



ASOR Executive Committee Meeting
April 21, 2018
Tucson, Arizona

PRESENT: Susan Ackerman (President), Richard Coffman (Chair), Lynn Swartz Dodd (Secretary), Tim Harrison (Past President), Ann-Marie Knoblauch, Heather McKee (Treasurer), Eric Meyers, Sharon Herbert (Vice President), Joe Seger, Andy Vaughn (non-voting), J. Edward Wright

1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:37 am.

The Executive Committee thanked Ed Wright for hosting us at University of Arizona.

2. Approval of Agenda. Approved by consent.

BE IT RESOLVED: the agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the January EC Retreat (January 27-28, 2018)

BE IT RESOLVED: the Minutes from the January EC Retreat (January 27-28, 2018) are approved by unanimous consent.

4. Approval of the Minutes from the March EC Conference Call (March 2, 2018)

BE IT RESOLVED: the Minutes from the March EC Conference Call (March 2, 2018) are approved by unanimous consent.

5. Officers Nominations Committee Report (Joe Seger)

The Committee did due diligence in January and February to reach out to Board members and through ASOR News to the membership. They created a list of five possible candidates for each of the two officer positions open on the Board: Secretary and Vice President. These candidates responded to an invitation to be considered by the end of March, and a conference call on April 5, 2018 resulted in these recommendations:

Ann Marie Knoblauch for a term from January 1, 2019-December 31, 2021.

In order to more effectively coordinate of the timing of position rotation among Vice President and President, so that ASOR can encourage leadership development, the committee recommends extending Sharon Herbert's term an additional year, to December, 2019 as Vice President.

Eric Meyers seconds the motions of the Officers Nominations Committee, which are as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED: the Executive Committee recommends that the term of the current Vice President shall be extended for an additional year to December 31, 2019. Approved by unanimous consent.

BE IT RESOLVED: the Executive Committee recommends that Sharon Herbert shall serve another year as Vice President until December 31, 2019. Approved by unanimous consent.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends that Ann Marie Knoblauch be elected to the position of Secretary for an initial term to extend from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021. Approved by unanimous consent.

6. Treasurer's Report (Heather McKee)

6a. Adoption of the FY 2019 budget

The Finance Committee convened during an April 16, 2018 conference call.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee accepts the IRS 990 form and empowers Heather McKee and Andrew Vaughn to sign and submit it.

For 2018, because of strong oversight of our expenses, better than expected performance related to the annual meeting, and savings because of staff transitions, ASOR has a break-even budget.

Regarding the cash and investment accounts, there has been positive performance, and we are amid an upward trend. ASOR has defined investment policies. The distributions that are made are based on explicit percentages, and an average of prior quarters is used to determine the percentage distribution. This is a good due diligence practice for maintaining the funds and managing them. The Finance Committee suggests that the higher fee accounts in Sequoia should be closed in order to bring the funds into management through Schwab and to streamline financial management.

Budget to Forecast: The Executive Director, Andy Vaughn, submitted a forecast with a balanced budget by the end of the year. There are unknowns ahead, including moving expenses and so the committee and Treasurer and Executive

Director need to look into this more closely.

Moving: ASOR will move without most of its furniture, which was purchased under Rudy Dornemann (more than 20 years ago). An upgrade is warranted rather than paying for its loading and moving. Also, the existence of a new publishing partner could have an impact on what is stored at the office, although that agreement with a publishing partner wouldn't come into effect until January, 2019. However, staff will determine whether they can ship journals to the new publishing partner in June/July. Presently, ASOR staff are planning to rent a cheap Wooster area storage space and to have enough to fulfill claims until January, but we await UC Press response about taking on stock from ASOR in advance of the contract.

Balancing the Budget: Andy Vaughn

We are projecting a balanced budget if people make unrestricted gifts. We need an additional \$15,000. We look to our Trustees to help us move toward this goal. We are already ahead of budget, and this is helping us to weather the extraordinary situation, and we need continued support to reach the promised land. We will request extraordinary gifts for a building fund in the coming year. It may be a challenge to ask people for gifts for two things at the same time, but we need support for Annual Fund and a Building Fund. We will be asking people to consider giving more than their usual gift to ASOR.

