

## **AAG Council Meeting Minutes**

November 21-23, 2014

Atlanta, Georgia

**Present:** Mona Domosh, *President*; Sarah Bednarz, *Vice President*; Julie Winkler, *Past President*; Grant Saff, *Treasurer*; Laura Smith, *Secretary*; Douglas Richardson, *Executive Director*; Sara Diamond, Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Melissa Gilbert, Ron Hagelman, John Harrington, Jr., J.M. Shawn Hutchinson, Richard Kujawa, Thomas Maraffa, Florence Margai, Scott Mensing, Tom Mote, Jeremy Tasch (via Skype), Elizabeth Wentz

**Regrets:** Stuart Aitken

**AAG Staff:** David Coronado, Ed Ferguson, Candida Mannozi, Yonette Thomas

### **Opening of the Fall 2014 Council Meeting**

President Domosh called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. on November 22. New Council members J.M. Shawn Hutchinson (Great Plains-Rocky Mountains), Florence Margai (National), and Tom Mote (Southeastern) and new Student Representative Sara Diamond were introduced.

*Hagelman moved to adopt the agenda. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.* President Domosh noted that the minutes of the Spring 2014 Council meeting had been unanimously approved (Gilbert abstained) on August 4, 2014 following the new online process for review and approval of minutes.

### **President's Comments**

President Domosh commented on her presidential theme of radical intradisciplinarity and previewed plans for a Presidential Plenary session around this theme at the Annual Meeting in Chicago. She also expressed her ongoing support for pursuing a "climate survey" of the AAG membership, as well her desire to explore ways of better communicating to its membership the impressive range of research, programming, and services that the AAG offers as an organization.

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

Vice President Bednarz expressed her desire to explore ways that the AAG might help to situate Geography departments well during times of disruption (e.g. issues of assessment, accountability, high-impact educational practices, diversity), including awareness of the issues, understanding, and provision of guided practice and feedback.

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

Past President Winkler focused her comments on the progress made in outreach between geography and the physical sciences, and in enhancing the position of physical geography within the AAG and the discipline. Following from the "Conversation on the Future of Physical Geography" session that was held at the Tampa Annual Meeting, planning is underway for a special all-day Symposium on Physical Geography at the Chicago Annual Meeting. Besides facilitating and enhancing dialogue among physical geographers around the theme of environmental reconstruction, an additional goal of this symposium is to experiment with alternative formats for physical geography sessions at future annual meetings.

### **Reports from Regional Councillors**

Hagelman, Chair of the Regional Councillors, noted that regional reports will be delivered at the Annual Meeting in Chicago and reminded Regional Councillors that their top two items will be presented in the

Council meeting while the full written reports will be posted to the AAG website. Hagelman reported that there are no pressing issues at this time.

### **Student Representative's Comments**

Student Representative Sara Diamond reported that the Student Representative position has now been established by the Graduate Student Affinity Group to be a two-year position. Current concerns of the affinity group include relationships with universities over institutional overhead policy, treatment in departments, living wages, insurance coverage, family policies, harassment issues, etc. The group would like to see the AAG adopt a set of best practices or recommendations in these areas. The group is also concerned with how graduate students may best support contingent faculty.

### **Discussion of Contingent Faculty Question**

The issue posed by Domosh for consideration by all Council members was: "We are all aware of the increasing numbers of contingent faculty (part-time, adjunct, temporary) in our universities and colleges. Although this situation does bring with it some opportunities, it also creates challenges for our departments, students, and faculty. I am hoping to discuss what some of these challenges are, so we are all aware of them, and share with each other creative ways of dealing with their impacts." Maraffa distributed to Council ahead of the meeting a thoughtful reflection on the issue from multiple perspectives including that of the contingent faculty member, the academic department, its faculty and chair, and the university administration; the document also outlined five potential ways that the AAG might respond to the situation.

