



**ASOR Executive Committee Fall Meeting
November 19, 2022 (2:00-5:00 PM)
Boston Park Plaza Hotel, Hancock Room**

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

Guests: Sheldon Fox, Marta Ostovich.

Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order and Approval of agenda and spring minutes (Richard Coffman)
 - The meeting was called to order at 2:05 PM.
 - **BE IT RESOLVED:** The agenda is approved by unanimous consent with two additional items:
 - Under item 4: add Lynn Welton to be reappointed to chair the Honor and Awards Committee for a second three-year term
 - Under item 11: vote to extend the appointment of Piotr Michalowski as editor of JCS to a term ending June 30, 2024.
 - **BE IT RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting from the May 7, 2022 are approved by unanimous consent with two minor typos.
2. Trustee Election Results (Jane DeRose Evans, see Board agenda)
 - Institutional Trustees (term to run January 1, 2023-December 31, 2025)
 - Michael Hassel was re-elected.
 - Kathryn Grossman was elected.
 - Member-elected Trustees (term to run January 1, 2023-December 31, 2025)
 - Bob Mullins was re-elected.

- Sarah Costello was elected.
- Jane noted that she has served on the Trustee Nominations Committee for more than six years and announced that it is time for her to step down.

3. Future Board-Elected Trustees (Sharon Herbert)

Eric moved, Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends to the Board that Alex Brooks be appointed to the Board of Trustees for an initial three-year term (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025)

Unanimously approved.

Eric moved, Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends to the Board that Lisa Ackerman be appointed to the Board of Trustees for an additional three-year term (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025)

Unanimously approved.

Eric moved, Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends to the Board that Alex MacAllister be appointed to the Board of Trustees for an additional three-year term (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025)

Unanimously approved.

Eric moved, Emily seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends to the Board that Timothy Potts be appointed to the Board of Trustees for an additional three-year term (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025)

Unanimously approved.

- The EC thanks outgoing Trustees Paul Flesher and Debra Foran for their service.

4. Committee Chair Appointments (Sharon Herbert)

Biographical sketches for new Trustee and Committee Chair candidates are at <http://www.asor.org/hidden/board-info/2020/12-handouts>

Joe moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee accepted the recommendation of the Chairs Coordinating Council and recommends that the Board appoint Kate Larson to an initial term as co-chair of the DEI Committee (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025).

Unanimously approved.

Joe moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee accepted the recommendation of the Chairs Coordinating Council and recommends that the Board appoint Kiersten Neumann to an initial three-year term as co-chair of the Program Committee (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025).
Unanimously approved.

Joe moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee accepted the recommendation of the Chairs Coordinating Council and recommends that the Board appoint Allison Thomason to a second term co-chair of the Program Committee (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025).
Unanimously approved.

Joe moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee accepted the recommendation of the Chairs Coordinating Council and recommends that the Board appoint Lynn Welton to a second term co-chair of the Honors and Awards Committee (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025).
Unanimously approved.

- The EC thanks outgoing Program Committee chair Helen Dixon.

5. Progress Report on ASOR Archives and Artifacts at HMANE (Sharon Herbert/Susan Ackerman)
 - Sharon noted that the ASOR archives are packed, including the Glueck materials that have been at Harvard since the 1960s and the materials from the ASOR office in Boston that were transferred to Harvard in 2018. The Glueck materials include a history of his activities as the director of the Albright over several terms and will be kept with the rest of the ASOR archives.
 - The archives are on their way to the American Heritage Center in Wyoming.
 - Additionally, there were artifactual materials that belong to ASOR but have long been housed at Harvard. The objects have now transferred to HMANE at Harvard and a deed of gift was signed.
 - Susan noted that HMANE has a full run of *BASOR* and *NEA* that they would like to donate to ASOR.

Budget Matters

6. Treasurer's Report (Emily Miller Bonney)
 - Emily noted that the Finance Committee had met earlier in the day, and the report for the EC is that same report for the Board meeting.
 - ASOR is in good shape, with net assets of around \$6 million. This is excellent news considering the losses in the stock market in 2022, and is due in large part to the generosity of donors and because of ASOR's success in securing grants for cultural heritage work. Significant gifts have been made to several funds.

