

AAG Council Meeting Minutes
April 3–5, 2017 Boston, MA

Present: Glen MacDonald, *President*; Derek Alderman, *Vice President*; Sarah Bednarz, *Past President*; Thomas Mote, *Secretary*; Julie Cidell, *Treasurer*; Douglas Richardson, *Executive Director*; Stuart Aitken, David DiBiase, Chris Hair, John Hayes, Shawn Hutchinson, Sriram Khé, Patrick Lawrence, Robert Mason, Cathleen McAnneny, Gregory Pope, Darren Purcell, Susan Roberts, Susy Ziegler

AAG Staff: Candida Mannozi, Candace Luebbering

Opening of the Spring 2017 AAG Council Meeting

President Glen MacDonald called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm on April 3 and welcomed Council members and AAG staff.

Consent Agenda

The following reports and action items were included in the consent agenda: *Guide to Programs in the Americas*, *GeoHumanities* journal, AAG News, funding for geography and science, proposals submitted or projects in development, AAG Honors, Susan Hardwick Excellence in Mentoring Award, Enhancing Diversity Award, Harold M. Rose Award, Award to Recognize Outstanding Department, Harm de Blij Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Geography Education, Stan Brunn Award for Creativity in Geography, Honorary Geographer, Presidential Achievement Award, Atlas Award, and ratify changes to committee appointees made by the Committee on Committees.

Approve the consent agenda. Sarah Bednarz moved, Cathleen McAnneny seconded, motion approved unanimously.

MacDonald acknowledged approval of the Fall 2016 Council meeting minutes on February 15, 2017.

President's Comments

President Glen MacDonald said the Association has faced several public policy issues regarding the administration's executive orders on travel, distressing rhetoric from the election campaign, proposed budget cuts, the bill to restrict use of geospatial data on racial disparities, among other matters. MacDonald said that he learned that there are members from countries in the U.S. visa waiver program who cannot use the visa waiver because they have visited a banned country. He asked that the Association be attentive to travel and immigration issues. He said there has been discussion about moving the annual meeting outside the U.S. and boycotts, which illustrate a distress among the membership about what has been happening in the public arena. The Council and Association staff have been responding to many of these concerns, and it is imperative for Council members to share with the memberships information about these activities. MacDonald also reminded Council members that as a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization, there are limits regarding activities that could be construed as lobbying. He also reminded the Council that the membership has a diverse set of views.

MacDonald said that although membership has been growing, the Association needs to strive to retain a sense of community. The Association also needs to be concerned about geography departments that report declining enrollment or losing majors. He suggested that the Association may need add staff focused on helping with departmental recruitment.

Finally, MacDonald said the Council needs to look at the sustainability of Meridian Place leadership. MacDonald said this means the Council needs to become more informed about Meridian Place activities and operations and think about strategic planning. He said the Association needs to continue to focus on communication with membership, to the next generation of geographers, and between the membership and policy makers.

Vice President's Comments

Vice President Derek Alderman began by thanking MacDonald and Executive Director Doug Richardson and the Association staff for the tireless response regarding public policy issues. Alderman has overseen the Geography Faculty Development Alliance (GFDA) Early Career Workshop, and in conjunction with Past-President Sarah Bednarz, the Department Leadership Workshop. He said 2017 will be the last time that GFDA is held at the University of Tennessee; there will be an opportunity for another department or group to host and lead this effort. Alderman encouraged the Council members to contact possible host departments to encourage them to consider this opportunity. Alderman said that in response to MacDonald's call for engagement and communication, the Executive Committee organized several panels for the annual meeting. He highlighted several of the panels. Finally, Alderman announced that the network of state geographic alliances voted to make the 2017 Geography Awareness Week devoted to the "Geography of Civil Rights Movements." Alderman asked the Council to endorse the decision by the Alliances.

AAG Council endorses that the 2017 Geography Awareness Week theme be devoted to civil rights movements. Alderman moved, Bednarz seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Past President's Comments

Past President Sarah Bednarz asked Council to encourage colleagues to make nominations for the nascent Fellows program. Secondly, Bednarz said there is variety in how regional councilors are elected across divisions, which may not be consistent with Association policy and bylaws. She said that she views transparent elections as an inclusion issue, and it is not likely that regions are attracting diverse pools if the process is not transparent. She encouraged the Council to work toward developing a consistent nominating and election process across regions.

