

AAR/WR MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)
26 October 2021, 1-2:03 pm PST
Online Zoom Meeting

Present:

Jake Nagasawa (Regional Coordinator), James Berry (Southern California & Western Region Student Director), John Erickson (Vice President and Program Chair), Anna Hennessey (Past President), Susan Maloney (Honorary Board Member, Advisor, and Facilitator, non-voting), Emily Silverman (President), Roberta Sabbath (Nevada Representative), Jacob Perez (Conference Manager)

Notes: Vice President Elect, Marie Cartier was not in attendance. Meeting began on time. Meeting called at 1:04 pm.

Minutes compiled by James Berry

- I. Greetings and Welcome
 - A. President Emily Silverman (ES) began the meeting with greetings and welcome. Gave thanks to Roberta Sabbath (RS) and John Erickson (JE) for their work on the 2022 conference contract and turned the meeting over to them.
- II. Cancellation and Deposit Concerns
 - A. John Erickson raised the topic of a potential refund of the deposit in the event of a Covid related cancellation.
 - B. Susan Maloney noted that AAR/WR can put notes in the contract. Suggested writing the verbal understanding that AAR/WR would not be liable into the understanding. Noted that any other areas of discrepancy should be put in writing. Stressed the importance of writing procedures and policies so that the next generation could take over without confusion. Asked if anyone had anything else to add to the contract. No one responded.
 - C. John Erickson posted the following in the zoom chat as potential language to be added to the contract
 1. "Should the event be cancelled, the above amounts that are associated with the required deposit shall be returned to their respective departments/parties and AAR/WR will not be held responsible for the required deposit."
 - D. A vote was taken to ratify the language and authorize the relevant parties to sign a contract if they are accepted by UNLV.
 1. John Erickson motioned to accept
 2. Anna Hennessey seconded
 3. Emily Silverman conducted the vote
 4. Unanimous acceptance
- III. Pricing, Memberships, and Guests
 - A. Roberta Sabbath suggested promoting the conferences location in Las Vegas and

the Hyatt's accommodations to attract participants

- B. Roberta Sabbath raised concern about membership and conference fees for non-religion faculty and students at UNLV
- C. Also asked about feasibility of guest passes for friends, family, and colleagues at UNLV.
- D. John Erickson mentioned that membership requirement for presenters was tied to National AAR's requirements.
- E. Added the discussion to New Business
- F. Note: At this time Jacob Perez, and Roberta Sabbath left the meeting
- IV. Non-Violent Communication and National Conference board meeting Nov. 19th 2021.
 - A. Emily Silverman expressed the desire for a more effective and healthy board.
 - B. Stressed the importance of Anna Hennessey and Susan Maloney's work on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the EC via the policy file.
 - C. Laid out plans for a nonviolent communications workshop to coincide with the annual board meeting. Planned on a 90 minute workshop for a potential \$250 fee.
 - D. John Erickson presented a potential schedule for the November 19th 2021 meeting as follows (all times in PST):
 - 1. 11am-12pm board meeting; 12-12:30pm break; 12:30-1pm board meeting; 1-2:30pm nonviolent communication workshop
 - E. Anna Hennessey suggested setting the advertised time as 11am-3pm to provide cushion for time overruns
 - 1. General consensus
 - F. John Erickson asked Emily Silverman to communicate with the workshop facilitator and confirm the price via an invoice.
 - G. Emily Silverman agreed and specified that the facilitator preferred electronic payment.
 - H. John Erickson asked if the EC could confirm the payment via email
 - I. Susan Maloney and Anna Hennessey affirmed that it was acceptable
- V. Potential Agenda for Upcoming Board Meeting
 - A. John Erickson introduced a potential agenda prepared by Anna Hennessey
 - 1. Update board on conference preparations
 - 2. Vaccination requirements
 - 3. Vote to approve William Martin as Northern California representative
 - 4. Vote to appoint Souad Ali for a third term as Arizona representative
 - 5. Budget Discussion
 - 6. Discussion of Susan Maloney and Anna Hennessey's work on policy file updates
 - 7. Update on board plans for 2023 UC Davis conference
- VI. Host Selection
 - A. Emily Silverman asked for clarification regarding the status of the host rotation
 - B. Anna Hennessey stated that Southern California is due

- C. Emily Silverman expressed the desire to work with whatever institution was willing regardless of location.
- D. John Erickson mentioned that he will be working with Vice President Elect Marie Cartier on the next location.
- E. John Erickson also agreed to reach out to the units to check the status of submissions

