



ASOR Board of Trustees Spring Meeting
May 4, 2024, 1:30–4:30pm EDT
May 5, 2024, 8:30am–12:30pm EDT
The Residence Inn, Alexandria, VA
King Meeting Room, 2nd Floor

Saturday, May 4, 1:30–4:30pm

Present: Susan Ackerman, Solange Ashby, Alex Brooks, Teddy Burgh, Emily Miller Bonney, Eric Cline, Sarah Costello, Lynn Swartz Dodd, Jane DeRose Evans, Sheldon Fox, Kate Grossman, Randy Helm, Sharon Herbert, Ann-Marie Knoblauch, Carol Meyers, Eric Meyers, Bob Mullins, Kiersten Neumann, B.W. Ruffner, Rick St. Hilaire, Carolyn Strange, Jason Ur, Andy Vaughn

Guest: Marta Ostovich

Absent: Lisa Ackerman, Margaret Cohen, Erin Darby, J.P. Dessel, Mark Lanier, Alex MacAllister, Ann Sahlman, Nancy Serwint

1:30–1:35 Welcome, approval of minutes, approval of agenda, etc. (Sheldon)
1:32PM call to order, introductions

Carol moved. Emily seconded. The minutes from the November 2023 Board meeting and the agenda were unanimously approved.

1:37 Brief financial report (Emily and Andy)

Emily stated that ASOR has more than \$7 million in assets but presented a budget for FY25 that will require the use of prior year surplus. More discussion will take place tomorrow.

1:40 Election of Proposed Board Elected Trustees (SCH)

Sharon reported on the search for new trustees.

1. Donald Martin

Sarah seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees elects Donald Martin to the Board of Trustees to a replacement term for the class of 2026 (May 5, 2024 to December 31, 2026).
Unanimously approved.

2. Andrew Moelis

Bob seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees elects Andrew Moelis to the Board of Trustees to a replacement term for the class of 2025 (May 5, 2024 to December 31, 2025).
Unanimously approved.

1:45 CCC report (Chuck)

Chuck reported on the healthy state of committees.

New Co-Chairs for COP—CVs posted

1. Eric Kansa
2. Sarah Kansa

Carol seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the ASOR Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee and on the recommendation of the Committee on Publications appoints Eric Kansa and Sarah Kansa to an initial 3-year term as co-chairs of the Committee on Publications, January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2027.
Unanimously approved.

New Co-Chair for Honors & Awards

1. Mahri Leonard-Fleckman

Kate seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the ASOR Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee and appoints Mahri S. Leonard-Fleckman to an initial 3-year term as the co-chair of ASOR's Honors and Awards Committee, January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2026.
Unanimously approved.

NEA editor search

Chuck noted that the advertisement has been posted and invited people to nominate.

Publication matters arising

1. COP recommends ASOR adopt the Digital Media Policies (document posted).
(see below)
2. COP recommends that William Caraher's term as Editor of the *Annual of ASOR* be extended an extra year, until December 31, 2025.

Sarah seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and on recommendation of the Committee on Publications extends William Caraher's term as Editor of the *Annual of ASOR* an extra year, until December 31, 2025.

Unanimously approved.

3. COP recommends that the ASOR Board establish the "LCP Handbooks Series"
(mission statement of series posted).

Chuck reported that there are already several volumes ready to go. Sharon noted that no new resources are needed.

Randy seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and on recommendation of the Committee on Publications establishes the "LCP Handbook Series".

Unanimously approved.

Return to Item 1 (digital media policy, from above).

Sharon reported that COP has been working on digital media policy for a number of years. While it's a good document, the CCC has not had time to fully discuss it.

Eric Cline joined

Motions from the Executive Committee meeting were read to the Board:

COP moved. No second.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Committee approve the recommendation of the Committee on Publications to adopt the Proposed Digital Media Policies for Publications

Susan moved. Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee receives the Proposed Digital Media Policies for Publications and commends the Committee on Publications for their hard work on a complex issue. The Executive Committee now encourages the committee to confer in the CCC about next steps and priorities for implementation.

Unanimously approved.

