

**ASOR Executive Committee Meeting and Retreat
Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel (Salon 9)
Philadelphia, PA
October 8-9, 2016**

Business Meeting

Present: Richard Coffman (Chairman), Susan Ackerman (President), Sharon Herbert (Vice President), Chris White (Treasurer), Lynn Swartz Dodd (Secretary); Andrew Vaughan (Executive Director). Eric Meyers and Ann-Marie Knoblauch.

1. **Call to Order.** Chairman Richard Coffman called to order at 9:10AM and issued a proclamation, as follows:

WHEREAS, the Paralegals and Administrative Staff of the Coffman Law Firm support ASOR, its work, and its mission (although we still don't get the "Oriental" thing); and

WHEREAS, we are proud of the service of Richard Coffman as Treasurer and a member of the Board of Trustees—principally because it takes him out of the office on a regular basis; but

WHEREAS, as much as we like him gone, the pain and agony inflicted on us as part of his "all hands on deck" philosophy of preparing the financial reports within a compressed period of time prior to ASOR meetings became too much to bear; and

WHEREAS, Chris White recently assumed the Treasurer's post, which provides us with the best of all worlds—Richard out of the office *and* no more financial reports to prepare;

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of assuming the Treasurer's post and taking the financial reports off our plate forever, we hereby designate Chris White an Official Hero of the Coffman Law Firm.

This 7th day of October, 2016.

So it is declared, so shall it be.

2. **Approval of Agenda.**

BE IT RESOLVED, the Agenda is approved, by consent.

3. **Approval of the Minutes from the April EC Meeting** (April 16, 2016)

BE IT RESOLVED, the Minutes are approved by the Executive Committee. Passed unanimously.

4. **Levantine Ceramics Project:** <http://www.levantineceramics.org/> (Susan Ackerman, Sharon Herbert, Andy Vaughn)

Susan Ackerman: Andrea Berlin and the Levantine Ceramics Project (LCP) Advisory Board are seeking a long-term affiliation and partnership for housing LCP. LCP is a crowd-sourced, on-line resource that enables users and contributors to upload ceramic data from the Levant. The Executive Committee discussed the merits of this project, its technical capacities, needs for growth, and possibilities of coordination with projects supported by ASOR in the past and with other online resources.

Access to the LCP project website would be through the ASOR's site; the project would remain Open Access; the LCP advisory board would be constituted as a committee within ASOR, possibly like an editorial board of one of our journals, with Andrea Berlin as editor/director. Discussion ensued about prioritizing a complete citation mechanism, such as is provided by the Alexandria Archive Open Context project. Access would not be not exclusive to our members. Rather this would be a resource that ASOR tries to help curate and sustain, which is valuable for members and others, and which is a service that we can provide to members worldwide. Meetings and workshops that are part of this project could be held internationally at the affiliated centers and during the Annual Meeting, which would be benefits available to international ASOR members and to members who attend the Annual Meeting. It would be possible to sign up all users as Friends of ASOR in order to provide a channel of communication relevant to LCP and ASOR.

The Executive Committee determined that a partnership could add value to ASOR members as a resource; that such a partnership is in accord with the strategic plan; and that funds can be found within our current budget for an initial five year period during which ASOR could agree to house the project, but not to curate it in perpetuity at this stage, and during which ASOR could develop this partnership and assess how or whether other partnerships and affiliations might be possible with other projects.

The following motion was made:

BE IT RESOLVED: Recognizing that a relationship with the Levantine Ceramic Project (LCP) will fulfill historic aspects of ASOR's mission and be responsive to its recently adopted Strategic Plan; and recognizing that members of the Executive Committee believe that this will benefit other projects that ASOR has supported in the past and in which ASOR members are currently involved; ASOR shall establish a relationship with LCP to house it for an initial period of 5 years, to be reevaluated after 5 years. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report (Chris White)

The Treasurer presented to the committee preliminary FY 2016 audited financial information. ASOR is projected to show a moderate increase in unrestricted net income for FY 16.

ASOR's FY 2016 investment results is showing a decrease overall but majority of the loss is related to the Sequoia Fund. ASOR Fellowship Accounts generated a loss of (\$56,477) (7.5%), while the Endowment Accounts generated a loss of (\$61,344) (9.1%). The losses in the Sequoia Fund accounted for (\$56,125) of the Fellowship Accounts and (\$62,476) of the Endowment Accounts.

Subject to any FY 2016 audit adjustments, the total market value of the Investment Accounts at June 30, 2016 is \$1,516,300, which is a (.58%) decrease over the market value of the Investment Accounts at June 30, 2015.

Subject to any adjustments arising out of the annual audit, the General Fund balance at June 30, 2016 is projected to be \$573,663, which is a 2.55% increase over the June 30, 2015 General Fund balance.