The ensuing discussion began with the topic of how to define "contingent faculty" and the absence of standard practices (in hiring, participation in faculty governance, etc.) among institutions, or even among departments within the same institution. Councillors reported on various structures at their home institutions, including newly defined typologies such as "instructional professorships," "teaching post-docs," and "faculty of practice" positions. Councillors agreed with Maraffa's suggestion that the AAG could provide training and examples of best practices to full-time faculty and department chairs on how to engage contingent faculty in department and university life.

Various impacts on graduate students were also discussed, including the use of contingent positions for graduate students in place of more desirable graduate teaching assistantships, or an overall reduction of teaching opportunities for graduate students. Wentz reported that another possible impact is reduction in the size of doctoral programs because of the importance of post-graduation placement rates (to tenure-track positions) to their program ranking. Diamond pointed out the need for graduate students to be able to discuss and receive guidance about alternatives to tenure-track positions upon graduation; Councillors agreed on the importance of recognizing and communicating the positive aspects of non-tenure track positions.

Councillors agreed that providing information to its membership about contingent positions and alternative professional paths (including non-academic opportunities) would be something the AAG could expand further (beyond existing resources such as the *Aspiring Academics* and *Practicing Geography* publications). Executive Director Richardson suggested establishment of a Knowledge Community for contingent faculty, as well as an on-line job board for non-academic listings.

Council discussed the issue of the growing proportion over time of faculty in contingent positions, and the need to effectively document and visualize the trend in order to advocate for departments and help

resist continued administrative pressures. Council agreed that issues of contingent faculty should be highlighted in the climate survey of AAG membership.

Finally, Council agreed on the importance of ensuring that contingent faculty feel a part of the geography community and are provided with information and resources from the AAG. Challenges to regular communication with contingent faculty (e.g. inconsistent AAG membership status) were discussed. Next steps will include a President's column on the topic; inclusion of questions on the climate survey; and establishment of a Knowledge Community and new on-line Jobs in Geography category on the AAG website.

## **STATUS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **Finances**

Richardson thanked Councillors for attending an orientation session the previous day and for being attentive to the Council's fiduciary charge as it is critically important to doing all that the organization does. He then reviewed the preliminary FYE 2014 financial statements. This fiscal year, AAG is expected to have a change in net assets of approximately \$800,000, according to pre-audit figures.

Saff presented the recommendation of both the AAG Executive Committee and Finance Committee to transfer \$900,000 from the current operating budget to the AAG's Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future. Treasurer Saff reported that the Finance Committee had considered upcoming expenditures in making this recommendation.

At its Spring 2014 meeting, Council had requested a series of financial scenarios be produced for Council to consider in order to make a more informed choice on a possible dues increase. Saff reported that detailed data have been provided and he and Wentz should have the scenarios available to discuss at the Spring 2015 Council meeting. Domosh thanked Saff and Wentz for taking on this task.

Mensing inquired whether there is a projected goal for the Richardson Endowment. Richardson replied that he would like to see it reach \$15 million. The AAG is able to provide all current services, programs, and research within the current budget flow; the endowment interest would be in addition to this. Kujawa inquired whether the endowment is designed to release a payout at a fixed percentage; Richardson reported that at the moment revenue is reinvested, but would be available in future years if needed.

*Harrington moved, as recommended by the AAG Executive Committee and Finance Committee, to transfer \$900,000 from the current operating budget to the AAG's Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future. Wentz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

In response to a request from Council at its Spring 2014 meeting, Richardson presented a new format for simplified financial reports that Councillors may share with the membership. Hagelman expressed gratitude for the new format. Margai inquired whether after looking at trends there are any categories that are worrisome; Richardson responded that there were none. Saff suggested that the AAG place these documents on the website. Winkler expressed her feeling that these new charts fulfilled the request from Council and her desire for them to be included regularly in the Council meeting packet.