- The Annual Meeting came close to breaking even, and memberships continue to increase with a goal of increasing membership by 5% each year.
- The Webinars have not been as successful as hoped, as participation has dropped: probably because potential participants are no longer stuck at home and because everyone is suffering from Zoom fatigue.
- There has been a change in the investment strategy. ASOR's self-managed funds have consistently outperformed those managed by Scott and Stringfellow. In August the Treasurer and the ED (with approval from the Board Chair and President) and agreed to take ASOR's money out of Scott & Stringfellow. Taking money out means we no longer have a line of credit. This is considered a small downside.
- After an RFP for the audit, the decision was made to stick with Romeo and Wiggins. Sheldon was thanked for getting the paperwork together. The 990 is expected in early December.
- Jane thanks Emily for the clear report and asked about the PPP loans and the MacAllister gift. Emily explained that both are completed, but donors continue to give significant gifts, and we use those gifts to serve our mission. Andy noted that we put the MacAllister gift into the endowment in 12 increments, with the gift completely invested by January 2022. This incremental strategy was adopted because of concerns about the market, but, unfortunately, the market unexpectedly went up during the investment period. Then, once the funds were fully invested, the market started going down! The money transferred from Scott & Stringfellow has gone up about \$100,000 since the transfer.
- Richard asked if we looked into the payroll tax refund program? Andy replied that we had, but it's unclear whether we qualify.
- Emily noted that the finance materials were presented differently for this meeting. The budget-to-actual was in a single document, plus access to all of the data within the spreadsheet (Quickbook entries). Susan noted the format was helpful, and suggested that it's a good idea to make both excel and PDF versions of the documents available to Board members.

7. Auditors' Report (Emily Miller Bonney)

- Emily commented that the auditor's report is finalized. Andy added that on page three, the net assets available for operations has gone up from \$413,000 to \$600,000. This is cash we have available for operational needs. Other net assets without donor restrictions increased from \$2 million to 2.2 million; the increase in the Board Designated Building Fund and the Strange Center accounts for close to half of that total. Andy noted that funds with donor restrictions saw a drop from 3.8 to 3.4 million, a result of the stock market loss.
- Andy also highlighted some figures from the Profit/Loss page of the audit (page 4). These figures include endowment accounts. He observed that the budget to actual spreadsheet (a separate exhibit) is tied to net assets available for operations and not to these endowment accounts. Andy also pointed to page 6, with a breakdown of profits and loss by program, including the Annual Meeting. The staff are clocking their time for various activities in order to determine the costs for ASOR programs such as the Virtual Annual Meeting.

8. Finance Committee Action Items (Emily Miller Bonney)

Chuck moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: that the ASOR Executive Committee recommends the Board of Trustees receive and accept the Fiscal Year 2022 Audited Financial Statements that have been reviewed and discussed by the Finance Committee and Executive Committee. Unanimously approved.

9. Development Committee (Lynn Dodd)

- Lynn Dodd delivered the following report:
 - *I would like to express gratitude for the Development Committee members who have met monthly this past year.*
 - *My main message to you on the EC is to say two things:*
 - *“The development committee exists to help the Board to deliver on its responsibility to provision ASOR with the resources necessary to achieve its mission and vision.*
 - *You know about the wonderful things that Andy Hanan and Erika told us last night...wonderful things are afoot from the presentations you heard last night. This is an exciting time!*
 - *I hope that any of us have not yet made an annual gift –and many of you have, will do so. We have a \$125K goal for our Annual Fund and we are at \$20K in hand with another \$2500 pledged. So, friends, I ask that you will consider whipping out your checkbook or pushing the button to Donate to ASOR. Your gifts make an extraordinary difference for ASOR—now and looking forward. You make a difference in your giving to ASOR and also in writing and thanking others! Thank YOU for what you have done, and please keep going!*
 - *Finally: looking forward, the Development committee has been discussing starting a silent phase of a campaign for ASOR, with the hope and expectation of bringing a proposal to the Board in Spring, 2023. This would be a proposal for a major comprehensive campaign, perhaps in the mid 7 figures.*
 - *We discussed the committee and staff starting to work, then coming back to this body in April at the Board Meeting with a campaign recommendation that will include:*
 - *Case statement*
 - *Level of campaign*
 - *Results of quiet discussions with potential donors*
 - *So we are looking forward to Expanding Our Frontiers, Broadening our Vision and looking to Wider Horizons.*

Discussion following the report went as follows:

- Susan asked whether there are specific frontiers that we hope to expand. Lynn noted that the campaign would be comprehensive and allow donors to choose where to put

- their money, with some emphasis possibly on increasing the endowment. This is still at the exploratory stage of the process.
- Andy noted that the Humanities are being challenged, and funds to support members' research at colleges and universities are being cut back. We are not a rich organization, but we are financially stable. ASOR is poised so that gifts and contributions can be used for mission rather than to keep the boat floating. Furthermore, a healthy balance sheet makes us attractive to donors to support new work.
 - Jane proposed raising money for a hybrid synchronous meeting, as members are exhausted from doing both. Sharon agreed with Jane, pointing out that there are two big hypotheticals: 1) Cost—What will it cost? Can we afford it? Should that be a fund-raising goal? And 2) can we deliver a product that works? We need more data on both. We can learn from other organizations such as the AIA, which is doing a synchronous hybrid annual meeting this year.
 - Ann-Marie suggested also learning from universities, who are dealing with the same challenges with synchronous hybrid classes
 - Other ideas included an endowment for the Executive Director position, and funding for travel to the AM.

