanimously approved.

**5. Report on the Centennial Committee- Joe Seger**

ASOR’s Centennial Celebration is set for April 13-16, 2000 in Washington, DC.

The Gala Banquet is planned for April 14 at the U.S. State Department Dining Room. We are projecting about 250 guests including dignitaries, overseas centers, past presidents and trustees, founding societies, the consortium and the membership.

Saturday’s lecture program featuring ASOR notables will be at the Smithsonian and the Grand Reception of “Roasts, Toasts and Boasts” will tentatively be held at the Montpelier Room at the Library of Congress. Sunday’s academic sessions as well as the digs reunion lunch is planned for the Wyndham Washington Hotel.

We are hoping to provide opportunities for various corporations and individuals to sponsor different aspects of these events in return for recognition at the Centennial. We have been

working with Public Forum Institute in Washington to pull this together and start soliciting sponsors and a Steering Committee is presently being formed to assist us with the leg-work.

## 6. **Report on Publications** - Al Leonard and Billie Jean Collins

Billie Jean has been researching new providers for ASOR Publications due to the Scholar's Press meltdown. The main organizations interested in acquiring our business (or aspects of it) currently are: Academic Services, AAA, Blackwell, Altamira and Eisenbrauns. She has worked up a proposal showing three scenarios ranging from managing everything (accounting, books, member-subscriber services and journals) in-house to outsourcing everything except the accounting. The benefits of each scenario are still being determined. There was mention of considering going with a university press and perhaps consulting Oxford Press since they currently publish the Encyclopedia of the Near East for ASOR.

No matter which scenario we go with, ASOR will have to take over the accounting and will need to make adjustments accordingly such as purchasing software and new equipment.

Due to the upheaval with Scholar's Press, Publications has been losing members, subscribers, production and money. We need to protect ourselves after December 31 when SP will no longer be fulfilling their commitments to us. SP has put ASOR in a volatile position and we need to have an agreement drawn up to have ASOR's liabilities covered and ensure that SP sign and honor it.

Chairman MacAllister made a motion to have President Seger pursue legal counsel and research our options concerning the validity of the existing yearly contract with Scholar's Press that runs through June 30, 2000.

The motion was unanimously accepted.

President Seger indicated that he will work with COP to relieve some of the overwhelming issues and that the Committee should now include other figures such as Ingrid Wood in their discussions about planning what needs to be done regarding SP/Publications work with the COP Executive Committee. The Executive Committee gave their consent for Al and Billie Jean to move ahead with new contracts and steps they now need to take to resolve the situation.

Chairman MacAllister made a motion to form a committee for the Publications transition.

The motion was unanimously accepted.

Billie Jean commented that COP needs to have a decision on which new Publications scenario they want to adopt by November, 1999.

Billie Jean inquired about what our publishing mission is at ASOR and who our audience is. The response was: partly, through a commitment to providing this publishing service, we are fulfilling a broader mission to disseminate a particular kind of information to the world.

7. **Report on Archaeological Policy** - David McCreery

Dave is proposing new simplified forms for the application for affiliation. He suggests that these forms be submitted every other year instead of every year. Last year there were a total of 48 affiliated digs, 24 in the field and 24 in publications. He is looking at a projected 50 to 60 this year.

He then pointed out that he made some small cosmetic changes to the "Statement of General Standards." He also thanked Holly Andrews in the Boston office for creating the new system of submitting forms electronically via the ASOR website. He then handed out the names for the updated CAP classes through the year 2003.

8. **Report on Annual Meeting and Program** - Rudy Dornemann for Victor Matthews

Response to the Annual Meeting has been great this year. We already have record numbers for the Meeting. Unfortunately, we are not pleased with the treatment we have been receiving from the Cambridge Marriott. They have not been cooperative in accommodating our spill over and have refused to sell us any more rooms. Consequently we have had to seek other accommodations at the Holiday Inn in Cambridge and Boston. The good news is that there is a change in willingness of participants to come earlier and stay for the duration of the meeting.

The 2000 Annual Meeting in Nashville is shaping up. We have signed a contract with the Loews hotel which looks to be a very nice and accommodating property.

9. **Report from the Executive Director** - Rudy Dornemann

Holly Andrews and Britt Hartenberger are taking over new positions in the Boston office. Holly has been promoted to Assistant Director and Britt will be taking over more of the routine duties of the office as Senior Staff Assistant. They have already got the 2000 Annual Appeal out to the members and we have received early responses.

Rudy met this Summer with a representative from the Saudi Arabian embassy. There is a new Saudi Arabian archaeological initiative that Wyche Fowler, the Ambassador to S.A. and a former ASOR trustee, is promoting. Wyche Fowler sent a letter to ASOR in September asking for our support and participation in this initiative.

Chairman MacAllister made a motion to respond favorably to Fowler and form a committee to explore ASOR's involvement in this Saudi Arabian archaeological initiative. The motion was unanimously accepted.

Chairman MacAllister stated that a Saudi Arabian archaeological initiative meeting should be scheduled for the Annual Meeting.

President Seger noted that plans for the centennial celebrations at the overseas centers are under way and will begin on May 28, 2000 in Jerusalem.

10. **Old Business**

Corporation Meeting: Nominations are being solicited for new Trustees. Randy Younker will circulate the nominations to the committee soon after the deadline. There will be 3 new Institutional Representatives and 3 new Individuals voted onto Board in November.

We are seeking to expand our institutional member base. President Seger has drafted a new application which simplifies the process of applying for membership and so far the response has been favorable. Chairman MacAllister suggested that we put an application in each envelope and hand them out at the Annual Meeting.

11. **New Business**

The Membership Meeting agenda for the November meeting will be pulled together soon.

The next Executive Committee meeting after November will be in February. Washington may be a good place, we could probably get a good rate at the Wyndham Hotel.

Vote to adjourn - 1:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Holly N. Andrews (for James Strange)