2:00 Governance Committee Report, actions arising. (Emily and Sharon)

Topic 1. Motion coming from Executive Committee regarding recommendations for Presidential term.

Emily stated that this motion is motivated by the sense that a 6-year term for president and plus the 6-year past-president term was discouraging for younger folks who want to serve as President. Comparable organizations have a past president for a year, and the past president remains available for support afterwards. It is also suggested that a president elect be selected in the penultimate year of a president's term to shadow the president during their final year.

There was discussion of what a presidential term should look like. Some of the issues discussed include:

- Shorter terms appealing to a broader audience
- How changing terms will affect institutional knowledge
- The current term structure is restrictive in terms of who can serve (burden of service).
- Possibility of two 2-year terms (4 years total of service), but this would mean someone could serve a single, 2-year term (too short).
- How ASOR leadership roles flow into the presidency and the process for finding a new president.
- The relationship between the president and Executive Director.
- Timing of when the president needs to decide if they are seeking a second term.

There is no motion from the Executive Committee, as they want input from all trustees. If a change is approved, it would be followed with bylaw changes to be voted on in November.

Jane moved. Jason seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the ASOR Board of Trustees approves changes to the bylaws that would limit the term of the past president to one year.

Unanimously approved.

There was further discussion of whether the duration of presidential terms needs to be changed if things are going well. ASOR has been lucky to have stable leadership and long-serving presidents.

Jane moved. Chuck seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the ASOR Board of Trustees approves changes to the bylaws to introduce an office of president-elect to serve during the final year of the current president's term.

Unanimously approved.

Sheldon pointed out that it still has not been decided whether the president's term is a 3-year renewable or non-renewable term. There was more discussion followed by a consensus to keep a 3-year renewable term, with the idea that people can elect to serve

only one term. Kate noted a possible bias for a candidate who expresses interest in serving more than one term.

Topic 2. Bylaw changes.

Kate seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that on recommendation of the Executive Committee, the ASOR Board of Trustees approves the changes as distributed for the ASOR by-laws, article 5 (committees) with the typo corrected in sections 5.3.6.
Unanimously approved.

Sharon and Emily reorganized the committee sections. There are two substantive changes:

- Development committee members can serve more than two terms.
- The Personnel committee has been expanded to include Publications and CH chairs.

Randy seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that on recommendation of the Executive Committee, the ASOR Board of Trustees approves the changes as distributed for the ASOR bylaws, articles 2.5 and 8.1.

Approved with one abstention (Eric).

(This removes ACOR from the bylaws.)

Break 3:15-3:30

3:30–4:15 Public statements discussion (Sharon)

Sharon noted that while these topics were on the November agenda, but the timing was not right for discussing them then. This comes from the context of ASOR leadership being asked to make statements.

Topic 1: 3:30–4:00 Should ASOR be making political statements and if so what kind and how?

In addition to the general principles, this touches on several items of current business next before us: Topic 2.1 Contested territories language report; Topic 2. 2 Land acknowledgement statements.

The overlapping, sometimes conflicting, issues involved, all much in recent news: One--freedom of speech/academic freedom (but hate speech??); Two—the expectation that a learned society provide a safe place for all voices to be heard in civil discourse at a time when a number of our members all calling for social activism from the organization.

One possible answer briefly discussed at November Board—Adopting something like the University of Chicago Kalven report. Below links to info on Kalven report: the report itself; 2 recent commentaries on it, both by conservative/libertarian entities; a YouTube video of a recent UC panel on the topic. The report and articles are mercifully short. The video runs an hour and a half. Sharon can summarize. There is also a link to the Princeton “policy of restraint.”

https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/KalvenRprt_0.pdf
<https://www.thefire.org/news/wisdom-university-chicagos-kalven-report>
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelnietzel/2023/12/26/the-kalven-report-and-the-limits-of-university-neutrality/?sh=674cd7fc3bf0>
<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/news/video-the-kalven-report-and-freedom-of-expression/>

another approach: Princeton restraint policy

<https://paw.princeton.edu/article/princeton-president-christopher-eisgruber-tradition-institutional-restraint>

If not statements, actions?

