

# SHAFR Council Meeting

Friday, January 6, 2012 - 8:00am-12pm

Executive Board Room , Sheraton Chicago Hilton & Towers Illinois  
Chicago , Illinois

## Meeting Minutes

*This meeting was held in accordance with SHAFR By Laws.*

**Council Members Present:** Matt Ambrose, Laura Belmonte, Mark Bradley, Carol Chin, Frank Costigliola, Christopher Dietrich, Mary Dudziak, David Engerman, Peter L. Hahn, Mitchell Lerner, Andrew Preston, Andrew Rotter, Marc Selverstone, Sarah Snyder, Annessa Stagner, Marilyn Young, Tom Zeiler (Presiding)

### **Business Items:**

- 1) **Announcements** Zeiler called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM, welcoming new members of the Council. Attendees introduced themselves.
- 2) **Resolution of thanks** Zeiler introduced a resolution of thanks to departing SHAFR council members including Thomas Schwartz, Jeffrey Engel, Erin Mahan, and Jaideep Prabhu. The resolution was seconded and passed unanimously.
- 3) **Recap of motions passed by e-mail votes** Hahn reviewed motions that had passed by e-mail vote since the last meeting. By e-mail, Council had approved the minutes of the June 2011 Council meeting. Second, Council had approved a motion to return the management of the website to the SHAFR Business Office and the return to static web content upon the resignation of the web editor on December 31, 2011. The motion had explained that because the *DH* editor foresaw online collaborations between the journal and its publisher beginning in 2013, it was recommended that the website return to the Business Office for the short term future. Dudziak expressed concern with reversing the digital presence that had been developed and suggested creating a task force to explore options with regard

to the site and to report in June 2012. Belmonte agreed and indicated that social networking integration ought to be considered as well. Young moved to create a task force to report on the future of SHAFR on the internet at the June 2012 Council meeting. It was clarified that the task force would examine data on “hits” on the website. Dudziak seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Selverstone, Dudziak, Stagner, and Belmonte volunteered for the task force.

- 4) **2011 financial report** Hahn presented oral and written reports on SHAFR’s finances. He encouraged Council members to examine closely the written report and indicated that he would answer questions at any time. Hahn highlighted certain revenues and expenditures in 2011 and reviewed the projected budget for 2012. Overall operating revenue well exceeded operating costs this year. Hahn indicated that without a special, one-time source of revenue, SHAFR would have run a very small operating deficit. Hahn reported that the endowment experienced healthy growth in 2011 and that the end of year value narrowly exceeded the previous all-time high (2007, just before the national financial retraction). Endowment plus cash total is the highest in SHAFR’s history. Hahn alerted Council to anticipate a curtailment in revenue in 2013 after one more year of revenue increases in 2012. Within the next year, Council will need to decide either to reduce spending or to spend endowment earnings. Belmonte commented positively on the clarity of the financial reports and thanked Hahn. Belmonte also stated that waiting to decide how to approach about the 2013 problem seems to be a choice to run a deficit. Zeiler concurred and suggested making it a point of discussion at the June 2012 meeting. Rotter concurred that talking sooner rather than later about strategic spending choices was preferable. Zeiler said that a broader discussion would be better informed after the Ways & Means Committee report and that there are existing commitments by the Membership Committee which need to be met. Zeiler also noted that the Diversity and International Travel Grants needed to be reauthorized and the Program Committee had yet to report. Hahn noted that in several grant programs money is being left unallocated, which might provide some leeway in future years. Costigliola moved to continue the Diversity and

International Travel Grants at current level for another year. Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Rotter moved to accept the 2011 financial report, which was seconded passed unanimously.