Reports from Regional Councilors

Regional Councilor Chair Shawn Hutchinson shared the highlights to the regional reports, and he shared the full report electronically with members of the Council. The full reports will be published on the AAG website.

East Lakes

Patrick Lawrence reported that there is uncertain state support and concern for emerging potential policies impacting higher education in Ohio and Michigan. He said there is a need for more engagement with K-12 geography education including the Ohio Geographic Alliance, Advanced Placement (AP), and other high school college credit programs.

Great Plains-Rocky Mountains

Hutchinson reported that the GPRM meeting will be hosted by the University of North Dakota on October 13–14, 2017. Hutchinson noted the expansion of geotechnology (including GIS and UAV) and online programs buoying enrollment for many regional programs, many of whom continue to operate under increasingly challenging budgetary conditions.

Middle Atlantic

The division had no report, but Hutchinson reported that Rebecca Kelly of Johns Hopkins was recently elected regional councilor.

Middle States

Robert Mason highlighted a response to a distressed department: Long Island University, Post Campus, which suspended admissions for the Geography major. Mason said division members are asking how, if at all, do departments respond to the administration travel bans at local and regional levels.

New England/St. Lawrence Valley

John Hayes reported that NESTVAL had a successful meeting on the campus of Bishop's University during October 14-15, 2016, in Sherbrooke, QC, Canada. The conference theme was "Multi-Scale Climate and Environmental Change." The upcoming meeting will be hosted by Central Connecticut State University during October 20–21, 2017, in New Britain, CT. The conference theme will be "Geography in the Community." The annual, peer-reviewed journal of NESTVAL, *The Northeastern Geographer*, will publish the next two volumes as special issues on Climate Change in the Northeast and Food Geographies of the NESTVAL Region.

Pacific Coast

Sriram Khé reported that the upcoming APCG meeting will be in Chico, CA, during October 25–28, 2017. Hosted by the Department of Geography and Planning at California State University, Chico, the conference theme is "Sustainable Communities." He reported that several new programs have been established within the region including four new undergraduate specializations and three new minors at the University of Nevada Reno and three new programs at the University of Southern California, including an interdisciplinary PhD and MS degrees, and an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor.

Southeastern

Thomas Mote reported that the next SEDAAG meeting will be November 19–21, 2017, in Starkville, MS, with local arrangements handled by Mississippi State University. He reported that departments are being creative and innovative about ways in which they attract students

and seek support, with much emphasis placed in online programs, geospatial technologies and environmental-related studies. New undergraduate programs are now being offered, or are being proposed, at the University of Florida, Florida State University, Marshall University, and the University of Georgia. At the graduate level, East Carolina State University now offers a Professional Science Masters in GIS&T, and UNC Charlotte is considering a name change for their Ph.D. degree from “Geography and Urban Regional Analysis” to “Geography.”

Southwest

Darren Purcell reported that the University of North Texas Department of Geography and the Environment was selected as the inaugural winner of the Master’s Program Excellence Award. Additionally, the department will strengthen their international offerings with a China Field School in Summer 2017. He also said the Department of Geography at Oklahoma State University received state approval for a Global Studies BA. A new minor in Global Studies is pending approval. This is the fourth undergraduate program managed by the department, adding to their existing BA and BS in Geography and BS in Geospatial Information Science degree programs.

West Lakes

Julie Cidell reported that the regional meeting was successful despite being in a geographic extreme of the region: Marquette, MI. She reported that departments are trying many different approaches to increase enrollment and/or majors and asked if it would be useful to do a survey of departments to see what changes have been made in the past 5-10 years and what effect they have had. She said members mentioned that they want the Association to do more in this regard.

Hutchinson reviewed the regional reports in response to the call of the Executive Committee to identify the impact of changes in federal policies. A few regions mentioned the effects of federal policies on their programs, with the federal travel policies raising concerns about international student recruitment. He also mentioned the expressions of appreciation for the Association responses to those policies.