There was discussion of how the Kalven report is useful for many universities, but ASOR is not a university. The following points were discussed:

- Usefulness of a policy that calls for institutional neutrality and restraint.
- ASOR’s diversity both in terms of geography and members makes speaking with a single voice difficult.
- ASOR remaining apolitical, and whether some of ASOR federally-funded grant work is inherently political.
- Strong reactions to ASOR statements that have been made.
- Current ASOR policy: question left to president and leadership, who will not make a statement unless it directly pertains to our mission – although it was admitted that this is a subjective judgment
- Members do want ASOR to respond and we want members to know that they are heard.
- The origins of the Kalven report and how it has been used to dismantle DEI in some cases.

Sharon mentioned ASOR’s scholarships for archaeology students from Gaza. We should focus on positive actions. Nevertheless, there has been pushback, especially queries asking why we are not helping students studying archaeology in Israel. Sarah argued that we need to meet such complaints with as willingness to take action: “what need do you have that you feel is not being supported?”

Topics 2.1 and 2.2 (4:00–4:15) Contested territories language report and Land acknowledgement statements. (reports posted)

2.1 Contested territories: should we adopt language suggested by ad hoc committee and accept necessary posted by-law changes?

The Ad Hoc Committee on Contested Territories came up with a small number of changes that will not do all of what the COP and the PC needed. There is no recommendation from the EC. Sharon asked whether we should adopt the changes to the Policy on Professional Conduct suggested by the Ad Hoc Committee.

There was discussion over whether the proposed language would be helpful for the committees that requested it (PC and COP), and the consensus was that it would not.

The consensus was that the Board is not ready to adopt this language and more discussion is needed.

2.2 Land acknowledgments: A. Opening statement for each annual meeting. Supplementary materials on AM website. B. Statement for the Strange Center. Postponed until tomorrow.

Executive Director Annual Review: Reports from Personnel Committee and EC (4:15–4:30 Sharon)

The Board entered Executive Session at 4:38.

The Board left Executive Session at 4:43.

Adjourn at 4:43 to a reception at Strange Center, 209 Commerce St., followed by dinner.

Sunday May 5, 8:30am–12:30pm

Present: Susan Ackerman, Solange Ashby, Alex Brooks, Teddy Burgh, Eric Cline, Sarah Costello, Lynn Swartz Dodd, Jane DeRose Evans, Sheldon Fox, Kate Grossman, Sharon Herbert, Chuck Jones, Rick St. Hilaire, Randy Helm, Ann-Marie Knoblauch, Carol Meyers, Eric Meyers, Emily Miller Bonney, Bob Mullins, Kiersten Neumann, B.W. Ruffner, Carolyn Strange, Andy Vaughn

Guest: Marta Ostovich

Absent: Jason Ur, Lisa Ackerman, Margaret Cohen, Erin Darby, J.P. Dessel, Mark Lanier, Alex MacAllister, Ann Sahlman, Nancy Serwint

8:32 Call to order

8:33 Budget and Finance Committee Report and Actions (Emily and Andy)

1. Review of Documents and Reports
 - a. Budget to Forecast (FY 2024) and Budget for FY 25 (Exhibit A)
 - b. ASOR Net Investment Spreadsheet (to March 31st). (Exhibit C)

- c. Analysis of ASOR self-managed funds through 3/31/24 (Exhibit D)

Emily stated that ASOR has around \$7 million in assets, and endowments grew by 12%. Some less-favorable areas include the cost of the Annual Meeting, with including reduced membership and registration revenue, and webinars. The cost of book publishing is also challenging.

2. Action Items

- a. Act on recommendation from Finance Comm. for FY25 Budget (see Exhibits A and B)

Eric seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, approves the proposed FY25 budget.

Approved, with one abstention (Randy).

- b. Approve language for Shepard Endowment (Exhibit E)

Randy seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, approves the language for the Shepherd Endowment (Exhibit E)

Unanimously approved.

Sheldon and Sharon noted the success of this grant program and the growth of endowment.

- c. Approve language for M. E. Strange Endowment (Exhibit F)

Sheldon described this endowment for outreach, which supports new programming focused on diaspora heritage. The EC recommends accepting the endowment and has a second recommendation regarding the development of an implementation plan.