Subject to any FY 2016 audit adjustments, the total value of all financial accounts (checking accounts, savings accounts and Investment Accounts) at June 30, 2016 is projected to be \$2,300,448, which is a (4.77%) decrease over the total value of all financial accounts at June 30, 2015.

For the initial months of FY 2017, that is, the two-month period ending August 31, 2016, ASOR Fellowship Accounts generated a gain of \$25,411 (+3.5%), while the Endowment Accounts generated a gain of \$26,192 (+3.9%). The ASOR Custom Benchmark for the same period increased to 3.37%.

As of September 30, 2016, all investments at Charles Schwab were rebalanced and are with 1%-2% of our targets.

Richard Coffman reminded the EC that the excavation fellowships were funded at

\$2000 rather than \$1000 this year. Susan Ackerman commented that ASOR noticed that there was greater interest in the new undergrad membership (\$29.95) for a \$2000 fellowship.

Andy Vaughn noted that approximately \$10,000 in gifts were received in two accounts, so ASOR will need to rebalance those accounts to reflect the happy circumstance of this new influx of permanently restricted dollars.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Committee accepts the report from the Treasurer and expresses gratitude to Chris White, for taking over the role from Richard Coffman. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Chairs Coordinating Council (Sharon Herbert)

a. Chairpersons of Committees:

Honors and Awards: Laura Mazow agreed to Chair the committee for a second term.

Outreach and Membership: Randall Younker agreed to Chair the committee for a second term.

Program Committee: Geoff Emberling is continuing. Danielle Fatkin will continue on the committee, and Helen Dickson will become the new co-Chair

Junior Scholars: A suggestion was made to make an “all-call” for people to nominate themselves or others as Chair of this committee. Several suggestions were made for possible candidates and Sharon Herbert and the Nominating Committee will follow up on this.

The President will present the new Chair candidates for Board approval in November at the 2016 Annual Meeting.

b. Program Committee would like Definition of “Prior Publication”.

Susan Ackerman drafted a policy and provided it to the CCC. She awaits feedback through the CCC after consultation with the committees. She intends to bring this definition to the Committee on the Policy on Professional Conduct for discussion following comment by the CCC.

7. Reports on ASOR matters ongoing:

a. ASOR Policy on Professional Conduct

The Society of Biblical Literature recently decided to adopt ASOR's Code of Professional Conduct by reference. Susan Ackerman commented that it is gratifying to ASOR that SBL values the process and outcomes achieved at ASOR and that they have decided to adopt the ASOR Policy.

b. 656 Beacon Street (ASOR's offices)

The Boston University property where ASOR currently is housed is up for sale, so a move will be in ASOR's future. ASOR is in a much stronger position since initially moving there, with more diverse programmatic needs and a more substantial staff. A move offers us the opportunity to consider many possibilities, many of which were discussed by the Executive Committee, including reconfigured space allocations in the office, new office locations near Boston or elsewhere, and expanded or new academic institutional affiliations (e.g., university or museum).

The President plans to bring this discussion before the entire Board.

c. ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives

In response to a query about the status of the weekly reports not being posted for September, the President and Executive Director briefed the Executive Committee on the new proposal that ASOR submitted to the Department of State, which includes Libya, Iraq and Syria. We await a response from them. In view of funding not being present yet, ASOR is taking steps to wind the project down and prepare the Year 2 deliverables.

d. ASOR Growth and Staffing Needs

In the past years, ASOR has grown from a small outfit run by few key people to a programmatic organization, from 3.5 to 8 staff; from \$800K to \$2.2/2.5M annual budget. An Associate or Assistant Director of Programs is needed. Such a position would be contingent on significant new external funding coming in to carry out programmatic work. A full discussion of the needs of ASOR and the issues that pertain to creating, funding and managing a second, senior tier staff person ensued.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee endorses the concept of increasing ASOR's professional staff capacity to carry out programmatic work contingent on sufficient outside funding. Motion passed unanimously.

e. ASOR support for legislation and MOUs

The President directed the attention of the Executive Committee to the two letters she wrote in support of the MOU with Greece and the MOU with Cyprus.

8. New Business.

a. The ASOR 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and Fund-Raising Goals and Priorities (Susan Ackerman; Ed Wright via phone on his 40h anniversary)

The Executive Committee held a thorough discussion about issues related to the **strategic plan** and fundraising priorities. Among the topics discussed were the following:

Ed Wright thanked Andy Vaughn and Susan Ackerman for their support in sending out the Fall fundraising letter, which reflects the Strategic Plan and was sent in a timely manner.

The Executive Committee discussed the report submitted by the **Fundraising and Development committee**. Among the priorities are Administrative Support, Annual Meeting, Publications, Outreach, Cultural Heritage Initiatives, Excavation Travel Fellowships, Fieldwork Support Grants, Non-Fieldwork-related Grants, Grant-writing support, Support for tenure-track Jr. scholars (TT), Support for NTT and independent scholars. Support for international scholars, ASOR Lecture Program (?), Support for Institutes/Schools/Centers.

