

ASOR Board of Trustees Meeting  
InterContinental Buckhead Atlanta  
Hotel  
November 22,  
2015

Present: B.W. Ruffner

get institutions to join; consider a tiered approach perhaps, because those students who have access to fellowships through institutional members. Re: 99% acceptance rate: Susan comments that this is a concern of the program committee. Is not interested in increasing the number of sessions at the meeting, but the quality of the meeting's papers. Eric thinks that tenure committees at R1 universities don't ask, in general, although some other colleges do that. BW Ruffner: would this undermine grad student access?

Vivian Bull's group: conversation was resource driven; were concerned that there were a lot of priorities that were measurable; (1) need to set out main priorities, so that those that require funding are identified; (2) needs more effort put into raising funds; may mean stepping outside normal areas where we have raised funds in the past; (3) requires board level commitment to the CHI of the US DOS were to withdraw; (4) question of implementation in priority and resource setting; need to have active development program that is ongoing and institutionally-ongoing operation; because we are competing with the very institutions we have as members. Experience in contacts and working with resources from different areas than we have developed in the past. Optimistic that this represents a positive goal for ASOR going forward.

Carol Meyers' group: (1) liked the growth oriented aspects (diversity, inclusion of non NAs in org structure, committees; admirable goals of diversity are not yet reflected in the Board, not so much gender/ethnicity but rather focused on the Israel/Jordan sector of our interests); (2) structure – needs a short version/elevator version so that it is tied together tightly; (3) section on outreach; needs to be more specific. There is a blurring of goals and implementation (possibly there needs to be balance across plan). (4) ASOR is more than just archaeology; in terms of public awareness of broader goals and in terms of grants: there are other types of field work and we want to support and encourage this as well through grant funding.

Richard Coffman's group: (1) propose an additional bullet point for the who we are and what we do: Encouraging the proper archival preservation of the documentary materials of archaeological research (add to mission); (2) Plan is solid piece of work; long on great ideas and goals; uneven on how we get there and what the organization on what ASOR looks like when we arrive (what is the realized aspiration?) (3) Liked the international reach, more inclusion of international membership (the 22% currently outside the USA); likes the idea of the international meeting, unsure of the logistics, conceptually it's ok; need some kind of consumer-friendly public outreach type program, perhaps a Sat/Sun afternoon: requires a lot of work planning, and good marketing, even if it's marketing to the local community; (4) Name issue and branding; important fundamental step that we need to take: want to see this fleshed out how to do deal with it one way or the other.



Business Items (9:45-10:30)

5. Approval of the Minutes from the April Board Meeting (April 18, 2015).

BE IT RESOLVED, the Minutes are approved. (Carol and Eric). Unanimously approved.

6. Committee Appointments

Bill Caraher, for a second three-year term as a member of the  
Program  
Committee (January 1, 2016- December 31, 2018).  
Helen Dixon, for an

Rachel Hallotte and Larry Geraty thank Andy and his staff for their assistance. We tried an electronic vote this year; many more participated. The results were: Ed Wright and Jeff Blakely (institutional members) and Ann-Marie Knoblauch, Jane DeRose Evans. The President says thank you and a warm goodbye to Catherine Duff and Barry Gittlen for institutional members.

Susan Ackerman: welcome to Jeff Blakely, a new member.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Trustees affirm the appointments. Unanimously approved.

8. Board Trustee Appointments (Susan Ackerman)

BE IT RESOLVED, Eric Meyers is nominated for a position on the Board of Trustees for three years (2016-2018). Unanimously approved.

Eric Meyers has been a trustee for about 35 years.

BE IT RESOLVED, James Strange is nominated for a position on the Board of Trustees for three years (2016-2018). Unanimously approved.

Randy Helm: has considerable managerial expertise in academia, a passion for his roots in the ANE, an area in which he published in his earlier life.

BE IT RESOLVED, Payton "Randy" Helm is nominated for a position on the Board of Trustees for three years (2016-2018). Unanimously approved.

Thank you to Sheldon Fox as 6 years as Treasurer and for his service on the Board.

Sheldon Fox responds that he already has registered for San Antonio and Andy still has him on speed dial.

9. Treasurer's Report (Richard Coffman)

**Treasurer's Report (Richard Coffman)**

The Treasurer initially focused the Board's attention on the Fast Facts at a Glance table in the Finance Committee Report. The first four entries summarize ASOR's cash and investment position at June 30, 2015. It is solid. The FY 2015 net income (i.e., unrestricted assets available for operations) was \$51,062. The total value of all financial accounts (checking accounts, savings accounts and Investment Accounts) was in excess of \$2.4 million as of June 30, 2015.

The Investment Account yields were over 5.4%, but the memberships and subscriptions revenue was slightly negative across the board. Memberships and subscriptions revenue is not driving the financial engine of the organization; it is one of the targeted goals of the new Strategic Plan.

ITEM	AMOUNT	CHANGE FROM FY 2014
Increase in unrestricted assets Available for operations (i.e., unrestricted net income)	\$51,062	N.A.
General Fund (i.e., unrestricted cash available for operations)	\$559,375	+17.64%
Market value of all Investment Accounts	\$1,525,081	+7.12%
Total value of all financial accounts (checking accounts, savings accounts and Investment Accounts)	\$2,415,579	+15.19%
Memberships and subscriptions revenue (total)	\$405,633	-1.72%
Individual Membership revenue (accrual basis)	\$162,003	-0.69%
Institutional Membership revenue (cash basis)	\$78,000	-1.27%
Subscriptions Revenue (accrual basis)	\$224,614	-2.14%
Investment income (Fellowship Accounts)	\$39,091	+5.8%
Investment income (Endowment Accounts)	\$35,097	+5.4%

## INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS

The Treasurer made three observations regarding the Investment Accounts.

