



**ASOR Executive Committee Meeting
James F. Strange Center,
209 Commerce Street Alexandria, VA February 8, 2020 9:00am-5:00pm**

Present: Richard Coffman (Chair of the Board); Sharon Herbert (President); Chuck Jones (Vice President); Heather McKee (Treasurer); Ann-Marie Knoblauch (Secretary); Jane DeRose Evans; Eric Meyers; Joe Seger; Lynn Swartz Dodd; Andy Vaughn (Executive Director), Susan Ackerman

Business Items (9:00-9:45)

1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM (Richard Coffman)

2. Approval of Agenda

- **BE IT RESOLVED:** the agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the November EC Meeting (November 23, 2019)

- **BE IT RESOLVED:** the minutes from the November 23, 2019 EC Meeting are approved with the following edits:
 - i. Clarified wording under 5a bullet 2 and 6
 - ii. Two typos: in 5d "accounts are managed; 8 bullet 4 "president"

4. BASOR Editor Appointment (SCH.)

- The Executive Committee discussed in great length the unanimous recommendation of the Publications Committee to appoint Susan

Cohen and Regine Pruzsinszky (co-editors) and Marwan Kjlani and Jana Mynárová (associate editors) of BASOR.

- Discussion focused on the range of range of research interests of the proposed team (both geographically and chronologically), and the need for diversity in BASOR's articles.

- Lynn Swartz Dodd moved, Joe Seger seconded:

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee affirms the unanimous recommendation of the Publications Committee of the appointment of the Cohen team as editors of BASOR for a term of three years (January 1, 2021-December 31, 2024).

- 8 in favor; 0 opposed; 2 abstentions.

- Lynn Swartz Dodd moved, Jane DeRose Evans seconded:

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends that the editors of BASOR take proactive steps to ensure diverse chronological and geographical coverage.

- 10 in favor; 0 opposed.

5. Personnel Committee Procedures (RLC, SCH)

- (Executive Director Andy Vaughn left the room for this discussion)
 - Members of the EC were asked by Richard what type of information would be useful in the report received from the Personnel Committee each year when discussing whether to extend the Executive Director's contract.
 - Discussion included past practices as well as future expectations.
 - In recent years, the practice has been to share the president's annual evaluation of the ED, without sharing details of salary or raises.
 - Lynn (among others) suggested that because the EC has fiduciary responsibilities for the organization, it is important to include financial details in the Personnel Committee's report.
 - In this way, the EC can affirm and support the work of the Personnel Committee
- Chuck Jones moved, Jane DeRose Evans seconded:

BE IT RESOLVED: The Personnel Committee will bring to the Executive Committee annually a report that includes the following:

1. The President's evaluation of the Executive Director,

2. A summary of the committee chair evaluations of the Executive Director,
3. A recommendation from the Personnel Committee as to whether to extend the contract of the Executive Director,
4. A recommendation regarding salary that includes amount and when appropriate percentage of change from previous year.

- 10 in favor; 0 opposed.

6. Nomination of Timothy Potts for Board (SCH.)

- Discussion involved the process for nominating candidates for Board-elected trustees.

- Discussion of Timothy Potts for election to the ASOR Board ensued.
- Jane DeRose Evans moved, Chuck Jones seconded:
 - **BE IT RESOLVED:** If the Executive Committee is interested in pursuing the Board nomination of Timothy Potts, that he be sent ASOR's Professional Code of Conduct to make clear to him that by accepting the nomination, that he abides by the Code of Conduct.

- Motion failed.

- Eric Meyers moved, Joe Seger seconded:
 - **BE IT RESOLVED:** The Executive Committee recommends to the Board the nomination to the Board of Trustees Timothy Potts, subject to his clear affirmation of and his acceptance of the Policy on Professional Conduct and all other policies contained in the ASOR Trustee Pledge.

- 9 in favor, 1 opposed

- Executive Director Andy Vaughn was asked to contact Potts to share the request that he clearly affirms the Policy on Professional Conduct and can sign the Trustee Pledge.