Hutchinson said the common theme among most regions was the effect of state budgets on higher education. Many of the regions’ reports mentioned issues regarding declining undergraduate enrollment, which may be related to online programs, AP credit, and transfer credit from other institutions. Purcell asked whether anyone had provided data about the effect of AP Human Geography, as the effect of the AP exam has been a common concern without supporting data. McAnney suggested that other AP courses may also play a role. Hutchinson discussed the role of geography as a “discovery major” and the importance of contact in the college level. Cidell said that at the University of Illinois 6% of students took AP Human Geography, and of those students, only 6% enrolled in a geography course at the university. Purcell suggested reaching out to the 200,000 students taking AP Human Geography, as well as the people teaching the course. Bednarz emphasized the importance of creating a pipeline with teachers of AP Human Geography. Alderman talked about reaching out to high school guidance counselors, college and university advisers, and community colleges. Chris Hair

mentioned the importance of media and video that explain what students can do with a geography degree. MacDonald said that UCLA uses an open house with community colleges to attract students. Lawrence mentioned the use of the Penn State Geospatial Revolution materials for recruitment plus alumni videos, which have received positive feedback. Richardson commented that he is seeking support from National Geographic to produce promotional videos, but he said it is also worthwhile to determine what is available online that could be used pending permission. He said the media landscape has changed and this may need to be in the form of a social media campaign. Sue Roberts suggested that the Association have a repository of promotional materials that departments produced. Hutchinson mentioned that Kansas State University worked with media professionals in the university to produce brief videos that were targeted to prospective students and their parents.

MacDonald asked that the departmental recruitment effort become an Association priority and suggested that Meridian Place hire someone to help develop media targeted for use by departments seeking to grow enrollment. He said there should be some video presence but the effort should use multiple media platforms. MacDonald said a report to Council regarding progress in this effort should be presented at the Fall 2017 Council meeting. At the annual meeting in New Orleans, he said there should be a session on best practices followed by a document on best practices.

Khé asked about the regional councilor election concerns expressed by Bednarz, particularly in light of the delayed election in one region. Lawrence asked what mechanism is available for expressing concern and offering assistance when regional divisions struggle. The individual regional councilors shared the process for elections in their regions, focusing on nomination processes, eligible voters, timeline, and the form of the election. Richardson shared the rules for electing regional councilors. Bednarz recommended a sub-committee of regional councilors that would examine election processes in each region.

MacDonald stated that Regional Councilors should be elected by AAG members in each regional division, regardless of their regional division membership status.

Student Representative's Comments

Student Representative Chris Hair said the Graduate Student Affinity Group appreciated the statements from the Association leadership regarding the travel ban. He highlighted the plenary session planned by the Graduate Student Affinity Group (GSAG), around "Building a Graduate Community." MacDonald asked Hair to report back to Council regarding any visa and immigration issues that students have shared.

Committees, Specialty and Affinity Groups

The Council received the revised proposal for a Digital Geography Specialty Group. MacDonald said the group leading this effort has responded to concerns from Council last year. They received support from the Cyberinfrastructure, GIScience, Cartography, and Economic Geography specialty groups and a comparable specialty group in the Royal Geographical Society. However, the Media and Communications Geography Specialty Group did not offer

support. Purcell and Stuart Aitken discussed the concern about the perceived areas of overlap, and Bednarz raised concern about the growing number of specialty groups. Richardson indicated that the growth in the number of specialty groups has been slower than membership growth and growth in meeting attendance.

Approve the Digital Geographies Group. Khé moved, Roberts seconded, motion approved with one opposed and one abstention.

Petitions from the Membership

The Council received a petition from the Network of Concerned Geographers regarding military related activities and research in geography. MacDonald indicated that Association should consider these questions but also asked if the Council should broaden consideration beyond the U.S. He reminded the Council that Bednarz had proposed, and the Council approved, a process for considering requests and petitions from the membership. Aitken said there is a perception among the International Task Force regarding a greater level of engagement with military among U.S. geographers. Roberts said she was a signatory to the petition, and indicated that in the U.S. geography is vulnerable to being redefined and this review is necessary to assess the danger. Alderman said the Association has faced this issue before; the issue has a legacy, but it has not been reconciled. Mason suggested that the audit to gather this information will be complicated and time intensive. He asked what the charge of the study group will be. Roberts recommended the American Anthropology Association effort on this matter as a model. Greg Pope asked about the role of physical geography. Aitken said some of this work is held confidential, and it will be difficult to get information. Bednarz said it would require collaboration with departments to gather the data, possibly through a questionnaire. Khé said the same questions could be raised about engagement with Homeland Security.

