



asor

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting
September 17, 2020 2:00 PM-3:00 PM EDT ZOOM

Present: Richard Coffman (Chair of the Board); Sharon Herbert (President); Chuck Jones (Vice President); Heather McKee (Treasurer); Ann-Marie Knoblauch (Secretary); Jane DeRose Evans; Eric Meyers; Joe Seger; Andy Vaughn (Executive Director), Susan Ackerman (Past President); Lynn Swartz Dodd

Guest: Meagan Shirley

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 2:02 PM (Richard Coffman)

1. Approval of agenda

- **BE IT RESOLVED:** The agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

2. Approval of Minutes Past Meetings

- Approval of EC Minutes from May 12, 2020, Zoom Board
 - Susan noted that the amended by-laws are not currently posted on the ASOR website
 - Minutes approved by unanimous consent.
- Approval of EC Minutes from August 3, 2020 Zoom Board
 - Susan noted motion under item 3 the resolution should read the Executive Committee recommends to the Board, not the Ad Hoc Committee
 - Minutes approved by unanimous consent with Susan's correction.

3. Discussion of Ad Hoc Committee on the Name of ASOR Final Report and associated documents

- Sharon began the discussion by calling attention to the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name, dated August 28, 2020. (attachment A)
- The Ad Hoc Committee recommends a vote to the entire ASOR membership, with a choice between two names:
 - 1) ASOR with one of the two full names:

- American Society for Overseas Research (ASOR), with the tagline “Unearthing the Past from Africa to the Indus Valley”
 - American Schools for Overseas Research (ASOR), with the tagline “Unearthing the Past from Africa to the Indus Valley”
 - 2) AARCHE (Association for Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, and Education) with the tagline “Unearthing the Past from Africa to the Indus Valley”
- Sharon noted that AARCHE came in dead last in the most recent membership survey (where there were two slightly different options for what AARCHE would stand for; both options were voted last or second to last).
 - The results of the membership survey are made more problematic because the survey included more highly-voted acronyms that use “Middle East” or “Near East.” Since the survey, the Ad Hoc Committee has determined such terms are problematic and not acceptable as a name for the organization.
 - Once options that included “Middle East” or “Near East” were removed from consideration, the only option left was the least popular, AARCHE.
 - AARCHE is what the Ad Hoc Committee recommends be presented to the membership for vote as an alternative to “ASOR”.
 - Richard noted that the results of the July membership poll (407 responses) shows that the membership is overwhelmingly okay with name options that include “Middle East” or “Near East.”
 - Susan further noted that the AARCHE name that the Ad Hoc Committee proposed in their final report is slightly different from either of the AARCHE options on the July survey, so the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee proposes a name option that was never voted on by membership.
 - Survey options voted on by membership:
 - AARCHE: Association for Archaeology, Research, Cultural Heritage, and Education (received 22 votes)
 - AARCHE: Association for Archaeological Research and Cultural Heritage Education (received 16 votes)
 - Recommendation in final report of Ad Hoc Committee:
 - AARCHE: Association for Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, and Education
 - After some more discussion of the results and recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee, Sharon posed the question: do we accept the recommendation in the Committee’s final report?
 - We have a motion from the August 19, 2020 Board meeting, to table to a specific time an EC recommendation that was made during its August 3 meeting. The Board motion (from August 19) is copied here for convenience:
 - *Susan Ackerman moved, Jane DeRose Evan seconded:*
 - *The Board of Trustees tables the Executive Committee recommendation to the Board of Trustees that the organization keep the acronym ASOR until the Ad Hoc Committee has presented its report to the ASOR Board.*