7. Other Business

Discussion Items 9:45 AM -12:00 PM

The agenda was adjusted slightly to allow for time for lengthier discussion of some items.

1. Strategic Plan, Part 1 (SCH) *All discussion of the Strategic Plan took place in the afternoon. See below.*

2. Financial Items (AV.)

- Andy began the discussion by noting that ASOR had received a bequest from P.E. MacAllister in the amount of \$500,000, unrestricted. The gift should arrive in April or May.
- a. Review of ASOR Investments (see distributed handout)
 - Andy reviewed several numbers on the distributed handout to show that since August 1, 2019, ASOR's management of its funds has yielded a 9.4-9.3% return, compared with Scott and Stringfellow which, in the accounts they have been managing for ASOR in the same time, has yielded 8.4% since they charge almost 1% as a management fee
 - Andy suggested caution and careful oversight with the accounts managed by Scott and Stringfellow.
 - Andy also noted that we had a positive balance sheet last year because our line of credit has been paid off because of market performance and gifts.
- b. Recommendation to engage Clearview Fiduciary Alliance (<https://clearviewfiduciary.com/>) to provide bench-marking data.
 - Andy raised discussion of engaging an advisory company, Clearview Fiduciary Alliance, a company that provide investment advice to non-profits Clearview is a subsidiary of KDI Capital Partners, of which former trustee Sheldon Fox is a partner.
 - CFA would charge \$1500/year for their services, half of their common annual fee for non-profits our size. For this fee ASOR, would have access to their suite of expertise and services. They also provide (limited) advice on hiring auditing firms, hiring a financial administrator, etc.
 - Andy noted he believes it is prudent to hire Clearview Fiduciary Alliance, but seeks feedback from the EC. CFA can provide custom benchmarks, and review the investments and work of Scott and Stringfellow.
 - Andy's suggestion will be discussed by the Finance Committee and they will make a recommendation.
- A brief conversation ensued about building the endowment through P.E. MacAllister's gift, as well as ways we might honor P.E. and Jim Strange with a photograph in the James F. Strange Center.

- c. Discuss ASOR Budget to Forecast spreadsheet for FY 2020 (see distributed handout)
Deferred to Sunday
- d. Discuss Spending Policy (i.e., distribution rate) for ASOR Endowment for Operations
Deferred to Sunday

1. Strategic Plan, Part 1 (SCH.)

- 5 minutes were to be spent discussing each goal of the Strategic Plan for 2016-2020, highlighting accomplishments and areas where more work can be done.
- Sharon noted that the plan is to present a new Strategic Plan to the Board in April 2021
- The goals are divided into two categories, programmatic and aspirational. Below is a list of the goals and a brief summary of the discussion.

Programmatic Goals (Strategic Goals numbers 1-4)

1. ASOR's Annual Meeting. This is seen as one of the most important things that ASOR does. ASOR has successfully navigated a challenging project to review the time and place of the Annual Meeting. Discussion focused on increasing the number of papers while maintaining high quality and the intimate feel that attendees appreciate. It will be important to work with the Program Committee to determine the advisability of increasing the number of concurrent sessions to ten, and allowing, as much as possible, for attendees to "session hop." This becomes problematic as conflicts arise, but it may be possible to alleviate some of this burden through an enhanced abstract submission process that parses more carefully the schedules of paper presenters and so allows more flexibility in scheduling.
2. Publications. Discussion here centered mostly on the opportunities to do more with open access to ASOR publications, including dig reports (current and past). ASOR could be a leader in offering this type of information. Other topics that came up included consistent and careful oversight of the website and News@ASOR.
3. ASOR's International Affiliations. Discussion here focused on the relationship between ASOR and the ORCS (CAARI, ACOR and the Albright) and where those relationships stand now, including how they might be improved. It was suggested that we might reach out the Centers to "check in" and remind them of the services that ASOR has to offer. Another discussion topic included other centers that align with ASOR's interests where (stronger) relationships might be built. (ARCE, ARIT, AIMS, PARC). Finally, the effectiveness of overseas committees was discussed. Currently there are committees for Baghdad, Syria, and Saudi Arabia.

