

ASOR Executive Committee
James F. Strange Center, 209 Commerce Street Alexandria, VA
March 5-6, 2022

March 5, 2022: 9:00am 5:00pm

Present: Richard Coffman (Chair of the Board); Andy Vaughn (Executive Director); Sharon Herbert (President); Chuck Jones (Vice President); Emily Miller Bonney (Treasurer); Ann-Marie Knoblauch (Secretary); Susan Ackerman (Past President); Jane DeRose Evans; Eric Meyers; Joe Seger; Lynn Swartz Dodd.

Guests: Marta Ostovich; Jerry Feierstein (virtually, for topic 4.a); Alexandra Jones (virtually, for topic 5.a); Ömür Harmansah (virtually, for topic 8); Virginia Herrmann (virtually, for topic 8).

Business Items (9:00-9:15)

Call to Order (RLC)

The meeting was called to order at 9:06 AM.

Approval of Agenda (RLC) (see Hidden Board Page)

BE IT RESOLVED that the agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

None.

Discussion Items 9:15 am 12:00pm

1. Finances (AV and EB): 9:15am 10:15am

Review of ASOR Investments and anticipated distributions for FY22 (see distributed handout)

Andy noted that all investments are down for the fiscal year (loss of 1.3-1.5%), and the budget is aided by two things: the endowment is higher, and the Building Fund and Kershaw Fund are producing distributions (two quarters of distributions for the Building Fund; three quarters of distributions for the Kershaw Fund). The next fiscal year will be assisted by four full quarters of these distributions.

The Scott & Stringfellow managed investments are down 7% for the fiscal year, while most of the others are down 1.3%. The Clearview handout shows the difference between Scott & Stringfellow and ASOR self-managed investments.

Scott and Stringfellow versus self-managed (10 min.)

Scott & Stringfellow has managed our funds for ca. 30 months. Scott & Stringfellow has under-performed when compared to self-managed funds more in January and February.

The bottom line is that through December for 36 months (they only managed 30 months of that period), Scott & Stringfellow are in the second or third quartile, and self-managed funds are in the first quartile. In the first two months of this calendar year, they have underperformed even more.

Richard asked how they are compensated, Andy replied that their compensation is not based on performance.

Andy noted that in the 2.5 years that Scott & Stringfellow has managed certain ASOR funds that they are 1.5-2% lower than self-managed funds. He recommended that we wait until June 30 (a full 36 months), then decide if we stick with them, or go with someone else, or go back to managing these funds internally, using the Schwab tool. Emily agreed with this recommendation.

Emily noted that the process of managing the fund using the Schwab tool has worked well for us. Currently Andy is doing it, but someone else on the Finance Committee could do this using the Schwab tools and calculators for rebalancing.

Andy estimates that he spends 4+ hours quarterly to handle the Schwab accounts. He is now tracking his time on a Google spreadsheet, so we can get a better estimate at the end of the fiscal year.

Richard noted that need to wait it out.

Dana #3 Endowment for Excavation Projects in Israel (10 min.)

Andy reported that on this new endowment will be funded by monies transferred from the Palestine Exploration Fund Israel Endowment Fund, Inc. (PEF Israel Endowment Fund; a donor-advised fund and non-profit that collects funds in the US to fund initiatives in the State of Israel).

Many excavations in Israel have gifts that go through PEF Israel Endowment Fund. Also, the Dana #2 Endowment funds excavation projects generally (not just in Israel).

Feierstein replied that these issues are already huge, Jordan, Israel and UAE joint project looking at water scarcity. COP 27 and COP 28 will be a huge focus on climate issues in the ME. The reality is that the ME is being affected more than any other region in the world, and what happens in the next 10-20-30 years will be dramatic for them. The secondary impacts of these issues flows of refugees, etc. will be dramatic and a global challenge.

Susan explained that ASOR members hold expertise that existed millennia ago can be used to solve current problems.

Andy asked Feierstein to address the question of opportunities that come with ASOR being in this area. How can ASOR benefit from having moved here?

Sharon

hold workshops (eg, Adam Frachia (University of Maryland) who started a program on his own for first-generation/BIPOC students, as a possible partner adjunct at UMaryland. It could also help to reach out to faculty at Howard University.

Jones emphasized the importance of hands on/grass-

c. Summary by Virginia Herrmann of work of ad hoc committee: 3:10pm 3:20pm

The committee was formed to take action on climate crisis, particularly in regard to academic travel. The goal is to make the ASOR Annual Meeting carbon-neutral by 2025.

How are other societies responding?

Assessment of the carbon impact of the Annual Meeting-both travel and on-site.

Mitigation strategies: site selection (central and connected), teleconferencing, distributed locations/parallel meetings, hotel selection and policies, and carbon offsets. Carbon offsets not an adequate replacement, first seek to reduce as much as we can. Committee is studying carbon offsets, which ones work best. Also costs. Issues of accessibility and equity co-benefits.

Immediate actions: sustainable hotel practices, AM Travel webpage has more information on sustainability.

Medium term: *NEA* issue on climate change.

The committee will submit a report in time for the 2022 AM, looking into what other learned societies are doing. Relatively few other societies have taken obvious actionable steps. (Some goals and values statements

d. General discussion 3:20pm 3:45pm

Sharon asked what is on the hotel list of desiderata. Andy replied: vegetarian options for some of the meals, biodegradable cups for water, etc. Hotels see this as a business strategy moving forward. Larger investments include upgraded HVAC systems and refrigeration systems.