*Harrington moved to thank AAG staff (Teri Martin, Rebecca Pendergast) for producing a new simplified format for financial reports as requested by Council, and that this format continue to be provided to Council members on an annual basis. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

## **Membership**

Richardson reported that registration for the Chicago Annual Meeting is high; he anticipates membership to be close to 11,000 members at the close of the calendar year. Wentz noted that in strategizing for the future it is important to look beyond total membership to trends in specific categories. Saff noted that Council has tabled discussion of a potential dues increase while he and Wentz process categorical membership data provided by the AAG central office and produce financial scenarios for discussion at the Spring 2015 Council meeting. Richardson also noted that a survey of lapsed members is ongoing. Council discussed additional membership issues and strategies such as marketing membership to individuals outside of the discipline, retention of retired members, and the timing of partner membership renewals.

Richardson reviewed additional membership support services that are now or will soon be available to regional divisions that wish to participate, including regional division annual meeting registration fee collection systems, content management system websites, supplemental online payment systems, and regional accounting and bookkeeping support. Councillors expressed their thanks to the AAG for providing these services; Hagelman noted that these services will help to strengthen not just the regional divisions but also the national association through bolstering membership and more closely integrating the regions with the national association. *Hagelman moved to thank the AAG Council, Executive Director Doug Richardson, and the AAG staff for their efforts in providing membership and meeting management services to the regional divisions. Saff seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Winkler reviewed the status of the best practices document from the Regional Chairs Workshop held at the Tampa Annual Meeting. A follow-up luncheon for Regional Chairs and Regional Councillors will be held at the Chicago Annual Meeting.

Domosh updated Council on her research into providing on-site child care services at Annual Meetings. She found that most of our peer organizations are providing professional on-site child care services, and solicited two proposals for provision of on-site services at the Chicago Annual Meeting. Richardson expressed his support for the initiative and a preference for the proposal received from Accent on Children's Arrangements, Inc., following the guidelines used by the American Anthropological Association at their annual meetings. Both Richardson and Domosh noted that this initiative is an important commitment on the part of the association to equity issues. *Mote moved that the AAG proceed with providing on-site child care at the Chicago Annual Meeting, using the proposal received from Accent on Children's Arrangements, Inc., and following the American Anthropological Association model of child care provision at meetings. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.* Diamond inquired whether the AAG provides a quiet room/nursing room at the Annual Meeting; Richardson will pursue this for the Chicago meeting.

Council turned to discussion of the proposed climate survey of the membership. Domosh noted the importance of the survey in assessing what the association is doing well in addition to identifying areas in need of improvement; she believes this will be the first time such a survey of the membership has been undertaken. Winkler credited the AAG Enhancing Diversity Committee with introducing the idea. Council discussed priorities for the survey (i.e. topics to be included) as well as potential incentives for

encouraging members to complete the survey. Given the origination of the idea in the Enhancing Diversity Committee, Harrington noted the importance of assessing how members feel about how the association is addressing issues of concern to diverse groups. From the general discussion, Domosh summarized some of the important themes to consider: membership services, diversity and inclusion, publications, and career paths (alternatives to academia). Harrington noted the potential for publications out of these data; Winkler noted that the American Meteorological Society regularly publishes articles on membership data. *Harrington moved to proceed with the AAG Climate Survey process. Winkler offered a friendly amendment that before the next Council meeting, a task force (consisting of Bednarz, Domosh, Winkler, Dupigny-Giroux, and Yonette Thomas) will provide a set of topics to be included in the survey and identify a vendor. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Saff reported to Council that geographers from Puerto Rico accepted the formal invitation from the AAG to affiliate with a regional division of the association. The Puerto Rican geographers requested to join the Middle States Regional Division; the Middle States Division officially amended its constitution at its fall business meeting to expand its regional definition to include Puerto Rico. Mote noted that the Southeastern Regional Division would also like to continue to engage and collaborate with Puerto Rico.

Richardson updated Council on the Long Range Plan Update; he is hopeful that it will be available for circulation at the Chicago Annual Meeting.

