

SHAFR Council Meeting

Friday, January 4, 2008 - 12:15pm

Committee Room, Omni Shoreham

Washington, DC

Meeting Minutes

Council Members Present: James Banner, Frank Costigliola, Craig Daigle, Catherine Forslund, Peter Hahn, Richard Immerman, Andrew Johns, Mark Lawrence, William Roger Louis, James Matray, Kenneth Osgood, Meredith Oyen, Stephen Rabe, Chapin Rydingsward, Thomas Schwartz (presiding), Amy Staples, Randall Woods, Thomas Zeiler

Business Items

Reports

Other Business

1. **Announcements** Thomas Schwartz expressed his desire to focus on two particular issues during his presidency. First, he plans to promote the further internationalization of SHAFR and to encourage membership in currently under represented countries. Second, he hopes to develop the Society's relationship with students across the field and in doing so take advantage of the recent upsurge of interest in foreign relations history.
2. **Recap of motions passed by e-mail vote** Schwartz reported for the record that since its last meeting Council had approved via e-mail the following motions:

1. Resolution congratulating Michael Hogan on his recent appointment as President of the University of Connecticut.
2. Expenditure of \$2,500 to host the graduate student breakfast at the upcoming OAH conference.
3. **Motion to accept 2007 financial report** Hahn presented the 2007 financial report in writing and orally. He highlighted generous contributions to the Divine and Hogan Funds, the new level of subsidy to the Diplomatic History office, the expenditure of \$35,000 on Bemis fellowships, the transfer of the same amount from the General Endowment to the checking account to cover that expenditure, the record-high publisher subsidy (which included a sizeable contract signing bonus). He noted that the Society finished the year with a net gain of \$11,000 in operating funds. Hahn invited Council members to examine the detailed written report and forward to him any questions or corrections. Hahn noted that in 2007 the Bernath Endowment grew by 7.6% and the General Endowment by 1.4%. The smaller rate of growth in the General resulted from the \$35,000 withdrawal to cover the Bemis grants. In discussing the named prize accounts, Hahn asked for Council's direction in deciding if the projected growth of the individual prize funds should be calculated based on general endowment growth after deducting the annual Bemis funds. The other option would be to inflate the rates of growth by assuming the absence of the annual Bemis withdrawal. Woods moved to allow Hahn to determine the best way to proceed in this matter. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Motion to set disbursement amount for Bemis Research Grants in 2008** Matray noted that last year Council allocated 20 percent of the General Endowment growth for the Bemis Research Grants, which amounted to \$35,000. It was stated that if Council allocates 20 percent this year, the Bemis Grants would be reduced to \$20,000. Matray explained that Council could maintain the grant allocation at 20 percent in the coming year but that he would also support increasing it to 30 percent. He emphasized the importance of maintaining

SHAFR's financial commitment to graduate student and junior faculty research. Immerman suggested that Council allocate Bemis money this year on a basis independent from endowment growth. He also advised against reducing funds in 2008. Costigliola supported Immerman's suggestion. Matray advocated publicizing the Bemis grants more widely. Woods agreed and suggested that advertisements highlight the high success rate of Bemis applicants. Costigliola proposed advertising in the *OAH Newsletter* and/or in *Perspectives*. Immerman motioned to authorize \$35,000 for the Bemis Research grants this year with the proviso that Council devise a more permanent solution when it meets in June. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Compensation for *Passport* editor** Schwartz introduced a motion to provide a \$3,000 annual stipend to the editor of *Passport*. He stated that the current editor's dedication and hard work have greatly improved the publication. Immerman and Osgood also attested to Lerner's solid contribution. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Management of new initiatives

1. **Dividing graduate student fellowships** Hahn explained that Council had previously approved \$30,000 for two Dissertation Completion Fellowships. The fellowship selection committee, in launching the program, studied various issues and became concerned that the funds are insufficient to cover the tuition, healthcare, and living expenses of an ABD graduate student. Discussion ensued regarding the many variables determining the cost of tuition and living expenses of a non-teaching ABD graduate student. Costigliola moved to increase funds to \$40,000 in order to support two \$20,000 graduate fellowships. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **Recruitment of web-master and director of secondary education** Schwartz announced that recruitment for a web-master and director of secondary education will begin shortly. In accordance with

Council's decision last June, an annual stipend will be attached to each position. Schwartz emphasized that the two posts are intended to elevate SHAFR's profile and organizational growth.