- 5) **Ways and Means Committee Report** Young, for the Ways & Means Committee, reported on a proposal from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for a SHAFR-sponsored internship payment to offset living expenses, proposed at \$5,000 per semester for 1 part-time research assistant. Dudziak asked if there were plans to limit eligibility to those who do not already live in the DC metro area or who are SHAFR members. Young confirmed that this was under consideration. Costigliola mentioned that this could add strain to the budget given the expected 2013 decline in cash flow. Snyder asked why such a well-funded institution needs financial assistance. Zeiler said that this proposal is part of a broader move to support graduate research and fellowships as a way of increasing the visibility of SHAFR.
- Dudziak asked two questions: Should SHAFR give fellowships to grad students for living expenses while maintaining flexibility about what program the graduate students are involved in, because it aligns with SHAFR's objectives? Should SHAFR choose to partner with the Wilson Center, because such a partnership will accrue a benefit to SHAFR that could not be acquired otherwise? Dudziak expressed concern that the program was insufficiently reciprocal and that SHAFR should explore getting more out of it. Rotter stated that the proposal might be premature. Rotter recommended a discussion of broader spending strategy before getting to specific spending proposals. Rotter recommended that Council suspend discussion of the proposal until June 2012, when it would grasp how sharp the revenue contraction will be. Dietrich expressed general favorability to the proposal, provided it could be afforded. Zeiler asked if Council wanted a more general discussion about where SHAFR is heading in terms of new spending programs.
- Costigliola indicated he desired a discussion but no vote as of yet. Young recommended adding the proposal to the June agenda. Selverstone stated that SHAFR should focus on providing permanent funding opportunities so that such programs will not become instantly vulnerable to revenue fluctuations. Young

moved to defer consideration to June 2012, Selverstone seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Young also reported for Ways & Means on SHAFR's involvement in the National History Center seminar series. NHC director Roger Louis asked SHAFR to double its existing support to \$10,000 per year, on the basis that SHAFR has been prominently featured in the program, many speakers have been SHAFR members, and all talks relating to SHAFR have included links to the SHAFR website. The increase would be designed to allow younger scholars to defray costs of attendance at the program. Young reported that many Ways & Means members thought that \$5,000 per annum was appropriate. Young favored increasing the level of support. Rotter pointed out that the AHA had absorbed the NHC. Maybe it would be opportune to tie our continued support to a broadening of administrative input and a higher profile of SHAFR members as speakers. Bradley recommended \$5,000 this year, with review of the situation next year, and noted that the NHC focused on issues of concern to SHAFR. Dudziak said that the transition could be an opportunity to increase SHAFR's involvement. Young moved that SHAFR double the subsidy for the coming year. Costigliola seconded. The vote failed by a vote of 1 yes, 12 no, 0 abstentions. Young then moved to renew the subsidy at existing levels, and in communications with the NHC make clear that budget issues will require annual review and prevent a longer-term commitment, and that SHAFR must be included in the title of lectures relating to foreign relations in the seminar series. Lerner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Hahn reported on changes to the roster of the Ways & Means Committee. He noted that Jeff Engel and Andrew Rotter were newly appointed members, and Emily Rosenberg was the Endowment Liaison. Following up on Council's decision in June 2011 to review the management of the Endowment, Rosenberg is now heading up a review of the present firm's management record and surveying alternative firms. Bradley and Dudziak recommended that in the review of endowment accounts, attention should be paid to the option of putting funds in socially-responsible accounts. Zeiler stated that Rosenberg will be scheduled to report at the June 2012 meeting.