Changes to the Investment Report. Several Board members requested that the Investment Reports be streamlined, so the FY 2015 Investment Report eliminates the columns for FYE 2009, 2010, and 2011. The current year (FY 2015) + three years of comparative financial information are plenty.

ASOR Custom Benchmark. A new column to the far right of the investment reports, entitled "ASOR Custom Benchmark," has been added. The ASOR Custom Benchmark, which more closely resembles ASOR's actual investment allocations under the Investment and Spending Policy, replaces the S&P 500 Index going forward as the benchmark to measure Investment Account performance. It was suggested by Sheldon Fox, and is a derivative of the benchmark used by his firm to evaluate the investment performance of the endowments of certain of its non-profit clients.

Eighty percent (80%) of the ASOR Custom Benchmark is composed of the MSCI All Cap World Index ("ACWI")—which is based on a global stock portfolio of large and mid-cap stocks—as opposed to the S&P 500 Index, which includes only U.S. large cap stocks. The ACWI benchmark is commonly used by pensions and endowments.

The remaining 20% of the ASOR Custom Benchmark is composed of the Barclays Aggregate Bond Index, the leading index for benchmarking fixed income returns.

Sheldon suggested the 80% ACWI/20% Barclays Aggregate Bond Index combination because 80% of the Schwab investment model utilized by ASOR consists of equities. For the 12-month period ending June 30, 2015, the ASOR Custom Benchmark is 1.36%, which is calculated as follows: +1.23% (ACWI) x .80 plus +1.86% (Barclay's) x .20. For the 3-month period ending October 31, 2015, the ASOR Custom Benchmark is -1.5%.

Sequoia Fund Adjustments. The Finance Committee recently made significant special adjustments to ASOR's investments in the Sequoia Fund—which are down 15.5% from their value at June 30, 2015. By way of comparison, the S&P 500 is down only 1.5% for the same period.

Being generally aware that the Sequoia Fund is the largest shareholder of Valeant Pharmaceuticals, a recent hot topic in the financial press, Sheldon probed further and discovered that through prior gains in Valeant, Sequoia Fund management had allowed its Valeant investment to grow to comprise 28.7% of the Sequoia Fund portfolio at June 30, 2015. Valeant's business model and accounting practices have recently been under attack, causing the stock to decline in value almost 60% from June 30, 2015 to October 31, 2015.

Sheldon believes Sequoia Fund management violated a fundamental investment principle by allowing one stock to comprise almost 30% of the Fund. As a result of the investment of approximately 50% of ASOR's large-cap equity allocation in the Sequoia Fund, Valeant stock effectively comprised approximately 9% of the General Endowment portfolio, and approximately 13% of the Platt and Harris portfolios at June 30, 2015. These are uncomfortable investment levels in a single stock.

Accordingly, Sheldon recommended that ASOR liquidate a portion of its Sequoia Fund investments across the board to reduce the overall Sequoia Fund investment to 25% of ASOR's large-cap equity allocation for each of the affected ASOR investment portfolios. Sheldon further recommended that the Sequoia Fund sales proceeds be reinvested in the Schwab 1000 Fund, which is ASOR's other large-cap investment fund. The adjustments have been made and are in process. We will continue to monitor the Sequoia Fund investments closely.

#### FY 2015 ANNUAL AUDIT

Romeo, Wiggins & Co., LLP, the ASOR outside audit firm, has completed the audit. No issues were identified. ASOR received another clean audit report. The auditors applauded the work of Andy Vaughn and his staff.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees approves the FY 2015 audited Financial Statements from the Finance Committee. Unanimously approved.

Sten LaBianca offers thanks to Selma Omerefendic for her great work in the past years.

## FY 2016 JOURNALS ESCROW RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of the Journals Escrow Account is to set aside the funds required to publish ASOR journals so as to fulfill ASOR's obligations to its members and subscribers. This is an annual calculation requiring Board approval. The FY 2016 Journals Escrow Account analysis and recommendation is equal to 40% of the FY 2015 deferred journal income.

Journals Escrow account is a 40% set aside this year. There is no change in the way this is calculated as in years past.

BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Trustees approves the motion from the Finance Committee to accept the FY 2016 Journals Escrow Recommendation. Unanimously approved. Unanimously approved.

Break (10:30)

Agenda is reordered to allow the President to retrieve a document.

10. Other Business:

Membership and Outreach Meeting. Endorsed a concept of a raffle to raise money for the Friends of Archaeology Meeting. The CCC were comfortable with the concept and felt that this should be taken to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

Steve Dana led a full discussion of the concept of the raffle and its operation and benefits.

BE IT RESOLVED, The Board of Trustees endorses the Committee on Outreach and Membership's plan to move forward in planning and executing a raffle to raise funds for the benefit of the Friends of Archaeology Program. Unanimously approved.

B.W. Ruffner has decided not to seek reelection as Chairman of the Board because of commitment to the AMA. This doesn't mean that he loves ASOR any less; he looks forward to hearing more papers that excite him.

Carol Meyers: moves to thank our Chairman.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees expresses its enormous gratitude to ASOR. Approved unanimously







resources (e.g. Harris Grant, other grants, fellowships), which will be available to projects

Reports (11:30-12:00)

15. AIAR (J. P. Dessel and/or Matthew Adams)

Greetings from Jerusalem. Please read the AIAR newsletter. Matt Adams is making a great start as a Director. There is now a written director's report. This report i