Committee Business

10. Chairs Coordinating Council Report (Chuck Jones)

- All committees submitted reports.
- CCC met this morning.
- Acquisition of *Ma'arav* is a good thing, as is the fact that University of Chicago Press is going to digitize it. Most libraries don't carry it.
- Piotr Michalowski is stepping down as editor of JCS, effective June 30, 2024, so there will be a search for a new *JCS* editor.
- Two new co-chairs are up to speed and joined the CCC for this meeting.
- CCC met monthly during the academic year. Focus on the Annual Meeting and DEI. The goal of the DEI Committee is to embed their agenda and goals in the work of all other committees. DEI Committee is still looking for a few more members.
- *ANE Today* has a new editor, whose term officially begins January 1, 2023. The transition is going well.
- Lynn asked about the digital publication policy. Chuck replied that it was approved at the COP meeting and will go to CAP next.
- Susan asked whether the CCC is still nimble given its growing size. Chuck replied that it is, and the increased size helps with workload. He has requested that committees review their procedures documents, share them with the CCC, and post them on the website. There was discussion of whether to post procedures and guidelines.
- The PC is trying to articulate its position on institutions in occupied territories and has put forth some language. Sharon noted this is a larger issue and will form another Ad Hoc Committee to address it. ASOR will not compile a list of contested places.

- Susan inquired as to whether BASOR had a policy for dealing with contested areas. Chuck replied that it is not quite a policy.

11. COP Report (Chuck Jones/Sharon Hebert)

- Acquisition of *Ma'arav* as an ASOR publication –(done)
- Other resolutions:

Emily moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: On the recommendation of the Committee on Publications and the Chairs Coordinating Council, the Executive Committee recommends that the Board appoint Simeon Chavel to an initial 3-year term as editor of *Ma'arav* (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025).

Unanimously approved.

Emily moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: On the recommendation of the Committee on Publications and the Chairs Coordinating Council, the Executive Committee recommends that the Board appoint Bruce Zuckerman as Editor Emeritus of *Ma'arav*.

Unanimously approved.

Emily moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: On the recommendation of the Committee on Publications and the Chairs Coordinating Council, the Executive Committee recommends that the Board appoint Jessica Nitschke as editor of *Ancient Near East Today* (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025).

Unanimously approved.

Emily moved.

BE IT RESOLVED: On the recommendation of the Committee on Publications and the Chairs Coordinating Council, the Executive Committee recommends that the Board extend the appointment of Piotr Michalowski as editor of *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* to June 30, 2024.

Unanimously approved.

12. DEI Committee Progress (Sharon Herbert/Chuck Jones)

- The DEI Committee and Sharon are working on how to include the ASOR Initiative on the Status of Women as a subcommittee of DEI. Sharon has been in touch with Beth Nakhai.

13. Climate Impact Committee Report (Sharon Herbert)

- Compliments were given on the thoroughness and detail of the report. Sharon is hoping Board will take action during spring meeting. She is impressed by how seriously ASOR members take mitigation of climate change and recognize the importance of its impact on cultural heritage.
- Susan noted that aspects of the statistics need more scrutiny. For example, only 23.6% of members answered the survey—is it a self-selected body.

- There was discussion of the Climate Impact Report. Pages 6 & 7 provide a good summary of the report.
 - Correlation to those who donate?
 - How many people view mitigating climate change as part of ASOR's mission? Higher percentage of those who disagree are on ASOR's Board.
 - Fieldwork model: hire in-country label and pay them a fair wage instead of flying field school students around.
 - Break-down of survey responses by age.
 - Board already voted to meet with SBL when possible.
 - Small vs. big changes.
 - Carbon offsets
- The charge of committee was to answer whether the meeting can be carbon neutral by 2025. It would have been easier to go with "work to mitigate effects" instead of putting a finite year on absolute carbon neutrality.
- Sharon noted that the PC is planning for the 2023 meeting, including, again, a dual platform model with a virtual component in October, but a week later than last year. The PC is looking at the Climate Impact report and thinking about 2024.
- Sharon stated that the EC is only receiving the report at this point.

Eric moved, Sharon seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED: The Executive Committee recommends that the Board receive the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Impact and thanks the committee for their exceptional efforts in preparing the report.

Unanimously approved.

- 14.** Date for spring meeting Sunday April 16. In-person or virtual? (Sharon Herbert/Andy Vaughn)
- Andy said that the proposed dates for spring meetings are the EC on Sat. April 15 and the Board on Sun. April 16. He invited discussion on whether the meetings should be in person or virtual
 - Ann-Marie brought up the EC retreat and whether that was going to be in person.
 - The discussion ended with the decision that the February EC retreat would be face-to-face and the April EC and Board meetings would be virtual.

Other business:

Two topics were raised:

- Some governance issues need to be worked out that came up during the deliberations of the Officers Nominations Committee.
- Emily asked about using credit cards for recurring monthly donations

Meeting adjourned 5:00

Respectfully submitted,
Ann-Marie Knoblauch