- *Unanimously approved.*
- Sharon clarified the matter by explaining we can recommend that 1) accept the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee, although there are some inconsistencies with their reporting and the alternative name to “ASOR” they are proposing was unpopular with membership; or recommend 2) decline the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee and only put forth the “ASOR” acronym options.
- Sharon made several points referencing the membership survey that potentially muddy the water (for example, in the March survey, members were never asked explicitly whether they supported removing the word “Oriental” from ASOR’s name, and in the second survey in July, members were asked to vote on six name options, all but two options included “Middle East” or “Near East”); both that did not contain Near East or Middle East gave the acronym AARCHE, and were voted 5th and 6th choice by the membership.
- Where to go next?
 - Option 1: get new data from professional survey people.
 - Option 2: go with the data we have, which (to Sharon) means at least putting an “ASOR” name out to ratify.
- Joe called attention to the BASOR except from 1921 included in the Board Documents for this meeting which gives some context for “Schools” in the name ASOR, but made the point that “Schools” does not inform about who ASOR is or what we do. (attachment B)
- Susan noted that “Schools” speaks to ASOR’s history, its overseas research centers, as well as the institutions of higher learning involved in the founding of ASOR.
- Several members of the Executive Committee weighed in on what should be included in a membership ballot.
- Richard recommended the vote not include taglines, to provide more flexibility for the tag line in the future without needing revision of the articles of incorporation.
- Andy reminded the committee of a membership poll taken during the transitioning the title of the journal *Biblical Archaeologist* to *Near Eastern Archaeology*.; The poll showed strong support for retaining the title *The Biblical Archaeologist*, but the Board decided to change the name anyway. If an ASOR membership poll shows strong support for a name that the Board finds unacceptable, it puts the Board in a difficult situation.
- Sharon reminded the committee that the only question on the first survey that achieved consensus was that the name reflects where we work, and neither the new options for ASOR nor AARCHE reflects this.
- Lynn brought up Andy’s assessment paper on the impact of the name change (attachment C), particularly the costs involved with the change, with AARCHE incurring higher costs than would a variation of ASOR. She questioned if additional costs connected with AARCHE is how ASOR wants to spend its limited funds. The name AARCHE comes with a price tag.
- Lynn noted that neither name provides geographic specificity, but at least “ASOR” has a history and is well known for where it works.
- Susan noted that the recommendation made to the Board on August 19

was made before the Ad Hoc Committee had submitted its final report, so the recommendation was considered premature. Now we have received the final report.

- Jane reminded the committee that these surveys were being held while the Black Lives Matter movement was unfolding, prompting greater reflection on the words. She suggested that the results of the first survey, taken in March, may be dated for that reason.
- Heather found Andy's attention to the potential costs of change very helpful. She indicated she supports a membership poll between ASOR with Schools, or ASOR with Society.
- Chuck noted that ASOR is known as "ASOR" world-wide.
- Eric reminded the committee of comments made by Erin Darby at the August 19 Board of Trustees meeting, advocating for "Society" over "Schools."
- Andy asked whether the EC wants to go on record as having a recommendation? Another option is to present the recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee to the Board without a recommendation from the EC. He noted that the Development Committee chose to go on record expressing support for the acronym ASOR, but the Executive Committee is not obliged to make a recommendation.
- Joe noted that the EC has the right and responsibility to thank the Ad Hoc Committee for their service, and based on our evaluation of their final report, make a recommendation.
- Lynn confirmed that the Development Committee voted to recommend to the Executive Committee that ASOR keep the acronym "ASOR."
 - Susan Ackerman moved, Jane DeRose Evans seconded:
 - The Executive Committee rescinds the recommendation about retaining the acronym ASOR that was made by the Executive Committee on August 3, 2020, and presented to the Board of Trustees on August 19, 2020.
 - Unanimously approved.
- **Discussion and vote on revised recommendation(s) from the Executive Committee to the Board on next steps in name change.**
 - Now that we have received and reviewed the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee, we are prepared to make a recommendation that includes all information.
 - Andy noted that if the membership is polled about more than one possible new name, it will then be necessary to poll the membership a second time so that they may vote or ratify the eventual new name chosen by the Board. His understanding is that the membership must vote yes or no to amend the Articles of Incorporation with the new name.
 - Lynn supported a scenario in which the EC chooses a name and recommends it to the Board of Trustees, the Board discusses and votes on that recommendation, and then membership ratifies the name voted by the Board.

- Susan Ackerman moved, Joe Seger seconded:
- The Executive Committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that the organization retain the acronym ASOR, and that it be put out to the membership for a vote whether ASOR should stand for The American Schools of Overseas Research or The American Society of Overseas Research.
- 9 in favor, 1 opposed (Dodd), 0 abstentions

The meeting adjourned 3:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann-Marie Knoblauch