

Minutes AAG Council  
November 18-19, 2017  
New Orleans, LA

**Present:** Julie Cidell (Treasurer), Susy Svatek Ziegler, Rebecca Kelly, Lorraine Dowler, John Kupfer, Jamie Winders, Susan Roberts, Sriram Khe', David DiBiase, John Hayes, Patrick Lawrence, Deborah Thomas, Derek Alderman (President), Glen MacDonald (Past President), Darren Purcell, Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, Vice President, Cathleen McAnneny, Secretary, Deborah Thomas, Shadi Maleki (Student Representative), and Douglas Richardson (Executive Director)

AAG Staff: Candida Mannozi

### **Opening of the Fall 2017 Council Meeting**

President Derek Alderman called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM on November 18. He welcomed Council members and staff. The Council observed a moment of silence for Rob Mason, the Middle States Regional Councilor, who had recently passed away. Those present reflected on and shared their memories of him. A memorial session is being organized for him at the 2018 AAG Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

### **Consent Agenda**

The following reports and action items were included in the Consent agenda: ratification of changes to committee appointees, adding an additional board Member to the *Annals*, Guide to Programs in the Americas, AAG News, *Geohumanities Journal*, Proposals submitted or in development, AAG Honors, the Presidential Achievement Award, Honorary Geographer, and the Stan Brunn Award for Creativity in Geography.

*Adoption of the Consent Agenda was unanimous.* Glen MacDonald moved, Sriram Khe' seconded.

### **President's Comments**

President Derek Alderman expressed gratitude for the support for his ideas for activities and for the support and hard work of the AAG staff. He indicated that we are starting in a solid environment, but there are still challenges. Changes in the model used by National Geographic Society to support geography education, along with the change to block grants under Every Child Succeeds Act, will make it harder to secure funds for K-12 geography education.

Alderman suggested that we should educate and be educated by our members. He said that the Council needs to be proactive and empower our members to develop programs. He proposed creating a grant program for

*public promotion/engagement of geography and asked Council for their general agreement for him to continue pursuing this idea.*

*The AAG Council endorsed the idea of pursuing a grant program that could seed public promotion of and engagement with geography.*

### **Vice President's Comments**

Vice President Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach focused on the grand challenges that face Geography and eographers. She stated that we have a range and diversity of talent that can work to solve some of our most complex problems. This requires a coalition across disciplines, including the humanities, to empower those who are under-represented in science and to communicate the human right to benefit from science.

Luzzadder-Beach noted that National Geographic has reorganized its research side and urged participation in review panels so that there is a geography voice in the review process. The changes include moving from the Young Investigator Grants to Early Career Grants, with no age limit. All of these initiatives are designed to prepare future policy makers, educators and researchers. Geography and geographers continue to break barriers and we need to be at the table to bring the spatial lens to the planning of new agendas.

### **Past President's Comments**

Glen MacDonald reflected on the many different perspectives represented among members of the AAG and emphasized that, as an organization, we must try to consider these multiple perspectives. When issues are brought to Council it takes time to make things happen. MacDonald reminded the Council that what we do is important.

He suggested three things that will help meet the needs of our members and our responsibilities as citizens. They are:

Communication with the membership and to the public;

Engagement with professional (non-academic) Geographers so that they see the added value of membership in AAG;

As one third of AAG Annual Meeting attendees are international, we should have a Councilor whose portfolio is to represent the international community.

### **Regional Councilors' Update**

Patrick Lawrence, Chair of Regional Councilors, reached out to all Regional Councilmembers and will do so again ahead of the Spring 2018 meeting for reports/feedback from Regions. These reports can include issues or concerns that are coming out of Regions. He would like to survey the regions on how

they are conducting elections, transitioning leadership, developing leadership, etc.

### **Student Representative's Update**

Shadi Maleki, Student Representative to the Council, stated that students hope to schedule their business meeting time with as little conflict with other specialty groups as possible.

There is increasing outreach to undergrads.