- 3. National History Center** Immerman introduced William Roger Louis and Jim Banner who were in attendance to make a request on behalf of the National History Center (NHC). Louis described the origins of the NHC and its current situation. It was described as an independent institution that seeks to promote research, teaching, and learning in all fields of history. It originated from the idea that there ought to be a national history center in Washington, DC to provide a physical space for the AHA and other historical organizations to exchange ideas and to help historians reach out to a broader audience. The NHC is also intended to shape the public discourse by providing the historical context necessary to understand contemporary events. Louis described various NHC projects, including the Decolonization Seminar, the *Reinterpreting History* series, and a project examining why historians have not proven successful as public figures shaping governmental policy. Louis highlighted two other programs which he hoped SHAFR would support financially: the Congressional Briefings Project and a joint lecture series with the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Louis explained that Congressional Briefings are designed to provide historical context and perspective on current issues for policy makers and members of their staff. The speakers focus on historical events and developments that influence current policies. Previous briefings have included a session on U.S. domestic race relations headed by John Hope Franklin and Eric Foner and one on the history of social security led by Edward Berkowitz and Alice Kessler-Harris. Louis indicated that a briefing on Pakistan might be approved in the near future. The NHC has also entered into a partnership with the Council on Foreign Relations in support of a biannual lecture series in which historians discuss foreign relations topics. Louis spoke of the

importance of such events, including a lecture by Ernest May on surprise attacks in U.S. history. In conclusion, Louis requested that SHAFR provide the NHC with \$10,000 annually for the next three years. He explained that the funds would be split equally in support of the Congressional Briefings and the CFR lecture series. He stated that SHAFR's support would be recognized at both venues. In response to questions about governance of the NHC, Louis answered that a six member steering committee, one third of whom are named by the AHA and two-thirds of whom are chosen by the AHA appointees, made decisions. In reply to a question about the spending on the CFR lecture series, Louis explained that the total cost of organizing each lecture is \$10,000 split equally between the CFR and the NHC. In reply to a question about whether a SHAFR member could be placed on the NHC steering committee, Louis and Banner answered affirmatively. In reply to a question, Louis stated that there are currently three congressional briefings per year and that the NHC hopes to increase that number to five. It was suggested that the NHC produce an article for publication in *Perspectives* or *Passport*. Louis and Banner expressed willingness to consider writing such an article. Louis and Banner left the room. Schwartz began discussion stating that the steering committee will empower the endowment committee to devise a procedural policy to deal with future requests for funding. Immerman noted that the NHC funding request was proposed several months ago to the steering committee, which after much consideration accepted a resolution to support the NHC at a rate between \$5,000 and \$10,000 annually. A vigorous debate ensued regarding the merits of the NHC, the nature of its request and the degree to which SHAFR's mission might be further advanced in supporting the two proposed programs. After much discussion, Costigliola motioned that Council provide the NHC with \$5,000 for one year with the proviso that all the funds go to support the Congressional Briefings. Osgood introduced an amendment stating that SHAFR should have a part in determining how the money is spent. The amended motion passed unanimously.

7. ***Diplomatic History*** Zeiler was happy to report that *Diplomatic History* had a fine year. He reported that there were just over 100 submissions and the acceptance rate was 17 percent. A special issue on the environment edited by Kurk Dorsey is one of several topical issues anticipated for the near future. Others special issues will include one on biography edited by Frank Costigliola and one on the end of the Cold War edited by Jeff Engel. A special issue focusing on U.S. troop withdrawals is currently being considered.
8. **Electronic version of the *Guide*** Zeiler stated that a full report on the Electronic version of the *Guide* has been issued and distributed to Council.
9. **2008 annual meeting** Staples reported that the 2008 program committee will meet on January 5. She noted that there have been 58 panels proposed for 48 slots. Panels focusing on early U.S. history are up from previous years. The committee is currently organizing the plenary sessions but suggested that Council consider having the President determine the topic and composition of the Friday session given the relatively late appointment of the program committee. Staples also suggested that the electronic version of conference program contain links to panel abstracts.
10. **2009 annual meeting (Thomas Schwartz, 5 minutes)** Schwartz announced that SHAFR's 2009 annual conference will be held on June 25-28 at the Fairview Park Marriott in Falls Church, Virginia. A local arrangements committee will be put together in the near future.
11. **Bernath Dissertation Grant and Gelfand-Rappaport Fellowship** Johns announced that the Bernath Dissertation Grant was awarded to Jennifer Miller and the Gelfand-Rappaport Fellowship to Min Song. It was noted that the number of applicants remained consistent with previous years. Johns also suggested that the deadline for the Bernath Dissertation Grant be moved back from November 15 to October 15.

- 12. Resolutions of thanks to retiring Council members** Schwartz introduced a resolution thanking former Council members Mark Stoler, Anna Nelson, and Fred Logevall for their valuable service. The resolution passed unanimously.
- 13. Announcements and other business** Hahn announced that he will schedule a three-hour Council meeting in Columbus on Thursday, morning, June 26.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45pm.

Respectfully submitted, Peter L. Hahn Executive Director PLH/cr