Richardson said this is an issue that Council has considered before. If a panel is constituted, it should be broad based, and the study should have context internationally and consider funding at the department and university level. Lawrence mentioned the specialty group in Military Geography. Mason said that an international focus would be too expansive to be effective. MacDonald will draft a charge to a possible study group to distribute to the Executive Committee and Council for feedback. He will also ask for suggestions for names of possible study panel members.

Executive Director's Comments

Executive Director Doug Richardson urged Council members to review the Association's policy action page to see the wide number of activities, including the most recent statements on the administration's travel bans and budget proposal. He told Council members to expect a series of budget proposals that will have negative impacts; the Association staff will work to oppose those budget proposals in conjunction with other professional associations. Richardson encouraged members to engage with their own congressional members and their staff. Richardson said Meridian Place has hired two new staff: Coline Dony as a senior researcher and Meredith Stone as a policy and outreach specialist. He reported that it appears that there will be record attendance in Boston of around 9300 and a membership close to 12,000.

STATUS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Finance

Treasurer Julie Cidell led Council members through the one-page summary from the Finance Committee, directing members to relevant pages in the Council packet with more detail. She said the Finance Committee review indicates that the Association is in excellent financial shape. Lawrence asked about the sources of growth in the endowment. Richardson responded that the sources are the annual change in net assets that are invested, donations to the endowment, and internal earnings in the endowment that are reinvested. Bednarz and Cidell emphasized that the annual meetings are not usually an income generator for the Association.

Cidell walked the Council through the FYE 2018 budget proposal, and discussed the notes of the Finance Committee meeting.

Accept the FYE2016 audited financial statement. Alderman moved, Hayes seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approve the FYE 2018 budget. Cidell moved, Bednarz seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Cidell said the socially responsible investing task force and Finance Committee discussed what socially responsible investing might mean in practice. Alderman indicated that the task force had differences of opinion on what priorities would constitute “socially responsible.” The Finance Committee discussed options with the Association’s financial adviser following direction from the Council. The financial adviser made two recommendations, which were forwarded to Council members prior to the Spring 2017 Council meeting. The two socially responsible funds recommended were Ariel Appreciation for CRM Small/Mid Cap Value and American Funds Washington Mutual for American Beacon Large-Cap Value. Roberts asked about the small amount of money going into these funds. Alderman emphasized that this is only the first of several steps in a process of socially responsible investing. Hayes mentioned the discussion of fossil fuel divestment in NESTVAL and asked about plans for divestment of fossil fuels, particularly coal. Richardson suggested that would be among the next logical considerations in the process.

Approve the recommendation from the financial adviser, following the meeting with the Finance Committee, to shift a portion of the Association’s investments into two socially responsible funds. Mote moved, Bednarz seconded, motion approved with one opposed and one abstention.

MacDonald indicated that the Council needs additional information about what constitutes socially responsible investing. Alderman asked for more information about the percentage of funds that will be moved and the nature of investments in the funds identified. Hayes asked that the Finance Committee provide additional information on fossil fuel divestment. MacDonald emphasized that any survey of the membership about investing should ask about

potential tradeoffs in earnings and, consequently, services provided to members.

The socially responsible investing task force and AAG staff gather as much information as possible about where investments are held for further discussion and reflection at the next Council meeting. Alderman moved, Cidell seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Cidell brought a proposal from the Executive Committee to move a portion of this year's \$873,000 increase in net assets (now in its operating funds) to the endowment.

Approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee to move \$500,000 from operating funds to the Douglas Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future. Bednarz moved, McAnneny seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Khé asked about progress toward a plan for the use of the endowment once it reaches \$15 million. Richardson mentioned that Council can generate ideas and possibilities but should avoid committing future elected Council members. Bednarz noted that a plan for the use of the endowment has been discussed in three Council meetings without resolution. MacDonald agreed that this should be addressed in the Fall 2017 Council meeting.