Students are concerned about the academic and professional job market.

They are looking to connect with geographers and others outside of academia for professional development around the job market.

Students would like to be more involved in the AAG and the AAG has initiated several programs to increase student participation, including the establishment of a new Undergraduate Student Affinity Group and specific events and activities for students at AAG Annual Meetings.

The AAG meeting in DC in 2019 could appeal to professional and academic geographers and could therefore bring these groups together.

### **Executive Director Comments**

Richardson stated that 2017 was a very busy year. He provided an overview of existing AAG programs, as well as numerous new programs and projects that have been undertaken in the past year. Richardson complimented AAG staff on their strong effort in handling an ever growing set of activities.

## **STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **Finances:**

Richardson stated that the AAG is in excellent financial condition. He projected that the AAG's change in net assets will be more than 1 million dollars for the AAG's fiscal year ending August 31, 2017. Treasurer Julie Cidell led the Council through the one page financial summary sheet and directed Councilors to the appropriate pages in the Council packet with more detail. The FYE 2018 budget will be developed and presented at the Spring 2018 Council Meeting.

Cidell suggested the formation of a future Committee to begin to think about the use of the earnings on the Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future, once the Endowment reaches a total of \$15 million. Cidell mentioned that the next Finance Committee meeting will also evaluate existing AAG socially responsible investments and consider whether to increase such investments in the AAG's portfolio.

Hayes indicated his desire to see the AAG divest from fossil fuels. He asked the Council to consider pursuing a more aggressive way for the AAG to divest from fossil fuels.

## **Membership**

Membership is projected to be over 12,000 members by the end of calendar year 2017. Most of our peer organizations have not seen the growth in membership that the AAG has achieved. Student membership is 39%. The establishment of the AAG Undergraduate Student Affinity Group appears to have helped recruit and engage more students with the Association. The Developing Regions Membership Program, with materials in many languages, has attracted members from across the globe.

The AAG has engaged in a time intensive AAG effort to upgrade the annual meeting registration and abstract submission platforms and new automated means for direct communication with membership have improved the AAG's interaction with and service to members.

A limited number of complimentary AAG memberships for opinion leaders such as journalists and interdisciplinary thought leaders has raised the profile of the AAG. Recognition of scholars and others in other fields as Honorary Geographers helps to connect geography with the larger intellectual community.

The American Association of Geographers received a sexual harassment complaint alleging that an AAG member made unsolicited remarks of a sexual nature to a female event manager with the Boston Convention Marketing Center during the 2017 AAG Annual Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. The Standing Committee on AAG Annual Meeting Attendee Disciplinary Matters ([http://www.aag.org/about\\_aag/governance/committees](http://www.aag.org/about_aag/governance/committees)) reviewed the complaint and recommended sanctions be implemented against this meeting attendee. The AAG Council met on November 18, 2017, to consider the Appeal that the AAG meeting attendee requested of the Decision of the AAG's Standing Committee on AAG Annual Meeting Attendee Disciplinary Matters.

After a thorough review of the documents comprising the record in this matter, the AAG Council determined that the evidence supported the allegations that the AAG meeting attendee persisted in making unsolicited remarks of a sexual nature to a female event manager with the Boston Convention Marketing Center during the 2017 AAG Annual meeting, even after she expressed to him that his comments were unwelcome and inappropriate.

Following full discussion and deliberation by the AAG Council members, the AAG Council voted unanimously to uphold the Decision of the AAG Standing Committee of September 11, 2017, and affirmed the Standing Committee's sanctions barring the AAG meeting attendee from attending AAG Annual Meetings for five years, from 2018 through 2022. The AAG Council also affirmed the Standing Committee's prohibition on him retaliating against the complainant or any witnesses.

### **Committees and Specialty Groups**

Glen MacDonald reported that he has recruited twelve members to serve on the Geography and the Military Study Committee, as discussed during the previous AAG Council meeting. The first meeting is to be held in Washington to, D.C. in January 2018. The study is expected to be completed within two years. Susan Cutter has agreed to serve as Chair of the Committee.

