

## ASOR Executive Director's Brief Update For The March '21 EC Workshop

### 1. Budget Update: Please see budget report and notes.

In the comments below, I am updating items specifically mentioned in my March report that have changed. Additionally, I have included a couple items not mentioned in the budget to forecast or the budget notes.

### 2. Virtual Annual Meeting—Update since December Board Meeting

No change since March meeting. Numbers are found in budget reports and notes.

### 3. Membership revenues for FY21: ca. \$14,000 below budget (improvement since March)

- A. Budget: Our budget had \$200,000 in revenue for FY21.
- B. Current (1/31/2021): \$131,782
  - a. = \$169,172 (gross) - \$37,390 (deferred)
- C. Better update: CCFO had already taken out deferred revenue, so total as of 3/31/21 is approximately \$182,000.
- D. Forecast: I have estimated \$186,000, but the number may be closer to the budgeted \$200,000. Memberships are up (many are scholarships), but we are only recognizing  $\frac{1}{4}$  of memberships paid in April and May (the rest is deferred to FY22).

### 4. Annual Meeting Update for Fiscal Year 2022—Meeting in Chicago and Virtual

We have much more information than last month (March), but it is still early. At present, we have 606 registrations (6 of them are non-paying staff). The gross revenue is currently about \$95,000, of which \$14,100 were scholarships (but that number includes AM 2020 as well). The following are some highlights of the proposals and registrations to date:

- Paper proposals for Chicago: 470 submitted by 450 people
- Paper proposals for virtual component: 417 submitted by 398 people
- Number of people submitting solely to virtual meeting: ca. 200 people
- Number of unique presenters from both components: 633 people
- Number of presenters (Chicago) outside U.S.: 200 (= 24 Canada and 176 rest of world)

It is already clear that there is a demand for the virtual only component, and ASOR has received positive feedback about trying to accommodate international members and members with disabilities who cannot travel at this time (or for whom travel is always difficult).

As of April 19, 2021, the Hilton Downtown Chicago is closed—with a schedule reopening date of May 20th. We have agreed to have a conversation with the hotel once they reopen, and we

tentatively scheduled that call for early June. I have been in touch with our attorney, and we are in a holding pattern.

## **5. Book revenue and expenses**

Update from March: As you may notice in the Charity CFO report, ASOR absorbed a one-time expense by recognizing book expenses in the current year for books that have not yet been printed or sold. Even after allocating OF dollars (\$12,500), Books will be a major expense this year. See notes in budget and budget notes.

## **6. Other Expenses (different from March report)**

- A. Personnel: salaries will be slightly above budget. Part of the reason is that we need to maintain at least 9 FTE employees to qualify for PPP loan forgiveness. The budget forecast may change if we use more PPP funds and less designated diversity funds for salaries for our employees from AITC.
- B. Operating expenses: See budget to forecast and notes.

## **7. PPP Loans**

No change. We have received forgiveness for the First Draw. I anticipate forgiveness for the Second Draw. We will likely choose the 24-month model, so the forgiveness will not show up in the audited financials for FY21. I do not think that we would qualify for enough expenses using the 8-week model, so it's better to let the forgiveness move into next fiscal year.

## **8. Returning to in-person work at the James Strange Center**

Three out of six staff who work in James Strange Center have been able to get at least one dose of a vaccine. Another person is scheduled to receive a first dose on Friday, April 23 (the day before the EC meeting). I anticipate that all staff will be able to receive both doses by late June or early July. I am not sure that all staff wish to be vaccinated. At present, we do not have plans to require staff to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

The current plan is to permit staff members who have been fully vaccinated (two weeks past the final dose) to be in the James Center with other fully vaccinated staff. This will be optional, and everyone will be required to wear a mask around others and to maintain safe distances. The current policy is not to permit more than one person in the building at a time.

I anticipate that staff who wish to receive a vaccination will be fully vaccinated (two weeks past final dose) by late July or early August. Because of summer schedules, our current thinking and is to return to in-person work in the James Strange Center beginning the day after Labor Day. We will follow CDC recommendations for masks and distancing at that time. The current plan is to

expect that all staff will return to in-person work. Jared Koller previously worked mostly remotely (before the pandemic), but that was before he moved to a full-time position. I'm in conversation with him about how many days per week he will come into the James Strange Center.

One open question is whether or not ASOR can or should require employees to be vaccinated. Another question is whether or not we will require employees to return to in-person work if they elect not to be vaccinated. Depending on the situation, ASOR may need to receive legal counsel on these questions.

## **9. Remote work status for Arlene Press**

As I think most EC members know, Arlene Press has been working remotely (as Meetings Manager, and now as Director of Meetings and Events) for the past decade. Her contract does not specify a location for the remote work—it specifies that she will be available during ASOR office hours (east coast hours), and that she will provide her phone, internet, etc.

Due to her husband's work, Arlene plans to move to Norway in June for approximately two years. She has asked the PC Co-chairs and me if this might be acceptable. She also asked for input from other staff. The PC Co-chairs were very supportive, and I am also supportive. Arlene has demonstrated the highest level of commitment to ASOR and pride in her work. The VAM would not have happened as well as it did—or maybe at all—if it were not for Arlene's dedication and job performance. I am confident that she will maintain that level of commitment and performance, and I am not sure that we could find someone else to support the in-person and virtual components as well as Arlene.

Arlene has committed to providing a high-speed internet connection and a U.S. phone number in Norway (she currently plans to keep her current phone number). She also plans to work regular east coast U.S. hours (probably 9am – 5pm). She also has committed to returning the U.S. (at her expense) for the Annual Meeting.

## **Concluding Remarks:**

Just as I concluded in March, I am pleased that we continue to have our sights set on the long-term, and I am convinced that our forward-thinking goals set forth in the strategic plan will pay dividends as we enter the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century at the end of the period covered under this plan.