Membership

Richardson discussed the membership report, including the membership numbers, and services provided by the Association on careers and jobs. MacDonald indicated that Council should monitor for growth in the lower-income categories where membership fees were recently decreased. He also highlighted the growth in developing regions membership but stated that he would like to see additional growth there. He noted Association membership comes from more than 90 nations. Lawrence pointed out that 41% of membership are students, which bodes well for future membership. Hutchinson commented on activities associated with the development of the Undergraduate Affinity Group with assistance of Candice Luebbering on the AAG staff.

International Membership Task Force

Aitken reported on the findings of a task force regarding international members' views of AAG services. Aitken said more than 20% of Association members are outside the U.S., including many students. He said there was strong agreement from the task force on the need for an international member of Council, possibly like the national councilors. The task force expressed concern that member services are targeted to U.S. students and should include a greater focus on international student members, such as job opportunities. The task force also raised the question about international membership in specialty groups and the ability to learn more about the specialty groups via their web presence. The task force mentioned the possibility for mentoring opportunities for members who are not native English speakers. The task force recognized the need to better communicate information on policy statements to international members, and the desire to reach out to international geography associations. MacDonald mentioned that all members can vote for national councilors and that international members have served in those positions. Aitken asked about the process to institute an international councilor position; Richardson indicated that would require a constitution change. MacDonald

discussed issues related to how a member would be nominated and the eligible voting members. Cidell asked whether the name “national” councilor could be changed to “at-large” councilor. Aitken indicated that would be more straightforward and send a positive message to international members. Richardson expressed concern about enlarging the Council, but indicated that it would be possible to have an international seat reserved among the existing six national councilors. He said that would still require a constitutional change. David DiBiase asked about the implications for an international councilor, such as whether this might lead to requests for a non-academic councilor. Pope indicated that this position sounds analogous to a regional councilor. Roberts suggested that the Nominating Committee could be encouraged to seek a greater proportion of international members. Alderman said the discussion is analogous to the student member, which is now established.

MacDonald asked that the Council consider two models to encourage international membership on Council: (1) a strictly designated seat for an international member among the national councilors, and (2) rename the national councilors to councilors at large and work with the Nominating Committee to encourage international candidates. MacDonald asked Council members to seek input from members for a full discussion at the Fall 2017 Council meeting. MacDonald also suggested that staff consider ways to communicate job advertisements internationally and to seek ways to improve websites of specialty groups to address concerns of international members.

Professional Membership Task Force

DiBiase reported on the findings of a task force regarding professional members’ views of AAG services. DiBiase said he estimated the number of members who are non-academic is between 12% and 15%. He explored ways in which the Association is engaged with this community. He noted the healthy number of people from NGOs that were involved in the themed sessions at the annual meeting. He said *The Professional Geographer* has about the same proportion of non-academic authors as are members in the association. He said the most substantial thing the Association has done for this community is the book *Practicing Geography*, which has great profiles and advice and perhaps has not received the attention it deserves. He said this effort needs to be more impactful and more public.

DiBiase identified nine specialty/affinity groups that would likely have professional members, and he reached out to about 50 people from those groups. He received questions from the individuals asking how serious the Association is about engaging professional members. Healthy specialty groups often have strong student paper competitions, and DiBiase asked what would be analogous to student paper competitions outside the academy. Richardson indicated that the success in enhancing international memberships is an indication that a sustained effort toward enhancing professional membership could be successful but would require coordination and materials focused on this constituency. Hayes discussed the importance of encouraging professional participation in the regional meetings. Pope discussed the possibility of a regular feature, like a status report, in the *The Professional Geographer* that would speak to professional members. DiBiase and Richardson indicated that the value proposition for

academic geographers is not the same for non-academic geographers. DiBiase said the place to start is capitalizing on the *Practicing Geography* work.

Mark Revell from AAG staff met with the Council to discuss career and professional development resources. Drew Lehman, a consultant working with the Association, also met with the Council to discuss activities and outreach efforts associated with the AAG 2017 Boston Emerging Workforce Scholars Program. Jennifer Cassidento spoke to Council about her new role as the director of publications, and the process underway of the removal of the sections of the *Annals*.

