

ASOR Executive Committee Meeting
Seminar Room, Duke Center for Jewish Studies
9:00AM – 1:00PM EDT
September 14, 2014

Members present: Susan Ackerman, President; B.W. Ruffner, Chair; Tim Harrison, Past President; Sharon Herbert, Vice President; Richard Coffman, Treasurer; Eric Meyers; Anne-Marie Knoblauch; Andy Vaughn, Executive Director.

Business Items:

1. Meeting called to order at 9:00AM (B.W. Ruffner).
2. Approval of Agenda.

Be it resolved, the Agenda was unanimously approved.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the May Meeting (May 23, 2014).

Be it resolved, the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting from May, 2014 are approved unanimously, as amended. Drop the sentence “of particular note....”

Be it resolved, the new ASOR budget presented by the Treasurer, as revised to include the funds for the Syrian Heritage Initiative, was unanimously approved.

4. Approval of Committee Appointments (Susan Ackerman).

Honors and Awards needs more people to read books and to manage other awards related tasks. The unofficial term of those nominated (the date when they will start contributing to the work of the committee) will be September 15, 2014, while official term begins January 1, 2015, with staggered terms.

Lawson Younger as a member of the Honors and Awards Committee (effective January 1, 2015; term runs through December 31, 2015, with the presumption of a three-year renewal, until December 31, 2018)

Lynn Welton as a member of the Honors and Awards Committee (effective January 1, 2015; term runs through December 31, 2017)

John Kampen as a member of the Honors and Awards Committee
(effective January 1, 2015; term runs through December 31, 2017)

Be it resolved, that the motion made by the Honors and Awards Committee to nominate the three persons listed above for service on that committee be unanimously approved.

A discussion ensued about the nature of the minutes that should be recorded for the meeting from the Finance Committee. Henceforth, the Minutes of the Executive Committee shall include a Treasurer's Précis which shall be provided by the Treasurer.

5. Proposal for New Awards: Honors and Awards Committee

The Honors and Awards committee is seeking to create two new awards.

A discussion about possible named awards ensued. Additionally, the Executive Director clarified ASOR's policy regarding ASOR overhead for award accounts. Once a named funds (e.g. PE McAllister; Carol/Eric Meyers) are fully funded, then the scholarship will be funded through a 5% drawdown. Above this, the ASOR ED may choose to assess a 1% fee to each account, once fully funded, and this overhead charge is a minor amount. For the Harris funds, ASOR is precluded from taking that 1% and, in view of the overhead involved in preparing the accounts for audit, Andy Vaughn encourages ASOR not to make such arrangements in the future.

Regarding the possibility that some of the Honors and Awards might have a purse attached to the prize, Susan Ackerman clarified that ASOR has a non-monetary award structure and, while moving forward we may wish to rethink this, this has been the policy. Susan Ackerman pointed the EC members to the report from the Honors and Awards Committee:

Be it resolved, the Executive Committee unanimously approve the motion from the Honors and Awards committee to create a Popular Book Award and an ASOR Annual Meeting Poster Award.

6. Treasurer's Report (Richard Coffman)

Insert the Treasurer's Financial Report précis, which Richard will provide. The Treasurer pointed out that ASOR is doing very well in comparison with a study published of the investment returned obtained by peer organizations, which is a validation of the soundness of ASOR's existing strategy of diversified assets.

Regarding the Syrian Heritage Initiative, see exhibit C, which requires additions to the budget.

Regarding the removal of funds for the Calvert and Hesi projects, these were sponsored projects that went back to 1968-1971, and which were funded by the Treasury Department through the Smithsonian Institution. Eric and Carol Meyers started their dig with some of these funds. ASOR has been paying auditing fees with no overhead gain from the accounts. Last year, the Hesi project took the funds to the Cobb Institute which is now disbursing them to the project currently underway by Jeff Blakely and Jimmy Hardin.

A discussion of the growth in awards ensued. A clear mission statement for each award category should be written and promulgated, perhaps to augment the text currently on the website, and which includes definition of which body oversees the awards process. Currently, the awards are overseen by a sub-committee of CAP. With the growth in the number of awards, there is a need to recruit additional members to this sub-committee.