Rebecca Kelly volunteered for the Council liaison position on the Archives Committee. Approved by general consensus.

David DiBiase volunteered as Council liaison for the Membership Committee. Approved by general consensus.

Proposal for a name change of the Study of the American South Specialty Group: Council discussion resulted in a request to ask the SG to consider a different name from the new one they propose. Alderman agreed to relate the Council's request to the SG.

Proposal for the formation of a Film Geographies Specialty Group:

John Hayes moved to deny the request for the new Film Geographies Specialty Group. Lorraine Dowler seconded the motion. The vote was 16 yes and 1 opposed.

The denial was based on the application lacking the total number of necessary signatures, and that they had not responded to the Media and Communications Specialty group's letter indicating their concerns about overlap.

Proposal for the formation of a Critical Geographies of Education Specialty Group:

Motion by Julie Cidell that the proposal be returned to the applicants, seconded by John Hayes. Vote was 16 yes and 1 opposed.

There is no indication of outreach to or consultation with the existing Education Specialty Group. They provide no clear sense of what they add.

Proposal for the formation of a LatinX Specialty Group:

Motion by Doug Richardson to accept the proposal for a new LatinX Specialty Group, seconded by Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach  
Vote 15 yes, 1 no and 1 abstention.

### **Publications**

The Council interviewed candidates for the position of Section Editor of the Methods, Models, and GIS Section of the *AAG Annals*.

Motion: Council appoints Ling Bian as editor of the MMGIS section of the *AAG Annals*.

Moved by Jamie Winders.

Seconded by John Hayes.

Vote was unanimous, with one abstention.

The Council interviewed candidates for the position of Cartography Editor for the *Annals*, the *Professional Geographer*, and *GeoHumanities*. Motion:

Council appoints Stephen Hannah as Cartography Editor. Moved by John Kupfer and seconded by John Hayes.

Vote was unanimous.

Khe' provided feedback from the Publications Committee noting that it would be good to have more time between the submission deadline and the interviews. It would also be helpful to have a uniform set of documentation to compare candidates.

We need to recruit and consider diversity in our flagship journals. The development is inadvertent and not reflected in the Editorial boards, which are quite balanced.

Council discussed whether the *Professional Geographer* (PG) may need a new identity or focus as PG Editor Barney Warf's term will expire in December 2018 and a new editor will be selected during the fall 2018 Council meeting. A straw poll of the Council supported the notion of a possible re-visioning of the PG. A subcommittee of the Council to discuss the PG was established comprised of: Sue Roberts, John Kupfer, Jamie Winders, John Hayes, and David DiBiase. This subcommittee is charged with generating suggestions for the Spring 2018 Council meeting. Richardson noted the need for advertising the PG editorial position opening very soon, and to receive applications (currently due August 2018), submit the applications to the Publications Committee, obtain their suggestions, and set up interviews at the Fall 2018 Council Meeting. Discussion mentioned the possibility of advertising for a one or a two-person editorial team for the PG.

The editorial team of *GeoHumanities* will reach the end of its four-year term appointment on December 31, 2018. Because this is a new AAG journal, and because this editorial team has just completed their first term, Doug Richardson recommended that they be asked to serve another term.

#### Editorial Boards:

The Executive Committee noted that it had approved, during its last meeting, the addition of Tracey Osborne to replace Rinku Chowdhury on Annals board.

Khe' summarized the publisher's revised proposal for the online commentaries to be published on publisher's website, linked to the original articles. He reported that Publication Committee is unanimously in favor of online version. Khe's motion to accept the publisher's recommendation was tabled for a later meeting.

#### Memorials for past presidents and exceptional members

Billie Turner has agreed to write a memorial for Tom Wilbanks. Approved by general consensus.

Marvin Mikesell passed away and Richardson asked Alec Murphy to write the memorial. Approved by general consensus, provided Murphy agrees.

#### **Council**

David DiBiase was elected to serve as new Chair of the National Councilors.