VII. AAR Membership Requirements, Guest Fees, and Outside Scholars

- A. Susan Maloney raised the issues brought up by Roberta Sabbath. Namely questions of AAR membership requirement and guest fees. Stressed the importance of protecting the academic stature of the conference. Framed membership as a professional requirement. Susan praised Roberta Sabbath for her work on the conference and stated that the EC has the power to subsidize on a case to case basis, but payment must be made for attendance. Framed this as a courtesy to the host institution.
- B. Susan Maloney argued against putting such small matters into the policy file, but agreed that it should be addressed since the concern keeps coming up.
- C. Susan Maloney suggested seeking outside funding. Mentioned Souad Ali's generosity and potential institutional funding for undergraduates etc.
- D. Emily Silverman raised the issue of whether plenary speakers need to be members.
- E. John Erickson stated that plenary speakers are exempt
- F. Emily Silverman clarified that paper presenters must be AAR members along with paying conference fee.
- G. John Erickson stated that scholarships can be handed out on a case by case basis
- H. Anna Hennessey sent via chat 1:33
 - 1. I sent this to John from our Policy File and Operating Agreement about the membership issue: "You must be a member of the American Academy of Religion in order to present papers or serve as a respondent during the annual conference" (page 24). The Operating Agreement says that attendance and participation in non-governance related regional activities (conference) is dependent upon being a member of the AAR (OA 5.1, page 11).
- I. Anna Hennessey stated that a small fund for scholarships exists, but unsure of how much
- J. Susan Maloney stated that the EC has the power to implement exceptions, but cautioned against exceptions becoming the rule. Suggested writing a clear policy that specifies how and why scholarships can be distributed.
- K. Jake Nagasawa placed the travel grant policy in the chat as a guide
 - 1. Travel GrantsThe region awards \$250 travel awards, at 4 awards per year. Of this amount, \$500 will be \$250/each and the other \$500 is allocated at the discretion of the President. Awards shall be limited in the following

ways: based on need/lack of institutional support and applicants must not have received a travel grant from the region in the last three years.
(Approved by the board in March 2020)

- L. John Erickson suggested tabling this discussion until later. Suggested that Anna Hennessey and Susan Maloney tackle it in their policy file work.
- M. James Berry asked for clarification as to what Roberta Sabbath's concerns were.
- N. Anna Hennessey stated that they were:
 - 1. Exemptions for people presenting from outside the field
 - 2. Guest fees
- O. John Erickson clarified that the guest fee is \$15. Does not want to create too many caveats. Suggested that hardship cases could email with petitions. Asked Susan Maloney and Anna Hennessey to address it. Board agreed to entrust them with the task.
- P. Susan Maloney asked James Berry to clarify in the notes which issues they should address. James agreed (included under action items)

VIII. Budget

- A. Jake Nagasawa stated that he had submitted last year's budget to National AAR and agreed to send the report to the board. Stated that the current balance is over \$21,000.
- B. John Erickson was pleased and noted that it would be more than enough to cover upcoming catering expenses.
- C. Emily Silverman asked what the status of the AAR regional development grants was. Who won etc.
- D. Jake Nagasawa was unsure of who won specifically, but stated that WR did not have any recipients/ Said his sense was national was rethinking development grant and making them more specific/thematic.
- E. Emily Silverman asked what budget/powers of negotiation was available in the selection of the plenary speaker. Travel, hotel, additional stipend etc.
- F. Susan Maloney stated that traditionally the budget was \$500 with no travel or accommodations. Normally treated as service to the guild.
- G. John Erickson suggested a direct ask with supplemental outside funding or zoom. Clarified that negotiating power is only \$500.

IX. Covid Protocols

- A. Emily Silverman raised concerns over Covid protocols on both the national and regional level.
- B. Jake Nagasawa recounted that similar concerns had been raised at the Regional Coordinators meeting, but no official direction has been given.
- C. John Erickson directed Susan Maloney and Anna Hennessey to put pandemic response language into the policy file. Such as:
 - 1. We require proof of vaccination or a negative test within 72 hours, Non vaccinated persons must wear masks and the conference will follow all state and county guidelines.
- D. Meeting adjourned at 2:03 pm PST.

Action Items

- 1. John Erickson: Add liability language to the conference contract. If accepted: sign contract
- 2. Emily Silverman: Obtain invoice and final cost from nonviolent communication facilitator. Send to the EC for approval.
- 3. Anna Hennessey and Susan Maloney: Clarify policy on the following points
 - a. Necessity of presenters to be AAR members
 - b. Necessity of all conference fees and memberships to be paid
 - c. Process for the EC to provide funding on a case by case basis
 - d. Process for allocating funds for these scholarships
- 4. Anna Hennessey and Susan Maloney: Include pandemic response language in the policy file.