The awards are one of ASOR's assets and a reason that people affiliate with ASOR, so we must manage it well. A discussion ensued about ensuring CAP continue as the venue for these awards to be given out, especially in the context of emerging conversations about the character of CAP affiliation going forward, which may change the workload of CAP. Giving of the awards for field work funding is both an important bureaucratic process and also a key mechanism through which CAP policy is applied. This mission is akin to the PC's purview over the Annual Meeting. A suggestion was made that Membership and Outreach may wish to have a member participate in that CAP subcommittee. This topic will be taken up at the next CCC meeting with a follow up report at the November meeting.

7. Other Business. Discussion Items:

- a. Webinar Report (Andy Vaughn). An excellent post-mortem report was written in response to an EC request. Fundamentally, the result is this: we will need to change the product and the price for it to work for us or it will not generate revenue sustainably. Might work to have downloadable lectures that could be bought for a small fee. A positive outcome of the use of the funds given for this endeavor has been the growth of the Friends of ASOR group. Friends of ASOR program produced ANE Today, which has 9000 subscribers to date, roughly, and enabled ASOR to revamp its website. Going forward, visitors now have to register to view materials including a resource page and videos. ASOR's ability to lead in social media was instrumental in success in the cooperative

agreement with the State Department for the Syrian Heritage Initiative. Once ASOR has achieved 50,000 Friends of ASOR, there likely will be a PBS-like effort, perhaps using October as Friends of ASOR month to raise money. Friends of ASOR have been generous in giving modest amounts toward scholarships.

9. Syrian Heritage Initiative (Susan Ackerman, Andy Vaughn)

The Syrian Heritage Initiative began August 4, 2014. See asor-syrianheritage.org where redacted reports submitted weekly are sent to State Dept are posted. According to reports, ASOR has exceeded the US State Dept's expectations thus far. ASOR is submitting a proposal with budget to extend the project to include the northern Iraq areas impacted by ISIS, also known as the territory of ISIL, by Monday 9/15/14. Eric Meyers gave made the comment that this is a seminal moment for ASOR and all present expressed support for this initiative. Lynn Dodd mentioned that through this effort, ASOR is creating new relationships and a profile that will be significant for intellectual, ethical, and instrumental reasons, such as when our next foundational campaign begins.

Susan Ackerman mentioned that this allows our members to answer the query: "how is ASOR saving the world (as a non-profit)?" We uncover and publish and now actively attempt to preserve some of the world's richest cultural heritage, which Tim Harrison concurred is exceptionally important, especially in view of the need to stop illicit trade because both damage to heritage sites and the trade diminishes prospects for a post conflict return to normalcy in which communities reconnect with symbols and locations, religious and otherwise, that enable community rebuilding across and through religious and cultural lines> Tim Harrison shared a September 2, 2014 Op Ed piece with the Executive Committee.

10. Revised draft: Ethics Working Group Guidelines on Professional Conduct (Lynn Swartz Dodd)

A robust conversation about the current form of the policy ensued following an introduction by Lynn Dodd, chair of the Ethics Working Group, which has been engaged in a four-year long process of research and consultation. Of special note is feedback from the committees that want clear guidelines while also allowing "culturally permissible" latitude/interpretation. Issues of particular concern to members have included political concerns in ASOR around issues of occupied territory which prompts its inclusion in the policy; and in ASOR a greater call for latitude on the issue of unprovenanced artifacts (as compared to the AIA, for example). Also, broad support for the advocacy and policy statement components of

the policy points to ASOR member support for the trajectory embodied in the Syrian Heritage Initiative. Also, the provenance issue is partly a generational issue; and also there is some separation along the lines of archaeologist versus epigraphers and historians. A discussion of several cases ensued.

11. Development: Future Plans and Priorities (Ed Wright)

Past campaign exceeded its goal by 30% and this shows enthusiasm for supporting ASOR. There is a need to revisit strategic plan and determine where shall we go next? Strategic plan expires next year – 2015. As part of development, there is a need to reassess strategic plan. Eric Meyers encouraged us to add greater emphasis on advocacy in fundraising challenges going forward. A strategic planning committee needs to be established. Annual drives should continue, but a formation process for the next foundational campaign needs to begin.

Andy Vaughn noted that as part of the Syrian Heritage Initiative, ASOR has agreed to engage in some fundraising for small mitigation projects. ASOR said that we would attempt to double the mitigation projects from the \$25K required by STATE, so ASOR has to raise \$25K.

Meeting adjourned 12:59PM.

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