There was discussion about having one National Councilor whose portfolio is to represent the international community on the Council of the American Association of Geographers. The AAG Council, in consultation with the National Councilors, will designate one of the National Councilors for this position.

Motion proposed by Sheryl Beach.

Seconded by Sriram Khe'.

Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Public Policy and Outreach**

AAG public policy, outreach and communication materials have been developed and expanded greatly during the past year. AAG Knowledge Communities are also available to all AAG Specialty Groups as well as to any Regional Divisions that wish to use them.

Per the suggestion of Derek Alderman, AAG Multimedia Resources have also been developed for geography departments to use to help recruit students.

The AAG has also created an online Speakers Bureau, which profiles geographers who are available to speak at universities or other venues beyond academia.

The policy section of the AAG website includes a snapshot of the many letters and policy statements made by the AAG during the past year. Among them are AAG statements and letters relating to the Trump travel ban, the reduced funding for climate change research and environmental programs, and the threats to open GIS use by special interests seeking restrictive procurement on nearly all mapping and GIS services and activities. The AAG was one of the organizers of the March for Science and these activities are also reflected on the AAG Policy webpages.

### **Annual Meetings**

Richardson reported that the 2017 Annual Meeting in Boston had a record attendance of over 9,400.

The 2018 AAG Annual Meeting will be held in New Orleans and projected attendance is approximately 8,000. Three themes for the New Orleans meeting are Black Geographies; Hazards, Geography, and the GISciences; and Public Engagement in Geography.

Richardson also noted that the AAG's childcare program has been very popular and is heavily subsidized by the AAG.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

Future AAG meetings include Washington DC 2019, Denver 2020, Seattle 2021, New York 2022, and Detroit 2023. The AAG has also received an invitation from the University of Hawaii's Geography Department to hold an Annual Meeting in Hawaii in 2024. There was discussion about the meeting in 1999, which had good attendance. Some Councilmembers noted that an AAG Annual Meeting in Hawaii would be a good way for US geographers to engage with the rapidly growing economic and cultural influence of the Pacific Rim.

Following a consensus poll, the Council encouraged Richardson to explore Hawaii as an AAG meeting site for 2024, and to enter into an agreement for a meeting if good terms can be negotiated.

### **Honors & Awards**

The following AAG Awards were announced:

2018 Presidential Achievement Award  
Susan Cutter and Billie Turner, II

2018 Honorary Geographer  
Dr. Robert Bullard for 2018.

2018 Stan Brunn Creativity Award



Mei-Po Kwan  
2018 Excellence in Mentoring Award  
David Kaplan

2018 AAG Honors

AAG Lifetime Achievement Honors

William Clark  
Richard Peet

AAG Distinguished Scholarship Honors

Katherine Gibson  
Henry Yeung

AAG Gilbert Grosvenor Geographic Education Honors

Iain Hay  
Michal Lee LeVasseur

AAG Media Achievement Award

Allen Carroll

AAG Publication Award

John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

The Inaugural Class of AAG Fellows is listed below:

Tom Baerwald, National Science Foundation  
Sarah Bednorz, Texas A&M University  
Daniel Block, Chicago State University  
Judith Carney, UCLA  
Jennifer Clark, Georgia Institute of Technology  
Craig Colten, Louisiana State University  
Joe Darden, Michigan State University  
David DiBiase, ESRI  
Kenneth Foote, University of Connecticut  
Amy Glasmeier, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Patricia Gober, Arizona State University  
Stephen Hanna, University of Mary Washington  
Audrey Kobayashi, Queen's University  
Helga Leitner, UCLA  
Richard Marston, Kansas State University  
Janice Monk, University of Arizona  
Kavita Pandit, Georgia State University  
Bruce Rhoads, University of Illinois  
Douglas Sherman, University of Alabama  
James Tyner, Kent State University

President Alderman adjourned the AAG Council Meeting at noon on November 19, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathleen McAnneny, AAG Secretary