



ASOR Board of Trustees Spring Meeting
May 3, 2025, 1:30–4:30pm EDT
May 4, 2025, 9:00am–12:30pm EDT
The Residence Inn, Alexandria, VA, King Meeting Room, 2nd Floor

Present: Solange Ashby, Andrea Berlin, Emily Miller Bonney, Sarah Costello, Helen Dixon, Lynn Swartz Dodd, Jane DeRose Evans, Sheldon Fox, Kate Grossman, Emily Hammer, Sharon Herbert, Rick St. Hilaire, Don Martin, Carol Meyers, Eric Meyers, Bob Mullins, Kiersten Neumann, Chuck, Ann Sahlman, Sarah Scott, Jason Ur, Andy Vaughn

Absent: Lisa Ackerman, Alex Brooks, Teddy Burgh, Eric Cline, Michael Hasel, Mark Lanier, Alex MacAllister, Andrew Moelis, Joe Seger, Nancy Serwint

Guest: Marta Ostovich

Saturday, May 3, 1:30–4:30pm

1:30–1:35 Welcome, approval of minutes, approval of agenda, etc. (SF)

Announcement that EC minutes removed for revisions and will be re-posted.

Motion to approve; Carol
Emily Seconded

Minor edits were recommended. No requests to read, so motion to approve was unanimously approved.

Topic 1 Financial matters (EB, AV, LD, KN, SH)

1:35-2:00 The financial climate and the status of ASOR's current and potential grants (AV)

Presentation of how federal changes have been affecting ASOR grants; some paused but others were finished. Current budget presented, and discussed as being cautiously optimistic, but not so much as previous year's. Some continuing staff time billed to surplus rather than grants. Details about specific grants was discussed. ASOR's path forward is to use surplus to cover deficit rather than stop the work; we are able to align our work with government mandates. News about paused grants might come the following week. Discussion about what the current Administration wants in terms of grants.

ASOR's staff was thanked for the work being done to make the pivots that are necessary. Discussion about mission creep but that ASOR is developing tools and training opportunities that

are applicable in other areas such as Syria.

2:00-2:45 Current and projected budgets (AV, EB)

Report included highlights such as forthcoming expected gifts, federal grant situation and impact of stock market activity. Overall ASOR should see positive outcomes; this and engagement with new projects provide opportunity to attract new donors. Noted that the proposed budget indicates the use of some reserves although that might not be necessary.

Motion brought forward to approve the budget by Finance Committee

Kate seconded.

Approved unanimously

Noted that our investments have been performing above most of our peers in the top quartile. This is without paying an investment firm and is a good selling point for potential donors. The AD, as well as committee members (volunteers) were thanked for their work.

2:45-3:00 Compliance of donor designated endowments with federal executive orders (AV)

Presentation of current donor programs in light of legal cases and use of donations. Further discussion of non-discrimination policies and EOs regarding the BIPOC Scholars programs. It was noted that the EC discussed that the BIPOC endowment does not have documented language that had been voted on. While there is no board resolution on it, it was suggested that it would be good to discuss with the Strange family. It was shared that the grants were awarded through the normal process this year, before the BIPOC program was put on pause.

3:00-3:15 BREAK

3:15-3:30 Development—the 2025 campaign and the 125th celebration (LD, SF, KN)

Numbers for the 2025 campaign and 125th celebration have not yet met their goals. Thanks all who have made gifts, commitments, so far. All are invited to contribute. ASOR's new work and positive growth are selling points for donors. Opportunities we can all consider included legacy giving or scholarship funds. Generous ASOR support for new staff and FOA webinars are things that are visibly sharable.

Details regarding the 125th celebration included committee members, as well as the date and location (Saturday 11/27 7 PM at the Hilton). It will be a celebration – not gala or fundraising endeavor. Full price tickets will be \$100 for sit down dinner and events. Fundraising and sponsorships will support tickets for others. Activities (speaker, reflections, videos, music) are being planned and responsibilities allocated. EC discussed communications and the intent to address the need for Saturday overnight hotel space. Sponsorships were discussed and feedback was invited. Points included table capacity, SBL overlap, online participation, crowdsourcing memories and member experiences to share at the event.

3:30-3:45 FOA fundraising activities—tours and webinars. See posted staff reports (SH)

FOA activities were presented and the main goal of outreach and fundraising was discussed; plans for better integration with committee structure was noted. Plans for potential tours to Israel and Cyprus were discussed. Points discussed included audience, other locations (Jordan, N. Africa, Turkey, Egypt), marketing, and other benefits and opportunities.

