

SHAFR Council Meeting

Friday, January 5, 2018, 8 AM - 11:59 PM

Harding Room, Marriott Wardman Park
Washington, DC

Meeting Minutes

Council Members Present: Terry Anderson, Matthew Connelly, Mary Dudziak, David Engerman, Peter Hahn (presiding), Julia Irwin, Barbara Keys, Adriane Lentz-Smith, Brian McNamara, Amy Sayward (ex officio), Kathryn Statler.

Others Attending: Mark Sanchez, Patricia Thomas, Anne Foster, Andrew Johns.

Business Items

Thanks to retiring Council members: Following introductions, Peter Hahn invited a resolution of thanks to retiring Council members Petra Goedde, Paul Kramer, Amanda Boczar, and Fred Logevall for their service. The motion was made by David Engerman, seconded by Matthew Connelly, and passed unanimously.

Recap of motions passed by correspondence: It was noted that the only Council action taken since the June 2017 meeting was approval of the minutes of that Council meeting. There was no further discussion.

SHAFR financials: Council reviewed the financial reports on Fiscal Year 2017 (1 November 2016 to 31 October 2017). Given that the Council's endowment spending rule (withdrawing no more than 3% of the endowment based on a three-year rolling average) takes effect during FY2018 and in light of uncertainty about future royalties, Council approved a number of recommendations from the Ways & Means Committee to balance the FY2018 budget. These resolutions included awarding only one Marilyn Blatt Young Dissertation Completion Fellowship starting in 2018 (passed unanimously after discussion), trimming the budget for the Global Scholars and Diversity grants for the 2018 SHAFR Conference (passed unanimously after discussion), and ending

financial support for the National History Center (passed unanimously after discussion). Additionally, Engerman moved (Terry Anderson seconded) that those responsible for organizing the social event at each year's conference organize the event and set the ticket costs in such a way that at least 50% of the cost of the event is recouped through ticket sales. This motion passed unanimously.

SHAFR publications: Engerman reported on behalf of the task force searching for a publisher once the Oxford University Press contract expires on 31 December 2019 (deadline to notify OUP of non-renewal is 31 December 2018). As a follow-up to sending a call for proposals to potential publishers, Engerman and Petra Goedde held informational meetings with several publishers during the AHA, preparatory to the February deadline for formal proposals. The task force plans to present a recommendation to Council in June 2018. Council members identified several features they would favor in a future contract.

Patricia Thomas of Oxford University Press reviewed some of the statistics on consortia agreements (referring to a pre-circulated written report), affirmed that revenue from *Diplomatic History* being available on JSTOR would be reflected in the next report, and stated that the working relationship between Oxford and the editorial team in Indiana was running very smoothly. Council members asked about social media strategies and the difficulties that SHAFR members currently face in becoming members or renewing their memberships through the OUP website.

Anne Foster, editor of *Diplomatic History*, referring to the editors' written report to Council, announced that new editorial board members had been appointed: Nicole Phelps, David Milne, and Emily Conroy-Krutz. Conversation then commenced on institutional support of the journal at Indiana University, which is scheduled to continue through June 2019.

Hahn asked Council to consider the written review of the editors of *Diplomatic History*, which called the publication "the jewel in SHAFR's crown" and offered strong endorsement of the current editorial team. Engerman proposed (Anderson seconded) a resolution, which passed unanimously, that expressed Council's enthusiastic

endorsement of the work of the current editors and authorized Hahn to pursue negotiations with Indiana University about institutional support for a second five-year term.

Andrew Johns, editor of *Passport*, expressed his desire to maintain the current specifications for *Passport* under the new publisher contract but also expressed his understanding that Council would decide based on the best overall interests of the organization. The current arrangement has allowed *Passport* to publish a greater number and variety of pieces than might otherwise have been possible. Discussion followed about making individual articles searchable and tweetable as well as ending the delay between the paper and web publication of *Passport*, all of which could draw in a broader and more diverse audience of potential SHAFR members and authors. It was also suggested that increasing the diversity of authors of the books that are reviewed would be an asset.