Bednarz updated Council on the status of the Geography Faculty Development Alliance (GFDA) and the AAG's Healthy Departments workshops. Directors Ken Foote and J.W. Harrington, Jr. will run the program once more at the University of Connecticut in 2015. Bednarz has consulted with Foote; he has facilitated a transition for the program.

### **Publications**

Richardson noted that Joseph Wood will author a memorial for Wilbur Zelinsky and that Peter O. Muller and Alec Murphy will author a memorial for Harm de Blij in the *Annals of the AAG*. Authors will also be identified for memorials for former AAG Presidents George Demko and J. Ross Mackay.

Richardson reminded Council that the editorial terms for Richard Wright (People, Place, and Region section) and Bruce Braun (Nature and Society section) for the *Annals of the AAG* will end in 2015. A call for editor of the People, Place, and Region section of the *Annals of the AAG* will be posted; Wright is not interested in reappointment. *Bednarz moved to ask the Chair of the Publications Committee to inquire with Bruce Braun about reappointment as editor of the Nature and Society section of the Annals of the AAG. Harrington seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Richardson presented the recommendation of the AAG Publications Committee to interview two of the three teams that applied for co-editorship of the new *GeoHumanities* journal; Richardson noted that the AAG Executive Committee agreed with this recommendation. The Publications Committee provided Council with suggested questions for the editorial team applicants.

Winkler updated Council on the proposal for a new AAG journal related to physical geography; the next step is to gather more information about the publishing practices of physical geographers.

Richardson updated Council on the *AAG International Encyclopedia of Geography*; he is looking toward the end of 2016 for a publication date.

Richardson presented recommendations from the Publications Committee about a reduction in the number of associate editors for the *AAG Review of Books* and bringing the journal into compliance with the AAG policy that individuals may serve on only one AAG journal editorial board at a time.

*Domosh moved to accept the Publications Committee recommendation that the number of Associate Editors of the AAG Review of Books be reduced from six to four, and that the remuneration for Associate Editors be decreased to \$500 per annum. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

*Domosh moved to follow the Publications Committee recommendation that upon renewal of editorial board positions for the AAG Review of Books, Editor-in-Chief Kent Mathewson implement a procedure for issuing staggered terms that will achieve topical coverage, and that, thereafter, any new editorial board appointments must comply with AAG policy that individuals may not serve on more than one AAG publication editorial board. Wentz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

### **Communications**

AAG Communications Director David Coronado presented to Council on various updates to the AAG website and metrics of website traffic. Sections for department news and member news have been added to the AAG News Online site. There are currently five different ways of reaching AAG members: three via e-mail (AAG SmartBrief, AAGeogram, and the AAG Newsletter) and two online (the home page (aag.org) and AAG News Online (news.aag.org)). Council discussed limitations of the website metrics (e.g. how viewers are using the material, what viewers are looking for), the possibility of gathering feedback through an optional user survey, and ways to recruit Newsletter pieces. Richardson noted the possibility of eventually having a full-time staff person dedicated to managing social media for the association.

### **Meridian Place Operations**

Richardson noted that the association name change question (from the Association of American Geographers to the American Association of Geographers) will be included on the 2015 AAG election ballot as a binding vote. The recommendation from the AAG attorneys is that if the name change is approved by the membership, the change be accomplished in the simplest and most flexible way by registering for a d/b/a (“doing business as”) rather than through a constitutional process that would result in the association having to modify or amend many documents, contracts, etc. Richardson and Ferguson support this recommendation.