Heather McKee: The original budget included capital budget—which is smart from a strategic thinking point of view--although not a usual accounting practice as a formal document. She would like to commend the authors of the NEH grant, which lays out clearly what is needed. We will need to take aggressive measures to reach the goal, as we continue with our mission, maintaining operations, etc.

Andy Vaughn outlined the various issues related to the staff in terms of continuing appointments and hiring needed to replace staff who would not be moving to the Washington, DC area.

Richard Coffman pointed out that we need to make the move and start getting settled in Alexandria so that we don't have "so many spinning plates".

A discussion about possibly thanking staff at the Denver Annual Meeting occurred.

Cultural Heritage Initiatives: Susan Ackerman: For the past couple years, ASOR had budgets over \$2 million, including Department of State funding. The FY19 budget, however, reflects the fact that we have no guarantee of DoS funds after June, 2018.

The Executive Committee discussed the Cultural Heritage Initiatives and staff.

BE IT RESOLVED: the Executive Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the 2019 budget.

7. Insurance:

Richard Coffman: there may be trips coming up in May with ASOR folks out of the country in various locations. How do we address the question of providing appropriate insurance? A discussion occurred about insurance and suggestions for agents to be contacted were offered.

8. ASOR's Temporary Home in Alexandria, VA: Virginia Theological Seminary (Susan Ackerman, Andy Vaughn)

A discussion of the offer of a transitional space for a low rent for ASOR that had been made by Virginia Theological Seminary ensued, including a full discussion about the planned sale of an Assyrian relief.

Eric Meyers made a motion. Sharon Herbert seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: ASOR's Executive Committee recommends that the Board accept the offer from Virginia Theological Seminary for assistance in housing and other move-related items. Six voted in favor. Three were opposed. The motion passed.

9. ASOR's New Home: Development Report (Ed Wright)

We set a goal of \$4000 for our March Fellowship Madness fund-raising for Dig Scholarships and the actual amount raised was \$6800. In 2017 we gave 18 fellowship awards total. For 2018, we were able to give a total of 21 awards.

We need to raise at least \$1.2 M to purchase a place in greater DC area. We have applied for a 3 to 1 matching NEH grant. For this, we would need to raise \$900K to get \$300K. To date, we have received initial commitments of \$316K. There is still the possibility of major gifts to come. That is the context for the discussion of the new home.

Eric Meyers commented that the new tax law could have a negative impact on giving, according to his sources (\$24,000 itemizing goal).

10. ASOR Bylaws (Susan Ackerman, Richard Coffman)

We will discuss ByLaws revisions with the Board today. Susan thanked Richard Coffman who did a fabulous job. These revisions address lapses, ambiguities and contradictions in the By Laws. The only substantive governance change is that we

wish to devolve the busy work aspects to the Executive Committee. Presently, in terms of proposing committee members and editorial board members, the Vice President brings these names to the Board. Susan suggests that this kind of nomination be approved by the Executive Committee rather than the Board. We are in no way proposing that Editors don't come to Board.

It remains important to report decisions to the Board even if the Executive Committee makes the approval.

Lynn Dodd: has there ever been an instance when a committee member or editorial committee member ever was disapproved by the board?

Eric Meyers and Susan Ackerman respond "no".

Susan Ackerman indicates that she will confer about this proposed change with the pro bono counsel. The official vote would occur in November.

Joe Seger complemented Richard Coffman for a masterful job on the ByLaws.

11. Personnel Committee Report (Susan Ackerman)

Annually, the Executive Committee reviews the personnel report of the Executive Director. The President solicits feedback from Board officers and standing committee chairs, using the form that Tim Harrison developed. She compiles these responses, synthesizes them and presents this to the personnel committee. This year that committee included Richard Coffman, Sharon Herbert, Heather McKee and Susan Ackerman.

The Personnel Committee made a motion that Andy Vaughn's contract be extended for another year.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Director's contract shall be extended for another year. Passed by unanimous consent.

Sharon Herbert asked the minutes reflect appreciation for Lynn Swartz Dodd for her service as ASOR Secretary. Her term ends December 31, 2018.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:03 PM