Topic 2 Governance items (SH)

3:45-3:50 Election of new Committee Chairs

Note that the new procedure is Board need only approve committee chairs. When term ends, the

committee is polled and suggests an individual to the nominating committee. It then goes to EC then full Board.

EC brought the motion. Lynn seconded. Unanimous

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee to appoint Fred Winter to an initial three-year term as Chair of the Cultural Heritage Committee (January 1, 2025–December 31, 2027).

EC brings the motion. Carol seconded. Unanimous

Question: who co-chairs? Vanessa Workman.

BE IT RESOLVED that Board accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee to appoint to appoint Luiza Osorio G. Silva to an initial three-year term as Co-Chair of the Early Career Committee (January 1, 2025-December 31, 2027).

Andrea seconded. Unanimous

BE IT RESOLVED that Board accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee to appoint Laura Mazow Associate Chair of the Membership and Outreach Committee.

3:50-4:10 Proposed Bylaws Changes: Changing the name of the DEI Committee

Report regarding the committee's desire to think about the name change. Committee wanted to move forward with the change: many early career and untenured members did not want DEI on their dossiers despite their commitment to the work. Committee came up with the name, there was further discussion by EC. Discussion about the mission of Carolyn's wishes. Point made about the inclusion members' names on the website. Point of clarification that ASOR is not backing away from this work. While ASOR will not make statements about this, there may be a Town Hall in May. Discussion about these actions and any language change in relation to the Executive Orders and ASOR's viability for government grants while still maintaining ASOR's priorities.

Section 5.3. Standing ASOR Committees. The Standing ASOR Committees are (and shall be) created by the Board of Trustees to carry out ASOR's mission and initiatives. The Standing ASOR Committees are, without limitation, the Committee on Archaeological Research and Policy, Cultural Heritage Committee, Early Career Scholars Committee, Honors and Awards Committee, Membership and Outreach Committee, Program Committee, Publications Committee, and **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee** the Carolyn Midkiff Strange Committee on Growth, Innovation, and Visibility. The Board shall have the authority to create and appoint such other Standing ASOR Committees as the Board deems necessary as ASOR's mission and initiatives evolve and expand. The Board also has the authority to disband any Standing ASOR Committee the Board determines no longer meaningfully contributes to ASOR's mission and initiatives. All members of the Standing ASOR Committees must be individual members of ASOR.

Section 5.3.9. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. The Carolyn Midkiff Strange Committee on Growth, Innovation, and Visibility (GIV) Composition: At least six (6) ASOR members, at least two (2) appointed each year for three-year terms President as a voting ex-officio member Executive Director as a non-voting ex-officio member Function: 1. Advise the President, the Executive Director, the Board, and other ASOR leaders regarding initiatives ASOR might undertake either individually or jointly with other bodies to reach out to and include diverse

communities in ASOR activities in meaningful and sustainable ways. In North America, these communities include, but are not limited to, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other underserved groups 2. Overseas, ASOR will focus on serving its international membership and working with local archaeological communities to promote public engagement in ASOR activities.

Motion to amend the language in the bylaws Section 5.3.9 function 1 (Sarah K. Costello)

‘Advise the President, the Executive Director, the Board, and other ASOR leaders regarding initiatives ASOR might undertake either individually or jointly with other bodies to reach out to and include all communities. 2. Overseas, ASOR will focus on serving its international membership and working with local archaeological communities to promote public engagement in ASOR activities.’

Unanimously approved.

4:10-4:15 Trustee Mentorship and the Importance of Being an ASOR Trustee (AS)

Report regarding the desire to give new Trustees opportunity to do more work and be better on-boarded. Recommendation to provide mentorship and put together a document of what is expected of trustees, in terms of involvement and financial goals. Board provided positive feedback. Board concurred the document and plan to be a good idea and NC would provide mentorship while the EC would provide orientation. More work to be done on this, and some communication between the EC and NC was recommended because there are 2 sets of Trustees (member-elected vs. board elected).

Motion made (by Emily) to BOT to adopt the policy from Ann Sahlman to support and mentor new trustees and for the Trustees Nominating Committee to oversee the process and the ASOR Officers to run an orientation session.

Discussion about the importance of this when a trustee does not already know some folks on the board, and that this would be a personal process.

Seconded by Jane
Unanimously approved.

Discussion of renovations to Strange Center (AV)

ED reviewed the architect’s plans, emphasizing priorities for classroom space, moveable furniture, and ADA accessible work space. Noted that construction is being moved out a few months. Ideally the proposed budget will suffice.