Eric seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, approves the language for the M. E. Strange Endowment (Exhibit F)

Approved with two abstentions.

Eric seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Board accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee and requests that the President and the Executive Director, in consultation with relevant committee(s), develop an implementation plan for the M. E. Strange

Endowment (Exhibit F), to be presented to and considered by the Board at its November 2024 meeting.
Unanimously approved.

The was discussion of what this programming might look like.

- d. Approve Amended Travel and Entertainment Policy (Exhibit H)
- e. Approve Amended Records Retention Policy (Exhibit I).
- f. Approve Amended Privacy Policy (Exhibit J)
- g. Approve Investment and Spending Policy (Exhibit K)

All of these are consolidated as a single action item.

Kiersten seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, approves the amended Travel and Entertainment Policy (Exhibit H); the amended Records Retention Policy (Exhibit I); the amended Privacy Policy (Exhibit J); and the amended Investment and Spending Policy (Exhibit K)
Unanimously approved.

- 3. For Information (not an action item): The Finance Committee reviewed and approved the updated "ASOR Policies and Procedures" document. Emily and Andy can answer questions. (Exhibit G)

8:57am: Discussion of Land Acknowledgments (tabled from yesterday)

A. Opening statement for each annual meeting. Supplementary materials on AM website. B. Statement for Strange Center.

Sharon presented the DEI recommendations on land acknowledgment. There were concerns over the performative nature of land acknowledgment. Carolyn noted the hard work of the DEI Committee.

Kiersten reported on discussions between the PC and the DEI Committee. There is a desire to include information on accessibility, family resources, land acknowledgments for Boston, and a history of the area on the Annual Meeting website.

Sheldon pointed to the EC minutes from February which include a motion to thank the committee for their report and a recommendation to consider educational materials for AM and Strange Center.

There was discussion of fossilizing past communities and only showing a single community in these types of statements. There are also issues of land ownership. Further discussion ensued on the performative nature of statements.

There was a discussion of educational materials for attendees, including city tours that could be accessed via QR codes, and actions that attendees could take.

There was consensus on offering educational materials which present longer, more complex histories of an area, though there was some concern about overburdening the DEI Committee with this task.

Ann-Marie read the recommendations from the February retreat:

Jane moved Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Committee thanks the DEI Committee for their suggested policy on land acknowledgements for ASOR and receives their report.

Unanimously approved.

Lynn moved. Kate seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Committee recommends that the Board consider charging the DEI committee with developing educational materials that inform members about the indigenous and other histories of the land on which the annual meeting takes place and ASOR's James F. Strange Center is located.

Unanimously approved.

(Alex Brooks joined)

Sharon noted that it is not just a concern of the DEI Committee—it also concerns the PC, and maybe also COM.

Lynn moved. Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED that upon recommendation of the EC, the Board charges relevant ASOR committees with identifying and sharing educational materials that inform members about the indigenous and other histories of the land of the annual meeting takes place and ASOR's James F. Strange Center is located.

Unanimously approved.

9:35 Development Report and ramifications on office organization (Lynn and Sharon)

Lynn thanked members of the Development Committee and the Trustees.

- March Madness: \$4750 raised from 23 donations for fieldwork scholarships.
- Annual Fund: \$125K goal to help run organization of ASOR. At the start of the weekend, we were at \$95K. Additional gifts have come in over the weekend. Trustee participation is at 100%
- ASOR 2025: \$5 mill goal, we are at \$3.7 million of the \$5 million goal.
 - Continue to think about how we can contribute.

Sheldon added his thanks. There is around \$900,000 in quantified legacy gifts, and over 2/3 of trustees have declared their intent. Marta has printed pledge forms if anyone needs one.

9:45am Report on Office Forums Conducted in April 2024 (SF/EMB)

Emily stated that one of the outcomes of the February Executive Committee retreat was a desire for better understanding of how ASOR functions as an organization (staff,

committees, etc.). Focus groups were designed to identify possible areas of overlap and any needs or changes to be made. The goal is to hold these focus groups every year.