4. Fellowships, Grants, and Other Forms of Support for ASOR Members. Discussion included the success ASOR has achieved in this area, as well as the potential for more. Andy noted some statistics: last year we gave away \$86,000; this year we hope to give away \$120,000; this year we had 135 applications for 25/26 awards. Eric suggested the timeframe of fellowships could be expanded for upper level graduate students to work on projects when an excavation is not in the field, Susan noted that the timing of the awards might be adjusted to make it possible for non-summer projects to benefit. Sharon noted that donors love to fund these kinds of student experiences. We currently have several named endowed fellowships; one major goal should be to create a permanently endowed account for non-endowed fellowships as opposed to current gift use. Not much has been done to develop in-house resources for archaeological fieldwork, but given unforeseen areas where ASOR has evolved, this is understandable. Many positive things were said about the generosity of all ASOR members, and this culture of giving makes ASOR unique among its peers.

Aspirational Goals (Strategic Goals numbers 5-8)

5. Fostering the Field. Susan noted that the move to Alexandria Susan noted that the move to Alexandria has helped ASOR reach out and strengthen relationships with the government and other local learned societies and local universities (GWU, etc.). “We punch above our weight” in terms of our public advocacy. Eric suggested we expand further, engaging the Smithsonian and Sackler for co-sponsoring lectures, etc. Susan noted we might hold an annual World Heritage Day (the one held in 2016 was very successful). Andy noted that ASOR is being recognized now as an international asset to empower local stakeholders in carrying out initiatives in cultural heritage preservation. This may help in receiving additional grants. It was noted that forming affiliations with local institutions should be done with thoughtfulness and care to ASOR’s values. We have done much to secure the success of the next generation. The Early Career Scholar Committee has been a great success. Bigger change will take longer than five years. Chuck suggested “Alt-Academic” is not a good term to describe non-academics, since now non-academic careers are standard.
6. An Increased International Identity for ASOR. Andy noted we have had great success in this area, but there is more we can do. We have introduced in-country stakeholders as permanent committee members. Opportunities are opening up in some countries, such as Libya, and ASOR is leading the way with countries that have signed bi-lateral agreements with the US. Establishing an annual meeting rate for international scholars has been helpful; some of the international programming has not been as strategic as it might be and there is room for improvement there, and should be held in places that are easily

accessible to our international members. Discussion also included the Levantine Ceramics Project, with which ASOR has a five-year agreement to help host. Discussion turned to and how more can be done to integrate the LPC into ASOR's outreach as we reach the point of revisiting ASOR's relationship with LCP. Susan noted we should also be thinking more strategically about international members on the Board of Trustees.

7. Outreach. Susan noted our new website is an important accomplishment. It is vibrant and it does not look stagnant. Discussion turned to buying targeted ads on social media sites such as Facebook, which Richard notes he uses very effectively. It was noted that the website is quite slow (because of some updates) and it is not a good idea to have people click through to a slow site. Other discussion involved the need to grow our Friends of ASOR list (for which some money has been given) as well as how to more efficiently track user analytics for the website. Richard asked if perhaps we are trying to do too much, and we should focus on doing fewer things well. Susan said we are able to accomplish so much because of the volunteer culture of ASOR. Sharon noted that much comes down to investing in ASOR's digital needs. Andy noted that we haven't allocated the funds for maintaining ASOR's digital infrastructure, and that's what is needed to continue the academic and CHI work. Susan noted that sending out ANE Today out once a week instead of once a month is an important outreach effort, as was establishing the popular book award.
 8. Cultural Heritage. Susan noted that the creation of a standing Cultural Heritage committee has been an important step forward in this area, and hosting a World Heritage Day every year could also help. Several noted that working with Palestinian community could be helpful, and also help to engage the Albright with ASOR initiatives. An additional thought was seeking out opportunities for funding from EU sources. While working with the Getty Conservation Institute has promoted ASOR's engagement with site preservation, there is a lot of room for growth.
- Sharon asked us to percolate on these discussions overnight and how they could help shape a new Strategic Plan.