Specialty and Affinity Groups

Pope reviewed the specialty group reports. He highlighted suggestions from the Regional Development Specialty group to attract non-academics and comments from the China Specialty Group and Stand Alone Geographers Affinity Group.

Meridian Place Operations

Richardson referenced the two new hires that he mentioned during his earlier comments. He also said that Michael Solem's position between AAG and Texas State University has been renegotiated. The AAG organizational structure has been changed to increase the number of deputy directors. Richardson also presented the election results.

MacDonald mentioned the Executive Director review process and the interest in using a 360-degree review, which will include input from staff. The Executive Committee will work to establish a process. MacDonald said that the Executive Committee has also been discussing sustainability of the Meridian Place leadership, and Executive Committee asked the Executive Director to prepare a job description to help Council determine the characteristics of his successor that will be necessary to maintain a positive trajectory. Richardson said that he has been assembling information on succession planning.

Publications

Richardson directed Council members to the Council packet to review the metrics provided by Taylor & Francis. Aitken reported that the *AAG Review of Books* and *GeoHumanities* are doing exceedingly well. He reported that the other journals are doing well, and the impact factor for the *Annals* has increased. Aitken said the terms for two editors expire at the end of calendar year 2017. Mei-Po Kwan has been an editor of the *Annals* since 2006. Tom Hodler has been cartographic editor since 2005. The Association will call for applications for new editors.

Resolved that Council thank Mei-Po Kwan for her exceptional service as editor of the Annals and excellence in expanding the role of GIScience in the journal. Aitken moved, Hayes seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Resolved that Council thank Tom Hodler for his exceptional service as cartographic editor for AAG journals. Alderman moved, Pope seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Approve Mathew Sparke to the AAG Review of Books board. Purcell moved, McAnneny seconded, motion approved unanimously.

Approve publication of obituary in the Annals for Bill Bunge. Aitken moved, Khé seconded, motion approved with one abstention.

Aitken presented a proposed policy for *Annals* commentaries, which includes peer-review and the aspiration to have the commentaries appear soon after publication of the original work. Bednarz asked about publishing reviewed commentaries on an online site instead of the print edition. Ziegler asked about guidance for the tone of the commentaries, which should be constructive and professional in nature. Aitken said he will bring the proposed policy to the *Annals* editors for review.

Alderman asked about the possibility of an “Annals lecture” at the annual meeting. Aitken indicated that he had mentioned the idea to the Publications Committee, but the committee members were concerned that a published paper likely has already been presented at the annual meeting.

Communications

Richardson shared information on some of the communications policies and meeting themes. He pointed to the poignancy of the annual meeting human rights theme given the recent public policy concerns that the Association has faced. He discussed difficulties and lessons learned in the efforts to promote scholarship at the annual meeting to the media and broader public. Khé asked about a mobile friendly version of the AAG website.

Public Policy and Outreach

Richardson discussed a number of policy outreach efforts, and he asked Council members to examine the recent AAG efforts regarding federal budget proposals and the March for Science. DiBiase asked about the current effort in North Carolina to limit mapping and GIS work to licensed engineers and surveyors. Richardson mentioned the lawsuit against the administration’s travel ban by Americans United for Separation of Church and State that address the impact of bans on U.S. citizens and residents. Lawrence and Pope asked about the impact of the annual meeting boycott in sympathy with people who were unable to enter the U.S. Richardson said that between 100 and 125 people have asked for refunds. Khé suggested that we ask the scholar from the U.K. who wrote a letter about her inability to attend to the meeting an opportunity to share in the next newsletter.

AAG Projects and Programs

Richardson directed the Council members to review the projects and programs in the Council packet. Richardson announced that Bednarz will represent AAG on the Geography Education National Implementation Project (GENIP).

CONTINUING AND NEW BUSINESS

Council

Nominate Cathleen McAnney as AAG Secretary. Mote nominated, Hayes seconded. Elected by acclamation.

Nominate Sriram Khé as Chair of the Publications Committee. Pope nominated, Hutchinson seconded. Elected by acclamation.