Discussion continued around balancing affordable hotels in a hub city with those that meet desiderata.

Susan noted that Ömür ended with a call to change the way we do fieldwork and archaeology), which is not what Virginia addressed. International travel for the AM is minimal compared to everyone we send to the field every summer from North America. Herrmann replied that /or; /and. The impact of the AM is one of the charges of the committee. ppendix about

A lengthy conversation ensued that covered many topics regarding ASOR, its mission and climate change.

Future of in-person meetings

Future of fieldwork

Should we be working with other learned societies on this topic and be a leader among them?

Our meeting is small compared to others, should we be focusing on areas where we can make a difference (for example, DEI)

Our area of expertise is the long past, and we should be thinking about the long future?

Is it a priority for ASOR to focus on climate change?

Small steps and making the right gestures to start change

Gifts

Personal travel choices

- Capacity building in the countries in which we work

- How are we going to
actions are. Aside
from education or policy documents (which are performative) what are the
actions we can take?

There was a desire for the Committee to provide a list of tangible steps ASOR can take regarding climate change and also personal choice people can make.

4. Publication Topics (SCH) (3:45pm - 4:15pm)

a. Redesign of BASOR cover 10 minutes

Discussed above, see page 9.

b. Possible gifting of Maarav to ASOR (10 minutes)

Lynn introduced *Maarav* as a journal founded by Bruce Zuckerman for scholars dealing in Semitic inscriptions and, more generally, Northwest Semitic languages and literatures. Andy gave some background on the possibility of ASOR acquiring *Maarav*.

The journal is highly regarded, and UCP was interested in acquiring it pre-COVID, but they are not taking on anything new at this time.

There is now a possibility of an editorial team led by Chicago faculty, which means UCP is now possibly interested in obtaining to journal. Nevertheless, were *Maarav* to become an ASOR journal, and part of our UCP package, ASOR would not get enhanced royalties from UCP.

An anonymous donor/foundation will support the transition for three years.

ASOR would get a journal that all members would receive online (unsure about print), including access to all back issues and future issues.

Chuck noted that with proper management the journal could be run more effectively and with consistency. Susan noted that before moving forward we need to make sure it will operate within AS

a lot of questions: for example, does the editorial team always have to be University of Chicago faculty?

Andy and Kevin McGeough as chair of COP will work on this together. Andy was encouraged to continue the conversations.

c. Search for ANE Today editor (10 minutes)

Sharon noted that the beginning review date is March 14 for the *ANE Today* editor.

There are currently 7-8 interested parties, and 5 applications have been received. In the hopes of attracting a

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM.

Discussion Items

Progress of the ad hoc archives committee SA (9:00-9:30)

Susan reported that the Committee has been in conversation with Paul Flesher (head of archives at the University of Wyoming) who has volunteered to house the ASOR archives in Wyoming.

Pearce Paul Creasman told Susan that ACOR would be interested in some of the archives.

ACOR has an archival project and archivist on staff in Amman. ACOR is interested in those archives having to do with Jordan. It makes sense to have some excavation records (Dhiban, Jerash) in Amman. ACOR is also interested in West Bank materials (pre-1967).

Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East (12 Tf1 0 3mear East (1lnr1E (1l N110004r East) irs5 559.92 Tn

Discussion continued about concerns that the VAM not become a second-tier event, and whether the VAM might include something around the plenary on Nubia. (There would be an issue with making it public.)

Sharon: open ended discussion, Andy and Sharon will speak to the PC about it.

Venues for 2022-2026

Boston (2022 and 2025): contracts signed

Chicago (2023 and 2026): contracts signed

Uncertain for 2024 Andy has visited San Diego

Future of virtual and in-person components past 2022

Break: 10:30-10:45am

Discussion of possible new Board members SCH (10:45-11:15)

Sharon noted that there will be some openings on the Board in the Fall. Eric Meyers and Joe Seger are moving up to Lifetime Trustees /Board Members with full voting rights.

Each class (2022, 2023, 2024) will have one vacant spot.

Andy noted this is a well-deserved honor for Joe and Eric.

Sharon is looking for names for potential new trustees, the Board will vote in

November; we do not have to fill all openings if the right people are not identified.

Uses of the James Strange Center and further thoughts on CH SCH (11:15-adjournment)

Short term: plan to continue in-person working

Andy noted that the Alexandria-based staff are all back working in the office in the Strange Center (since day of Labor Day, 2021).

Eric suggested that ASOR needs to pursue connections at the Smithsonian. Andy indicated that this spring and summer will be a good time to reach out.

Short term: AITC plans to move into Strange Center; other groups?

AITC moved into the third floor on Friday; will be in Strange Center for a minimum of three years.

Eric: Does AITC have connections with the museum in DC?

Andy noted that Alex Jones has formal appointment from ASOR and can advise regarding cultural heritage in DC.

Andy: we are fortunate to have an affiliation with Dr. Jones, given her connections and appointments.

The plan is to make a workspace on the third floor that can be shared. The conference room will be moved up to the second floor.

ASOR will need to write an MOU with AITC.

The Strategic Plan has a section on how the James Strange Center

Reprise of discussion of Washington, DC location and CH activities

Meeting adjourned: 11:41 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Ann-Marie Knoblauch