There were four focus groups:

1. Staff
2. Editors
3. Committee Chairs who had more involvement with staff
4. Committee Chairs who had less involvement

Sheldon and Emily held an hour-long meeting with each group for confidential discussion. Participants were very glad to have the opportunity to talk. People were asked to describe their role. The report draws from the comments received. Sheldon highlighted comments that kept coming up.

Today's conversations focus on what you take away when you look at the report. What patterns do you see?

Sheldon asked the break-out groups to consider whether ASOR has what it needs to move forward. ASOR is changing rapidly and needs to make sure that we have the staff to support it.

10:00-10:20am BREAK

10:20-11:00 Breakout Sessions on Future Office Staffing and Organization

11:08–12:00 Reporting and Discussion of Breakout Sessions (SCH)

Group: Susan, Emily, Ann-Marie, Eric C., Jane, Teddy, Carol

Ann-Marie reported on the group's conversation.

- Marta serves as the default person for everything in the office and is doing too much. Her position could be changed to better reflect what she does.
- Need for professional communications and marketing manager.
- Accounting: look at Marta's and Andy's time. Hours towards ASOR's core mission? Hours toward "mission creep"? How does this affect our identity and mission?
- ASOR's growth: where are we heading?

Group: Rick, Chuck, Alex, B.W., Sarah, Randy, Sheldon

Sarah stated that the group noticed a need for more communications.

- Opportunities for member involvement and how these are communicated
- Publications contact person on staff
- Records? Compliance and risk management? Membership and privacy roles? Who on the staff takes responsibility for this?
- New auditing team or firm as best practice

- Regular program of Board evaluation, with Board evaluating itself. Increase volunteer involvement to help staff? Reward volunteers with discount on membership, letter acknowledging service

Susan asked what was meant by Board evaluations, and Randy replied that this is an effort by the Board to determine whether it is meeting expectations and whether it can function better.

Group: Eric M., Carolyn, Lynn, Kate, Solange, Kiersten, Lynn, Sharon

Kate called for Board evaluation in terms of what the staff needs. The focus groups helped with this.

- How to manage ASOR outreach and digital offerings of ASOR
- Need for a communications manager/PR
- Increase outreach for FOA, access in Middle East and N Africa
- Discussion of AM and support for digital aspects and communications
- What can Board do to provide office with what they need rather than dictating what the staff does?
- Discussion of Assistant Director position, and building the capacity of office

Sheldon noted that all groups mentioned a communications person and asked Andy to comment on how staff handles communications now. Andy replied that as IT Manager, Jared oversees the website. All other staff are involved in updating the website periodically.

Kiersten noted that having too many people working on communications can lead to disjointed efforts. A communications person would help other staff take this off their plate.

Andy replied that ASOR used to have someone in social media and communications role. Position was not renewed, which was a budgetary decision. He noted ASOR's large numbers of staff compared to other learned societies.

There was more discussion on the state of ASOR communications including the need for a strategy and public-facing communications.

Sheldon thanked everyone for being here as some need to leave early.

There was discussion of risk management, liability, and record retention. Andy noted that a federal grant required an external audit policy and a procedures document. Our cyber-security audit determined that risk was low.

Susan and Kiersten noted the importance of digital communications, especially with the digital portion of the annual meeting. There was a discussion of communications and the digital aspect of the Annual Meeting.

- Need for more staff support
- Press releases about certain events/workshops

- Connections in city to recruit new members.

Emily noted that a communications-marketing person could also help with fundraising.

There was discussion of committee service:

- Many who serve on the committees are junior.
- Decline in session chair interest.
- Opportunities to serve on committees could be more visible on the website.
- Burden of committee service.
- Add check box on each committee's page for people to express interest when they joining as a member?

Lynn, Andy, and the Development Committee are charged with discussing pursuing a grant to support communications and marketing person.

Eric C. and Andy noted that the GW interns have been doing a great job at ASOR and one option is also to offer them class credit.

Carolyn moved to adjourn. Kate seconded.
Adjourned 11:57 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann-Marie Knoblauch, with support from Marta Ostovich