Decisions on regional councilor chair and national councilor chair will wait until the new Council members are in place. Richardson discussed the upcoming regional meetings schedule and the Fall 2017 Council meeting. The Fall Council meeting was tentatively planned for 17-19 November in New Orleans, LA.

Richardson noted that the student representative was approved by more than 90% of members in the recent election.

Annual Meetings

Richardson discussed the three themes associated with the annual meeting. He also discussed the planning process for selecting meetings sites for future annual meetings: New Orleans in 2018, Washington in 2019, Denver in 2020, and New York in 2022. Richardson is considering several cities – including Detroit, and Seattle – as possible sites for meetings in 2021 and 2023.

MacDonald indicated that there have been many questions and comments from the Association membership about how the meeting sites are selected. The questions and comments focused on choosing less expensive locations, and holding meetings outside of the U.S.

Richardson said he will provide a summary of the meeting selection process and criteria that can be shared with membership. Roberts suggested there should be some mechanism for members who are concerned to be involved to better understand the complexity of the process. Pope asked about incentivizing the poster sessions. Richardson mentioned the much later deadline for poster submissions as well as the poster session symposia. Pope asked about the use of convention centers for meeting space, and Richardson responded that historically the preference of the membership has been for hotel space. Hair discussed the difficulty some students face in attending the annual meeting due to lack of travel support in some departments. Richardson mentioned the opportunities for student volunteers to defray costs for AAG Annual Meetings, and some travel support also provided by the regional divisions. MacDonald reminded members that they are the oversight committee for the meeting site selection process, and they should solicit input from the membership on their questions and concerns. Roberts mentioned that the American Anthropology Association has a FAQ on their website about site selection, which the Association may wish to consider. Lawrence and Aitken emphasized the importance of communicating to membership issues and opportunities associated with holding meetings outside the U.S.

Honors and Awards

The honors and awards were approved in the consent agenda. Bednarz reminded members to consider nominations for the Fellows program. Roberts asked about the backlog of eligible people. Bednarz indicated that it will be the Honors Committee to adjudicate such issues.

Resolutions

Whereas, Sarah Bednarz, as Vice President, President, and Past President of the American Association of Geographers has ably guided and served the Association to address the challenges facing the discipline of Geography, particularly by promoting greater communication of the AAG's work to the membership; encouraging the AAG to redesign how it presents its disciplinary data; launching the AAG Fellows Program; promoting the formulation of a succession plan at the AAG; and whereas she has thus contributed considerable and significant efforts to advance the AAG's mission, goals, and activities;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the American Association of Geographers, assembled in Boston, Massachusetts on the occasion of its 113th Annual Meeting, heartily thanks Sarah for her leadership of the Association during the past three years, especially for her efforts to advance communication with members, student participation in meetings, and for encouraging the AAG to plan for the future.

Whereas, Councilors of The American Association of Geographers expend substantial time and effort advancing the causes of the Association and the discipline; and *Whereas*, the Council of The American Association of Geographers has confronted numerous challenges and responded to many opportunities during the last three years;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that The American Association of Geographers, assembled in Boston, Massachusetts on the occasion of its 113th Annual Meeting, extends warm appreciation to Past President Sarah Bednarz, National Councilor and National Councilor Chair Gregory Pope, National Councilor Stuart Aitken, Great Plains and Rocky Mountains Division Councilor and Regional Councilor Chair Shawn Hutchinson, Southeastern Division Councilor and Secretary Thomas Mote, for the energy, time, and talent they have contributed to the Association during their terms on the AAG Council.

Whereas, Members of The American Association of Geographers offer their talents, time, and ideas to support the activities of the Association as Chairs and Members of various association committees appointed by the AAG Council;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that The American Association of Geographers, assembled in Boston, Massachusetts on the occasion of its 113th Annual Meeting, thanks the outgoing Chairs and Members of the AAG Committees for their service to the Association, the discipline and the profession during their committee terms.

The three resolutions were approved by acclamation.

Other Business

MacDonald discussed the idea for the open forum with the Council, in a town-hall style format, immediately following the Council meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, MacDonald adjourned the Council meeting at 11:40 a.m. on April 5, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Mote
AAG Secretary