**Minutes 2007**

ASEH Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes

Saturday, March 3, 2007

Baton Rouge

**[attachments are on file at ASEH archives]**

The Meeting was called to order at 12:34 pm.

In attendance:  Kathy Brosnan, Mark Cioc, Peter Coates, Sarah Elkind, Paul Hirt (new member), Nancy Langston, Mark Madison, Carolyn Merchant, Lisa Mighetto, Katherine Morrissey, Steve Pyne, Mart Stewart, Jeffrey Stine, Mark Stoll (new member), Ellen Stroud, Doug Weiner, Melissa Wiedenfeld, and Verena Winiwarter

Guests: Steven Anderson, Craig Colten, Betsy Mendelsohn, Christen Rosen, Paul Sutter, and Jay Taylor

Carolyn Merchant offered a friendly amendment to the 2006 minutes, to reflect the time that Lisa Mighetto had not been in the meeting.  The amendment was accepted and the correction made.

New executive committee members for 2008 were welcomed:  Paul Hirt, Nancy Jacobs, and Mark Stoll.  Paul and Mark were in attendance to observe; Nancy couldn’t make it.

There was a general discussion of on-line voting, which Lisa Mighetto reported to be working well, with about the same percentage of membership voting as with paper ballots.  There were no complaints, and the process was straight-forward.

Betsy Mendelsohn gave a report from the program committee, which led to a discussion of the ideal panel format.  Is it best to have three papers and a comment, or four papers with only audience comment, for example?  Would it help to have clearer guidelines for chairs, so they could better monitor time strict time limits for papers?  How can we best ensure space for audience comment?

Ellen Stroud made a motion to put specific guidelines on time limits in the call for papers.  Discussion followed, and it was determined that any guidelines needed to be flexible enough to accommodate many panel structures.

Sarah Elkind made a motion that the program committee publicize that there must be a half an hour for discussion.  Ellen Stroud seconded.  Paul Hirt offered a friendly amendment that there should be an hour for presentations, with the other half-hour of the panel time devoted to introductions, audience questions, and so forth.  The amendment was accepted, and the motion carried.

Craig Colten and Lisa Mighetto reported that conference attendance and field trip to New Orleans participation was very strong.

Steve Anderson asked for a formal motion of thanks to the local arrangements and program committees.  Jeffrey Stine made the motion, Doug Weiner seconded, and the motion carried enthusiastically.

There was discussion of the difficulty of local fundraising, and how important that job is for the conference and the organization.  Nancy Langston made a motion that new committee on fundraising be formed, including the local arrangements chair or someone they wish to appoint.  Carolyn Merchant seconded the motion, which carried.

Craig Colten and Betsy Mendelsohn left the meeting.

Jay Taylor reported from the publications committee.  Among the accomplishments:  entering an agreement with JSTOR, and incorporating panels on publishing into the conference programs.

Mark Madison gave the treasurer’s report, emphasizing that we need to remain focused on conference income.  There was discussion of newsletter postage, and other ways of possibly using technology to save money.  Nancy Langston moved to put the newsletter online, and Peter Coates seconded.  After discussion, Nancy amended her motion to call for a transition to an electronic newsletter by next year.  The motion passed, with one vote opposed.

Nancy Langston reported on the work of the outreach committee, which had successes in getting NSF funding for special conference sessions and projects.

There was discussion of the organization making a transition to a larger society, how things are being coordinated, and general issues of public relations and member involvement.

At 1:45, the committee members took a brief break, and then reconvened at 2 pm.

In attendance: Steve Anderson, Kathy Brosnan, Mark Cioc, Peter Coates, Sarah Elkind, Paul Hirt, Nancy Langston, Mark Madison, Carolyn Merchant, Lisa Mighetto, Katherine Morrissey, Steve Pyne, Mart Stewart, Jeffrey Stine, Mark Stoll, Ellen Stroud, Paul Sutter, Doug Weiner, Melissa Wiedenfeld, Verena Winiwarter

Tallahassee was discussed as the site for the 2009 conference, and Portland, Oregon, for 2010.  There was also discussion of potential conflicts with the World Congress for Environmental History in 2009, and how many people would be able to attend both conferences.

Mart Stewart moved to accept Tallahassee as a site for 2009.  Peter Coates seconded, and the motion carried.

There was more discussion of the World Congress, in August of 2009, in Copenhagen, and ASEH could best support it.

Doug Weiner motioned that ASEH contribute $1000 to the conference immediately, with the intention of more to follow after a budget for the conference is available.  Nancy seconded, and the motion carried.

At 2:50, Paul Sutter left the meeting.