- 6) **SHAFR annual meeting reforms** Hahn, having consulted with conference consultant Jennifer Walton, presented a series of suggestions and recommendations on business practices associated with the annual meeting. Council approved 2012 conference fees at the same level as 2011. Council recommended some souvenir (tee shirt or tote bag but without any corporate logo or name) and opposed allowing vendors to purchase access to the presidential luncheon table. Council approved continuing the subsidy of lunch tickets and the deep subsidy of student tickets, recommending that students should select which lunch to attend at reduced rate. Council approved the concept of package deals (table and ad combination at discount) for vendors. Council approved provision of AV as in past years (making it available to those who request by an early deadline so sessions needing AV can be concentrated). Council approved Walton setting up a Twitter account for the 2012 conference (and recommended that the task force on the website also reflect on this medium). Hahn recommended a transition from Paypal to Visa/MasterCard/Discover for processing of electronic payments. He summarized the costs projected by the bank and estimated that a slight savings to SHAFR and convenience to SHAFR and guests would result. Costigliola made a motion authorizing the transition to credit cards; Young seconded the motion; and it passed unanimously.
- 7) **Reforms to travel grants policy** Council approved recommendations from Hahn for reforms to the administration of travel grants: a) Diversity and International travel grants will be limited to coach airfare (or its equivalent in mileage) and three nights hotel. b) Travel grants will be reimbursed by Paypal or paper check only, per choice of traveller, with fees to be absorbed by traveller. c) Travellers have 90 days after completion of travel to submit receipts for reimbursement. Unclaimed allocations will be withdrawn after 90 days. d) The complimentary one-year membership awarded to Diversity and International travel grantees will be awarded for the year in which the grant is awarded and will not be awarded to grantees who are currently members of SHAFR.

- 8) **Motion on providing SHAFR conference travel to Passport editor** Lerner moved that Council allocate travel funds for the Passport editor to attend the SHAFR conference (on the same basis as Council members). Lerner stated that it is important that the editor brief Council annually and make other contacts at the conference. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
- 9) **Book reviews in Diplomatic History/Passport/H-Diplo:** Zeiler reported that *Diplomatic History* struggled to find reviewers of some books because individuals were previously recruited to review for H-Diplo and/or *Passport*. Zeiler suggested more consultation between *Passport* and *DH* staff and recommended that *Passport* rely on unpublished reviewers (as *DH* recruits only published authors). Dudziak stated that H-Diplo was not a competitor but an important feature of diplomatic historians' web presence. Young stated that she did not see H-Diplo as competition. Belmonte and Selverstone indicated that H-Diplo often gets reviewers before books come out. Preston recommended that the *DH* book review editor be authorized to recruit reviewers at an earlier date. Zeiler indicated that some form of stream-lining along these lines will happen.
- 10) **Discussion on selection of conference venues** Zeiler welcomed the input of Council on the selection of the venue for the 2014 annual meeting, noting that the Bylaws empowered Council to schedule annual meetings, that he had issued a call for proposals to host the meeting, and that three written proposals had been submitted. Dudziak recommended that Council make decisions about the geographic distribution of meetings. Belmonte indicated that few other organizations are so bound to being close to archival centers. Young recommended more meetings on the West Coast in general. Costigliola recalled that a recent poll indicated that the "every other year in DC" approach was highly favored. Belmonte suggested rotating the region of the conference in non-DC years (following the AHA model). Costigliola said that universities' willingness to host will prove useful in lean times. Zeiler affirmed that Council will vote on the venue for future conferences. When Zeiler asked for comments on the "every other year in DC" tradition, a consensus emerged in favor given the appeal of archives in that area,

especially for graduate students and overseas scholars. It was recognized that even if costs prohibit booking ideal locations (like a hotel on a Metro line), the metro DC area remained desirable. Council reviewed the three proposals to host the 2014 annual meeting and encouraged Zeiler to solicit additional details, especially about financial subsidies. Zeiler indicated that he would follow up with all three and bring the matter back to Council for a decision. Hahn indicated that a decision by e-mail this spring, if possible, would be preferable to waiting for the June meeting as it would allow technical contract negotiations to open sooner. Hahn indicated that a conference broker arranged the hotels at that the 2009, 2011, and 2013 conferences in DC, saving considerable expense. The broker has offered to negotiate non-DC venues as well. Dudziak asked about clauses in contracts regarding contingencies in the event of labor disputes, as both OAH and AHA have had to face that issue in the past. Zeiler and Hahn agreed to look into this matter. Reports