New Initiatives/Themes presented by the committee:

- i. Digital publications: web public outreach, scholarly volumes
- ii. Relationship between ASOR and Centers
- iii. Internationalization of ASOR
 1. Centers do this
 2. Our scholars
 3. CHI
- iv. Advocacy with Federal Govt.
- v. Next Generation (supporting, promoting, new job tracks)

A discussion of ASOR and corporate fundraising ensued.

Discussions included the possibility of crowd-sourcing some items, naming

possibilities, creating a list of “standard costs” for various items on the priority list, in order to allow generous ASOR friends to consider gifts in support of them; and a need to determine whether ASOR’s existing committee structures serves ASOR well. The Executive Committee requests that the CCC consider where in the existing committee structures and operations there might be naming or recognition opportunities (e.g., honors/awards; publications; lectures, paying production costs in order to allow open digital access to a small-run print publication, etc.)

Susan Ackerman mentioned that an article in News@ASOR describes 75 people having made gifts already this FY in the amount of \$85K. September was a record month for ASOR in terms of fundraising this early in the year. Eric and Carol Meyers Fellowship Endowment Dinner will be held at the Annual Meeting and should end in time to allow attendance at the Albright reception at 9:30pm. It will be held in a very nice venue at the resort. Andrea Berlin will be the speaker at the Legacy Dinner, which should be a lively event.

Action Item: A Gift Acceptance Policy will be developed by the Executive Committee.

The President thanked Ed Wright and his committee for their diligent work

9. ASOR Branding and Website Project

Branding and Website Task Force members: Susan Ackerman, Sharon Herbert, Ann- Marie Knoblauch reported on the details and status of the logo, tagline, and website, respectively, preceded by a brief recap by Task Force member Richard Coffman of what has transpired since the November 2015 Board meeting when what was then known as the Strategic Task Force—now, the B&WTF—was charged with identifying and retaining a consulting firm to review and strengthen ASOR’s brand in conjunction with developing the new ASOR website. On the table were a possible name change, a possible logo change, and a new tagline. Here is the post-November 2015 Board meeting timeline:

- 1) Early December 2015 - Richard Coffman researched branding and website firms all over the country, conducted preliminary telephone interviews, and narrowed the field to three candidates.
- 2) Late December 2015 - Richard Coffman and Susan Ackerman interviewed the three finalists by telephone, and selected C&G Partners in New York. Maya Kopytman is the leader of the C&G team working with ASOR.

- 3) January 2016 - Multiple conference calls and emails by and between Susan and/or Richard with C&G and the B&WTF with C&G regarding various issues. C&G independently secured input from ASOR members representing various constituencies within the organization.
- 4) January 29-30, 2016 (Washington D.C.) - B&WTF retreat. Maya Kopytman met with us the first day. The B&WTF focused on the logo and tagline.
- 5) February/March 2016 - Numerous follow-up conference calls and emails by and between Susan and/or the B&WTF with C&G.
- 6) April 2016 Board Meeting – The B&WTF reported its progress to the Board. The Board spent a considerable amount of time in a workshop setting providing feedback to the B&WTF regarding the logo and tagline. Maya Kopytman, via conference call, chastised the B&WTF for involving the full Board in the process, but we did anyway. The B&WTF synthesized and discussed the Board’s input with C&G.
- 7) Post-April 2016 Board Meeting – B&WTF made final tweaks to the logo and tagline. Discussions commenced with C&G over the summer re: website design. C&G delivered suggested design templates. A website designer was identified.

Current status. The B&WTF is proud to report that the soft launch of the new logo and tagline has begun. The launch sequence has been initiated. The train has left the station. They initially will be (i) rolled out as part of the 2016 Annual Meeting App during the week of October 10, 2016, and (ii) included in the Annual Meeting Program Guide, which has been delivered to the printer.

Going forward. ASOR will continue to transition to the new logo and tagline on business cards, stationary, promotional materials, etc. Building the new website will commence shortly. Countless hours of hard work by a lot of people have brought us to this point in the process. But there is more work to do. The new logo will be featured in swag that is available at the Annual Meeting.

Executive Committee members expressed their enthusiasm and thanks to the Branding and Website Task Force members for their stalwart service in this endeavor.

The meeting was adjourned until morning. The Chairman brought the meeting to order at 9:07AM. Ann-Marie Knoblauch was not in attendance.

10. The ASOR Board of Trustees Individual and Institutional Trustee Elections

The President explained who would rotate off the ASOR Board and led a full discussion about persons who could be considered as candidates for the two or three positions that would become vacant.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:00AM.