Domosh updated Council on the detailed request for proposals that will be sent to the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and to the American Geographical Society (AGS) Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for hosting the AAG archives. Saff noted that to ensure that the consideration of a permanent location for the AAG archives was as impartial as possible, there should not be involvement on the AAG Archives Committee by individuals holding positions at the locations or institutions that will submit proposals. *Council felt strongly that in order to conduct a fair review of proposals, the review process should not include any individual who is employed by or serves as (or is under consideration as) a board member, officer, or employee of any of the involved organizations (the Library of Congress or its Geography and Map Division; the American Geographical Society (AGS); the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee or its AGS Library). Domosh moved to proceed with the request for proposals submitted by the Archives Committee with the addition of the stipulation provided by Council. Maraffa seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Richardson abstained.*

## CONTINUING AND NEW BUSINESS

### Honors and Awards

The Honors Committee forwarded its nominations for 2015 AAG Honors to Council: *Lifetime Achievement Honors*: John P. Jones III and Bobby M. Wilson; *Distinguished Scholarship Honors*: Tony Bebbington and Ruth DeFries; *Ronald F. Abler Distinguished Service Honors*: John Frazier and Rita Gardner; *Gilbert Grosvenor Geographic Education Honors*: Michael Solem; *Gilbert White Public Service Honors*: Elizabeth Oglesby; *Media Achievement Award*: Rob Kitchin and Marshall Shepherd; *Publication Award*: University of California Press. *Bednarz moved to approve the list of 2015 Honors nominations as supplied by the Honors Committee. Harrington seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Mote abstained.*

Richardson presented the nomination from the Enhancing Diversity Committee of Wendy Jepson for the 2015 Enhancing Diversity Award. The nominee provided by the Harold M. Rose Award Committee for the 2015 Harold M. Rose Award for Anti-Racism Research and Practice is Bobby M. Wilson. *Domosh moved to approve the nomination of Bobby M. Wilson for the 2015 Harold M. Rose Award for Anti-Racism Research and Practice. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Richardson announced that the 2015 Honorary Geographer, approved by the AAG Executive Committee, will be Peter Bol of Harvard University. Winkler announced that Diana Liverman will be the recipient of the 2015 Presidential Achievement Award. Domosh announced that the Executive Committee had approved Susan Hanson as recipient of the 2015 Stanley Brunn Award for Creativity in Geography.

### Annual Meetings

Future AAG Annual Meetings will take place in San Francisco (2016), Boston (2017), and Washington D.C. (2019). New Orleans and Denver are possible sites for the 2018 meeting.

### Committees, Specialty and Affinity Groups

Smith presented Council with the slate of individuals for consideration for the Nominating Committee and Honors Committee (A and B). Council voted for the following individuals to stand for election on the 2015 ballot: *Honors A*: Darrel Hess and David Lanegran; *Honors B*: Chris Brown, Amy Hessel, Robin Leichenko, and Kendra McSweeney; *Nominating Committee*: Karen Johnson-Webb, Jay T. Johnson, Maria Lane, Marilyn Raphael, Murray Rice, and Bradley Rundquist.

Smith announced the list of nominees to be placed on the 2015 election ballot as received from the Nominating Committee for the 2015 Election: *President*: Sarah Bednarz; *Vice President*: Derek Alderman and Glen MacDonald; *National Councillor*: Paul Adams, Chris Duvall, Sue Roberts, and Susy Ziegler.

Richardson reported that the Healthy Departments Committee would like to add four new members in order to enhance the diversity of institutions and perspectives on the committee. *Harrington moved to approve the request by the Healthy Departments Committee to add Perry Carter, Jon Harbor, Darrel Hess, and Burrell Montz as members. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Domosh reported to Council on a proposal to establish a new AAG Committee on mental health issues in the discipline. Council agreed that the establishment of a task force initially would help to refine the list of activities for a standing committee. *Domosh moved to authorize the establishment of a task force to explore the topic of mental health issues in the discipline and to report back to the Council annually. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Harrington abstained.*

Wentz reported to Council on some of the concerns that have been raised by AAG Specialty Groups, such as the timing of Specialty Group business meetings at the Annual Meeting and improving access to the online AAG Knowledge Communities.

### **Council**

The Spring 2015 Council Meeting will be held in conjunction with the 2015 Annual Meeting in Chicago, from April 19-21. The Executive Committee will meet February 27-28, 2015 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, at the request of Puerto Rican geographers.

### **Closed Session**

Council met in closed session to review the Executive Director's performance and compensation.