- 11) **2012 Summer Institute** Rotter and Costigliola reported that the 2012 Summer Institute had been publicized on the SHAFR website, H-Diplo, and *Passport*. A meeting room has been donated and air-conditioned apartments made available for all the participants. Applications are due on February 1, 2012.
- 12) ***Diplomatic History*** Zeiler alluded to the long written report distributed with the agenda and reported that the Editorial Board is involved in organizing and choosing all forums published in *DH*.
- 13) ***SHAFR Guide*** Zeiler reported that over 500 new entries have been submitted this year. The updates continue to be posted every October 1 and April 1. Belmonte asked about usage rates for the electronic version. Zeiler noted that it might be time to reassess the utility of the *Guide*, perhaps through a poll of the membership.
- 14) **Summer Institute Oversight Committee** Rotter and Dudziak recommended that Council advise the Summer Institute Oversight Committee to take a more active role in issuing a Call for Proposals for venues, on which they could follow up in June. Hahn noted that funding authority for the Institute expires in 2012. Costigliola

moved authorizing the Summer Institute in 2013 at current funding level and reevaluating the program as part of the general financial discussion in June. Selverstone seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Discussion ensued on whether to merge the Summer Institute Oversight Committee with the Ways and Means Committee. No decision was reached.

15) **2012 Annual Meeting** Engerman reported that the 2012 annual meeting would take place in Hartford on June 28-30. The Program Committee received 90 full-panel proposals, making this the most selective conference in the last five years with a 70% acceptance rate. The Program Committee decided on 62 final panels. The plenary session will feature Fred Kaplan, Marilyn Young, and an individual from the Historian's Office at the Department of State. The Program Committee will schedule more panels on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Submissions from non-Anglophone countries were up. The committee tried to work in individual paper proposals. There were 14 applicants for Diversity and International travel grants. Because A/V costs continue to soar, the Program Committee limited A/V panels to two per session and located them in common rooms. The electronic submissions system seems to be working well, with no major problems. Rotter asked why there were fewer sessions than in recent years. Costigliola explained that SHAFR signed the contract before the popularity of the non-DC conferences exploded. SHAFR originally contracted for 46 sessions and was later able to increase that number to 62, the hotel's maximum. Dudziak asked if there was collaboration between the Membership and Program Committees. Zeiler stated that Council should consider unifying the Program Committee's and Membership Committee's travel funding, especially for international scholars.

16) **2013 annual meeting** Hahn reported that Young had signed a contract to hold the 2013 annual meeting on June 20-22 at the Renaissance Arlington Capitol View in Arlington, Virginia.

17) **Lesson Plans Initiative** Hahn alluded to the written report from John Tully that was distributed with the agenda. Hahn indicated that although the lesson plans initiative

had exceeded its original three-year mandate, Tully remained committed to bringing it to fruition. Belmonte noted that the State Department is embarking on a very similar project and recommended that SHAFR scale back its efforts. Zeiler advised that the program could be absorbed by the Teaching Committee. Zeiler believed that programs focused on teaching are worthy and that SHAFR should continue to advance teaching.

- 18) **Grad Students Grants and Fellowships** On behalf of the Grad Students Grants and Fellowships Committee, Hahn reported the following decisions: Stuart L. Bernath Dissertation Research Grant: Rebecca Herman W. Stull Holt Dissertation Fellowship: Alexander Noonan Lawrence Gelfand – Armin Rappaport Dissertation Fellowship: Lauren F. Turek Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grants: Hannah Farber, Eric Gettig, Emily Merchant, Matthew Shannon, Brandon Byrd, Jonathan Hunt, Samantha Iyer, Nathan Kurz, Steven Mcgrail, Oliver Murphey, Tim Sayle, Christy Thornton, David Wight
- 19) **Williams Junior Faculty Research Grants** On behalf of the committee, Hahn reported that the 2012 William Appleman Williams Junior Faculty Research Grants would be awarded to Bethany Keene and Michael Schmidli.
- 20) **Hogan Foreign Language Fellowship** On behalf of the committee, Hahn reported that the 2012 Michael J. Hogan Foreign Language Fellowship would be awarded to Helen Pho.

Zeiler concluded the meeting by thanking Council members and others for attending. The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.

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