Potential by-law amendments: Johns, in his role as outgoing chair of the Nominating Committee, discussed with Council the rationale of the committee's unanimous recommendations on by-law amendments that would shorten the election period (given the current electronic means of voting), eliminate the pairing of candidates on the ballot for each open position, and create eligibility prerequisites for candidates for election to Council and the Vice Presidency/Presidency.

Council discussed each of the Nominating Committee's recommendations. Mary Dudziak moved (Barbara Keys seconded) to decline the recommendation to replace the practice of pairing two candidates for each open Council seat with a practice of nominating a pool of candidates for all open seats and recognizing the top two overall vote-getters as the winners; the motion was approved by a majority vote (9-2-0). Dudziak moved (Keys seconded) to approve the recommendation to shorten the annual election cycle by ending balloting on September 30; Council passed that motion unanimously.

Regarding eligibility qualifications for election to the Nominating Committee, Council, or the Vice Presidency, Council members expressed concern about limiting the pool of

candidates to only those persons who met the proposed prior service prerequisites. It was also pointed out that the membership had—in three of the last four years—elected Vice Presidents who had not met the proposed qualifications. Dudziak moved (Brian McNamara seconded) to decline the recommendation pertaining to eligibility requirements for nominees for Vice President; Council passed the motion unanimously. Dudziak moved (McNamara seconded) a motion to decline the recommendation pertaining to eligibility requirements for those standing for Council and the Nominating Committee; Council passed the motion by a majority vote (10-1-0).

Additionally, Keys pointed out an inconsistency in the by-laws regarding run-off elections. Specifically, she noted that the phrase (Article 5(a)) “When more than two nominees are slated for a particular office and no candidate receives a majority vote, a run-off election will be held between the candidates with the two highest vote totals” became obsolete when the membership previously ratified an amendment providing that ties would be resolved by Council vote (Section 5(e)). Dudziak moved (Anderson seconded) that Council approve the deletion of the obsolete text. Council approved that motion unanimously.

Council thus directed that two proposed by-laws amendments (shortening the election cycle and removing the obsolete text on tie-breaking) shall be submitted to the membership for ratification votes on the 2018 ballot.

Proposals to host the 2020 SHAFR Conference: Council discussed proposals to host the 2020 SHAFR Conference in New Orleans, LA; San Juan, PR; and College Station, TX. Concerns were expressed about the higher fares and limited number of daily flights into College Station and the limited number of SHAFR members currently in Puerto Rico. The institutional support specified in the New Orleans proposal made it particularly attractive to several Council members. After assessing the sense of Council, it was determined that Hahn and Amy Sayward will further investigate the proposals and make a recommendation to Council in June.

Survey of SHAFR membership:

Julia Irwin presented a follow-up report on the challenges facing a general survey of the membership, primarily the inability to link it to the current membership process, which would likely garner the most complete data. Rather than simply waiting for that development, Council brain-stormed other ideas for gathering input from the membership about the current state of SHAFR. Adriane Lentz-Smith moved (Connelly seconded) that the task force survey the membership as soon as it is feasible along the lines suggested by the task force. Council unanimously approved the motion.

Conference events: Sayward asked for advice about how best to manage the SHAFR luncheon at AHA conferences (where the Bernath Memorial Lecture is presented) given that AHA scheduling changes limit the luncheon time to 90 minutes and thereby forces a choice between either an on-site, 90-minute luncheon (at higher cost) or an off-site, longer luncheon that conflicts with one of the sessions (at lower cost). She will follow up on this—as well as the final costs associated with the one-drink ticket system implemented at this year's SHAFR reception at the AHA.

Mark Sanchez, SHAFR's Conference Coordinator, reported on preparations for the June 2018 conference, which prompted a discussion about how to best maximize accessibility for a diverse set of members and about how to minimize audio-visual expenses.

SHAFR Guide: Due to inclement weather, Jason Prevost of Brill was unable to attend the Council meeting in person. Sayward will meet with him later in the conference and report to Council on the proposed SHAFR member discount. The hope is that this can be implemented in the month of January.

Council adjourned at 11:59 a.m.