### **Interviews**

Interviews of editorial teams for the new AAG *GeoHumanities* journal were conducted. Each of the two applicant teams were interviewed via Skype; Council discussion followed. *Domosh moved to appoint Tim Cresswell and Deborah Dixon as co-editors of the new AAG GeoHumanities journal. Maraffa seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

### **Adjournment**

*Kujawa moved to sincerely and enthusiastically thank the AAG staff for exemplary logistical support in facilitating the Council meeting. Harrington seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

There being no further business, President Domosh adjourned the Council meeting at 11:29 a.m. on Sunday, November 23, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Smith  
AAG Secretary



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## Summary of Resolutions

- *Hagelman moved to adopt the agenda. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 1)*
- *Harrington moved, as recommended by the AAG Executive Committee and Finance Committee, to transfer \$900,000 from the current operating budget to the AAG's Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future. Wentz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 3)*
- *Harrington moved to thank AAG staff (Teri Martin, Rebecca Pendergast) for producing a new simplified format for financial reports as requested by Council, and that this format continue to be provided to Council members on an annual basis. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 4)*
- *Hagelman moved to thank the AAG Council, Executive Director Doug Richardson, and the AAG staff for their efforts in providing membership and meeting management services to the regional divisions. Saff seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 4)*
- *Mote moved that the AAG proceed with providing on-site child care at the Chicago Annual Meeting, using the proposal received from Accent on Children's Arrangements, Inc., and following the American Anthropological Association model of child care provision at meetings. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 4)*
- *Harrington moved to proceed with the AAG Climate Survey process. Winkler offered a friendly amendment that before the next Council meeting, a task force (consisting of Bednarz, Domosh, Winkler, Dupigny-Giroux, and Yonette Thomas) will provide a set of topics to be included in the survey and identify a vendor. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 5)*
- *Bednarz moved to ask the Chair of the Publications Committee to inquire with Bruce Braun about reappointment as editor of the Nature and Society section of the Annals of the AAG. Harrington seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 5)*
- *Domosh moved to accept the Publications Committee recommendation that the number of Associate Editors of the AAG Review of Books be reduced from six to four, and that the remuneration for Associate Editors be decreased to \$500 per annum. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 6)*
- *Domosh moved to follow the Publications Committee recommendation that upon renewal of editorial board positions for the AAG Review of Books, Editor-in-Chief Kent Mathewson implement a procedure for issuing staggered terms that will achieve topical coverage, and that, thereafter, any new editorial board appointments must comply with AAG policy that individuals may not serve on more than one AAG publication editorial board. Wentz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 6)*
- *Council felt strongly that in order to conduct a fair review of proposals, the review process should not include any individual who is employed by or serves as (or is under consideration as) a board member, officer, or employee of the Library of Congress, American Geographical Society (AGS), and/or the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Domosh moved to proceed with the request for proposals submitted by the Archives Committee with the addition of the stipulation provided by Council. Maraffa seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Richardson abstained. (p. 6)*
- *Bednarz moved to approve the list of 2015 Honors nominations as supplied by the Honors Committee. Harrington seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Mote abstained. (p. 7)*
- *Domosh moved to approve the nomination of Bobby M. Wilson for the 2015 Harold M. Rose Award for Anti-Racism Research and Practice. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 7)*

- *Harrington moved to approve the request by the Healthy Departments Committee to add Perry Carter, Jon Harbor, Darrel Hess, and Burrell Montz as members. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 7)*
- *Domosh moved to authorize the establishment of a task force to explore the topic of mental health issues in the discipline and to report back to the Council annually. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Harrington abstained. (p. 7)*
- *Domosh moved to appoint Tim Cresswell and Deborah Dixon as co-editors of the new AAG GeoHumanities journal. Maraffa seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 8)*
- *Kujawa moved to sincerely and enthusiastically thank the AAG staff for exemplary logistical support in facilitating the Council meeting. Harrington seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 8)*