Melissa Wiedenfeld reported that subscriptions to H-Environment are climbing.  There was discussion of the challenges in working within the H-Net network, particularly with timely book reviews.

Ellen Stroud reported good intentions but little success from the ad-hoc diversity committee formed at the 2006 committee meeting.  There was discussion of creating a standing committee, and of funding travel grants for scholars of limited means.

Conversation then turned to a discussion of a grad student liaison, or a graduate student member of the executive committee.  It was generally agreed that it would be idea, but difficult to figure out how to choose such a liaison.  Funding was also raised as an important issue for such a liaison.  Concerns were raised about this discussion’s relationship to the issues of diversity, and how travel grants were allocated, and to what end.

Carolyn Merchant made a motion to have a graduate student liaison selected from the travel grant recipients.  Peter Coates seconded.  The motion carried, with two votes against.

Discussion then turned to the highest honors awarded by the organization, based on the guidelines of the ad hoc committee (see attachment).

Mark Cioc motioned that the highest awards be awarded every other year; Katherine Morrissey seconded.

Discussion on the nomination process ensued.

Ellen Stroud motioned to have nominations, but not necessarily an award every other year.  Doug Weiner seconded, and the motion carried.

Discussion returned to the diversity committee.  Ellen Stroud motioned for it to become a standing committee, Mart Stewart seconded, and it carried.

Discussion then turned to the organization’s membership in the ACLS, and its benefits.  Lisa let the committee know that she and Doug Weiner were delegates to the ACLS meeting until 2008, but that we would need to select someone to an ACLS delegate along with her after Doug’s term ends in 2008.  Also, she asked who would be willing to help create a pool of reviewers.  Kathy Brosnan expressed interest in reviewing.

At 3:30, the committee took a break, and reconvened at 3:50.

In attendance: Kathy Brosnan, Mark Cioc, Peter Coates, Sarah Elkind, Paul Hirt, Nancy Langston, Mark Madison, Carolyn Merchant, Katherine Morrissey, Steve Pyne, Mart Stewart, Jeffrey Stine, Mark Stoll, Ellen Stroud, Doug Weiner, Melissa Wiedenfeld, Verena Winiwarter

In Lisa Mighetto’s absence, the committee discussed her evaluation.  The mood was of enthusiastic support.

Steve Anderson rejoined the committee at 4 pm.

Verena Winiwarter moved that the committee accept Lisa’s report on her own performance, with commendation, and to have it stored with the financial records of the organization.  Carolyn Merchant seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 4:11, Lisa Mighetto rejoined the meeting.

Discussion then turned to Steve Anderson’s report on the journal, and possible increases in subscription rates.

Doug Wiener moved to approve the recommended increases with the exception of library and student increases.  After more discussion, he withdrew the motion.

Kathy Brosnan moved to accept the increases.  Carolyn Merchant seconded.  The motion carried with one vote against.

Marc Cioc then presented his report on the journal, which was discussed briefly.

Discussion then turned to a how or when the organization should take advocacy positions.

Doug Weiner made a motion that the organization be enabled to take policy positions on professional issues to be drawn up by a committee and put together by the incoming president, with voting of the general membership.  Jeffrey Stine seconded the motion.

Discussion continued, and Doug Weiner accepted as a friendly amendment that polling be used to determine the sense of the organization, and the position outlined by the executive committee.

Katherine Morrissey then pointed to the guidelines for taking positions that had been circulated in a memo prior to the meeting.  Doug Weiner then motioned to accept those guidelines.  Jeffrey Stine seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion then turned to the issue of the EPA closing libraries.  A proposed policy statement in support of keeping materials open to scholars had been circulated before the meeting.  Steve Pyne offered a friendly amendment that the phrase “urge to reprogram 2.5 million” be rephrased:  “devise a method to make all holdings available to the public.”  Carolyn Merchant offered a friendly amendment that the last section begin with “And therefore be it resolved…”  With these additions, the motion passed unanimously, and Nancy was thanked for her hard work.

Christine Rosen was then invited into the meeting to present on green investing.  Ellen Stroud left the meeting briefly, and Katherine Morrisey took minutes.  Ellen Stroud returned before the conclusion of the discussion of green investing.

Discussion then turned to financial planning, and travel grants.  Nancy Langston moved that we cover a particular travel grant even if donations from the expected source doesn’t come through in a particular year, since such grants are such a key component of our efforts.  Carolyn Merchant seconded.  Discussion of the grants continued, and the motion was amended to have the president and Lisa Mighetto decide particular cases.  The motion carried, with one opposed.

Katherine Morrissey made a motion to thank Steve Pyne, everyone seconded, and the motion carried to applause.

The meeting adjourned after 5:30 pm.