3. Annual Meeting Guidelines (SCH.)

- This agenda item included a discussion of the Report of the ASOR Ad Hoc Committee on an ASOR Code of Conduct.
- The question raised by the ad hoc committee and discussed by the EC, was the level of specificity that should be included in the guidelines.
- Members (based on feedback) do not want ASOR playing "police," but there needs to be a mechanism for action to be taken in the moment, and it was noted that the greatest challenges are from potential crisis moments that arise unexpectedly.

- A suggestion was made to adopt language similar to the ASOR gift acceptance policy, that has very broad language making clear that ASOR within its sole discretion can decline a gift that is not beneficial to the org—we can turn gifts down. By analogy, having discretion, ASOR in its sole discretion can decide to exclude someone from participation in the academic program of the annual meeting.
- The ad hoc committee recommends an ombudsperson be present at the annual meeting. A concern was raised that in doing so we might be committing to a due process that we are not in a position to offer. ASOR currently does not commit to providing due process for decisions about participation in the Annual Meeting.
- It was suggested we could provide training to staff and session chairs to help attendees feel safe.
- Furthermore, some of the questions of the ad hoc committee can be sent to ASOR's lawyers.
- Our goal is to make members and attendees safe.

Discussion Items (1:00pm–5:00pm)

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative (SCH)
 - This discussion focused on ways that ASOR can be actively working to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the organization.
 - Sharon prompted the discussion by asking us what diversity, equity and inclusion looks like for ASOR, and obvious one being how do we engage more people of color in ASOR?
 - Several options for a committee to address this were presented.
 - Chuck noted that ten years ago AIA/SCS made a concerted effort to become more multicultural, with success. This often starts with students.
 - Lynn noted that diversity helps us achieve our goals, and is intrinsic to ASOR's values, and diversity, equity and inclusion is about more than targeting particular underrepresented groups. Diversity is construed in many different ways.
 - Susan and Lynn both suggested an ad hoc committee that investigated these issues and provided a report outlining where the hurdles are and what is possible would be very helpful.
 - Chuck noted that that the public forum at the annual meeting on ASOR's name was difficult but helpful.
2. ASOR CHI and Other Grants and Development Reports (AV.)
 - Andy discussed current grant work being done and potential for future work.
 - Andy noted reports from work being done in Libya are amazing. Grant money is going primarily to in-country stake holders and small amount for staff time here.

- Richard asked if we might hire someone to help write grants on a contingency basis. Andy noted this is typically work for hire.
3. Whither ASOR CHI? (Jane D. Evans with Andy Vaughn)
- Jane, as chair of the Cultural Heritage Committee, noted the committee membership is now set, representing a broad range of ASOR's interests.
 - The committee mobilized ASOR members for the recent MOU for Tunisia and Turkey, and Lynn and Jane both testified in front of CPAC. Jane noted that Tunisia did not get a lot of pushback, but Turkey was more of an issue.
 - Jane will keep track of when MOUs are coming up—so we are not rushed to prep. It helps to have ASOR present. Furthermore, Jane plans to be more active and open, letting the ASOR membership know what the committee is doing.
4. Future ASOR Development Goals and Initiatives (Lynn Dodd and Andy Vaughn)
- Lynn, as chair of the Development Committee, gave an update to the committee's activities. The committee membership will meet monthly, and include ASOR members with much history with ASOR as well as experience in development and PR.
 - Lynn outlined the tasks of the committee:
 - Thank people who are giving
 - Get more givers
 - Tell the story of ASOR and what it does, for students, for site preservation, for heritage.
 - Lynn stressed the importance of articulating the “why” of ASOR, and use that to engage potential givers who do not know about what we do. This means figuring out ways to message to people who are not already ASOR members, and learning to tailor communication to non-academics.
 - Lynn asked EC members to come up with three people with whom they might approach with the “why” of ASOR.
 - Richard noted that these points could dovetail well with social media/Facebook ads.
5. Other New Initiatives?

Meeting adjourned 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann-Marie Knoblauch