4:15-4:30 Report on ED Annual Review (SH)

Reported that the review was very positive and well-deserved. Recommendation for the reappointment was shared with EC and approved. Congratulations to ED.

Adjourned 4:26

Sunday May 4, 9:00am–12:30pm Welcome (SF)

Note the primary item for the morning would be the Strategic Plan.

Topic 1 Governance continued (SH)

9:00-9:15 Proposal from DEI/GIV to study and potentially revise ASOR codes of conduct

Presentation of context: overall professional code that took 3 years to develop around 2017, and other work from various ad-hoc groups at the request of the president. Annual Meeting behavioral code (on issues such as harassment, bullying, etc.) and a potential fieldwork code (committee on Arch policy) are items that came up. Noted that current proposal is not from EC, but DEI/GIV which presented at CCC. While they are asking permission, they already have clear recommendations.

Continued presentation: the proposal is good work. Question to Board: does it want to move forward with this? Discussion and questions emphasized a number of points. These included issues of privacy, duplication of previous work, role of PC in such matters, Title IX, fiduciary concerns, CAP's role, and SP as place for further consideration. President and Arlene will communicate to the committee that they are available to hear members' concerns. Additionally, President charged with responding to the concerns and looking at the mentoring options.

9:15-9:30 Statements revisited, a continuing challenge (SH)

President reported that statements continue to be a challenging topic; ASOR does not make statements, but signed on to two. ED will share with Board.

9:30-9:45 New guidelines for PC on contested territories (appendix D to PC Guidelines, also see below) (SF and SH)

Reported that EC had detailed discussion on this topic in February; minutes were removed and will be further edited. PC brought this to the EC. Correct version re-posted on agenda and distributed on paper.

Discussion about the guidelines; history of the request, memos, and presentation in CCC meeting. PC needed, at the time (urgent, as they were reviewing proposals), guidelines – it is not a policy.

Questions about the italicized portion, and origin of the wording around 'competent.' Further discussion about the benefit of specific language. Question on whether this would eventually become a policy update. Discussion about how this relates to salvage work and materials that may or may not be presented at AM. Discussion about how to best support and collaborate with colleagues and scholars as individuals.

Motion to add link to ASOR conduct policies from the guidelines (Eric)
Andrea seconded.

Further discussion on the link – legal counsel noted that flexibility and ambiguity is a good thing. Discussion on dynamic situation as related to the way different parties (US, UN, ASOR) might define 'competent authorities.' Further discussion about whether to link to outside authority or to our own internal document.

Break.

11:00

Motion restated:

Eric made the motion:

To add quotation marks to competent national authority with a [hyperlink to 3e item 7](#) that Helen will read out loud which is part of our adopted conduct policy:

“they may consider for inclusion in ASOR publications and presentation venues research that has been undertaken in occupied territory and its contiguous waters as defined by customary

international law when that research is required strictly to safeguard, record or preserve the archaeological heritage of the occupied territory, or when permission of the competent national authorities of the occupied territory has been obtained by the researcher.”

It was noted that this is in line with the EC decision from Feb that it’s following current policy, and that there has been no pushback since the adoption of this policy.

Andrea – seconded

One opposed 3 abstentions. Motion carries by majority

Guidelines:

ASOR is committed to the dissemination of scholarly knowledge about the broad geographic and chronological parameters of the regions in which ASOR members work and these include occupied territories. These areas include territories in which there may be at any given moment a dispute about which national entity or population properly has political control. Scholars affiliated with institutions established in these territories without the cooperation of the [competent national authority](#) can produce work that would be of interest to ASOR members or the wider public. If ASOR accepts (based on its scholarly review), sessions, papers, posters, or other presentation formats for the Annual Meeting from scholars associated with these institutions, it will not publish in the program those institutional affiliation(s) of the presenters or organizers whose proposals it accepts. Presenters may not include any such references to those institutional affiliation(s) in their visual, oral, or written materials.

Topic 2—Preparation and planning for the next strategic plan (SH, JDE)

The Task Force

Report that work will over the summer, and models will be reviewed (ACLS, etc.) Task force plans to have a robust outline for Nov that will tell us where we are headed, with draft for next spring.

Co-Chairs: Jane DeRose Evans and Sharon Herbert

Members: Sheldon Fox, Andy Vaughn, Emily Miller Bonney, Bianca Hand, Petra Creamer, Janon Ur, Kevin McGeough, Julia Troche, Patricia Fall, Yorke Rowan, Gary Arbino, Debora Heard.

The purpose(s) and format of a strategic plan, distinguishing between actions and aspirations. The relation of the plan to our mission statement Should our strategic plan be short and punchy or a “state of the union” laundry list? See the posted new plans from the ACLS, the Art Historical Association, and the British Educational Research Association.

11:00-11:30 Breakout session on plan

11:30-12:00 Reports from breakout groups

Notes from each group will be shared with Secretary, and then with Task Force. Groups’ points below:

Group 1: Research/Education

- *Research:* why a lot of people joined, recenter strategic plan on scholarship Archaeological fieldwork and dissemination occupies most of members, least foregrounded in public communications. 3 pillars: 1. Support (fieldwork scholarships), 2. Inst. Infrastructure, 3. Dissemination. Maybe need more work on institutional infrastructure. Communication between dig directors. Databases? Staff as central point for collaborating and sharing information. Repository of research tools. Monthly zoom calls (recorded). Send message that ASOR is trying to help you be a

better scholar; help you along the way.

- *Education*: K-12 education (currently have some resources online), need more of these (ASOR members who have done this) draw on their expertise. Tab on the website for Educators, Tab for Field Professionals? Best practices: “What’s it really like to be an archaeologist?” videos. How we can contribute to ANE and Med world in 21st century with 21st century tools? Find a way to help young students understand why research matters and how we make knowledge. Dissertation prize?
- Many engaged in teaching: challenges: AI, declining interest in humanities, difficult dialogues. Shared challenges: space to talk about these challenges. Could be monthly meeting. Workshop. Good to do it at the AM. Noon time sessions-roundtables? Itemize these shared challenges. Figure out where it helps within the AM framework.
- ASOR needs to find ways to support educators and researchers. Accommodating and recognizing breadth and expertise (different career paths/types of support provided/types of webinars).
- Session on other career paths. Future of universities-careers. Reference list of people: career list. Skills: project management training
- Acknowledge and highlight diverse career paths of our members. Encourage and support them as they pursue these paths.
- Institutional Infrastructure in support for research, education, and professional development.

Group 2: The World’s Heritage

- ASOR’s role in the World’s Heritage – Cultural Heritage Initiatives make us a premier advocate for CH globally.
- Need for ASOR to be more involved in the CPA MOUs
- Continued engagement from field directors to liaise with local communities and governments.
- Questions about CHI grants outside of what the membership is interested in.
- Need for more educator resources on the CHI missions.
- Better promote the development of the tools that people are using
- Question: Is protecting and preserving the world’s cultural heritage is to the benefit of the US government.
- Affiliations with civil society organizations globally (as came up at the November meeting)
- Identity work: Members feel like there are two different ASORs (core areas and new areas)
- Thinking about how the strategic plan should be address asor’s need to be nimble as US policy changes over the coming years.

Group 3: ASOR’s place in the world

- A goal of the organization for years was to be the authoritative (turn-to?) scholarly body for the Middle East & wider Mediterranean;
- Mission Statement refers to Near East and wider Mediterranean
- Ancient trade routes could expand that remit, e.g. Sahel, Caucuses
- Challenging times might call for more expansive view than narrow
- Chronology: antiquity to the present; more prehistory, including human origins?
- How do studies of current populations and heritage connect to our traditional practice of studying the past
- Relevance of/to current populations in the region? Make our studies multi-directional in chronology and geography
- What value does this work have? By better understanding the past, we better understand ourselves and plan for a better future
- The point was raised of the value of a very minimal strategic plan, to keep us out of the crosshairs of bad actors a short blurb, a high-level description

Group 4: Prepare for the future

- *VALUES* Articulate clear values or core principles to define ASOR and guide policy and decision making (e.g. support for academic freedom; curiosity)

- FUNDING Provision ASOR with diverse sources to support success and sustainability in advancing ASOR's goals/vision/mission in encouraging research and public understanding of the NE and wider Med for all time.
- SUSTAINABILITY Work toward sustainability in ASOR events, operations, and programs
- STEWARDSHIP Support & use ASOR's assets responsibly (funds, real estate, reputation)
- RELEVANCE Mentor members for relevance in their professional lives in the face of emerging challenges and opportunities (including translating transferable skills)
- ENGAGEMENT Enhance our engagement of broader communities (e.g. institutional, various publics, international)
- SUCCESSION Have an established leadership succession plan

Topic 3 Matters Arising (SH)

Nothing else was added to agenda. Chair thanked the Board, and announced support for student tickets at 125th celebration have already been promised.

Board was reminded of FOA business card initiative. ED will work on more 125th outreach for support. Board was reminded of opportunities for their further support of ASOR through legacy and other gifts.

ADJOURN 12:13

