

AAG Council Meeting Minutes

April 19-21, 2015

Chicago, Illinois

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

AAG Staff: Candida Mannozi, Teri Martin, Yonette Thomas, John Wertman

Observers: Glen MacDonald, *Vice President Elect*; Ken Foote, Susan Roberts

Opening of the Spring 2015 Council Meeting

President Domosh called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. on April 19. *Bednarz moved to approve the agenda. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Domosh welcomed new Council member Gregory Pope (National).

Domosh noted that the minutes of the Fall 2014 Council meeting had been unanimously approved (Aitken abstained) on February 19, 2015 following the online process for review and approval of minutes.

President's Comments

President Domosh thanked Council for their attendance and expressed her excitement for the Presidential Plenary session organized around the theme of radical intradisciplinarity. She also noted that Council would be discussing the topic of diversity within the discipline during the meeting and that the topic would be the focus of her next Presidential column. Domosh also enthusiastically reported that the new on-site child care program offered by the AAG at the Annual Meeting was a great success with over 100 slots reserved.

Vice President's Comments

Vice President Bednarz reported on AAG's 12th annual Department Leadership Workshop to be held June 24-27 in Storrs, CT and encouraged Council to provide feedback on themes and to consider taking part. She also reported on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and encouraged Council members to write their Congressional representatives to help ensure that geography is represented in the legislation. Bednarz also expressed her desire to consider revisions to the format of Council meetings, including the introduction of a consent agenda, in order to have more time for work and discussion while together. She also expressed her support for increased data collection on the topic of diversity within the discipline in order to inform future action.

Past President's Comments

Past President Winkler reminded Council that her focus during her Presidential term had been the promotion of physical geography within the association, with an interest in experimenting with different formats. She reported to Council on the trial physical geography symposium to be held later in the week at the Annual Meeting, and thanked AAG staff Oscar Larson and Astrid Ng for their efforts to minimize conflicting sessions. She also noted the financial support for the symposium from the AAG Enrichment Fund; the publishers of *Physical Geography*, *Anthropocene*, *Geomorphology*, and *Progress in Physical*

Geography; and Robert and Bobbe Christopherson. Reactions to the symposium will be discussed in an open session following the symposium, with the intent that the symposium becomes a regular feature of the Annual Meeting.

Reports from Regional Councillors

Hagelman, Chair of the Regional Councillors, summarized the top news items from each regional division based on reports received from the Regional Councillors. Regions reported on divisional annual meetings, regional operations, new programs, and programmatic changes. The summary of top news items is included as an appendix; complete regional reports are available on the AAG website.

Maraffa noted the creation of new programs within the East Lakes Division, but that all are interdisciplinary in nature (often inspired by a focus on STEM). Hagelman noted that with the recent collapse of the Department of Geography at the University of New Orleans, the Department of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University is the only geography department left in the state. Gilbert noted that Temple University is starting a new professional science Master's degree in GIS.

Richard Kujawa, NESTVAL Regional Councillor, will take over as Chair of Regional Councillors for 2015-2016.

Student Representative's Comments

Student Representative Sara Diamond noted that Audrey Kobayashi would be the Graduate Student Affinity Group's plenary speaker at the Annual Meeting and that the affinity group would be hosting a meeting at the Field Museum of Chicago on Thursday in addition to its regular meeting sessions. There has been turnover in the Affinity Group's Executive Council and she expects there will be much to report in the next year.

Discussion of Diversity Question

The question posed by Domosh for consideration by all Council members was about diversity strategies within the discipline. Despite the Association's history of efforts to help diversify the discipline and progress that has been made, it remains predominantly white. Domosh challenged Councillors to consider and discuss what diversity strategies have been successful in their departments, universities, and regions, in order to work toward some new initiatives that we might set out for ourselves as a discipline or association. She stated a particular interest in the relationships between diversity in terms of numbers of faculty and students and diversity in terms of the content of our research and teaching.

Gilbert described strategies employed at Temple University, including paying attention to general education courses such as digital mapping that are often taught by visitors and for which faculty of color may be available and their research highlighted. In addition, the graduate program in Geography has been intentional about the diversity of admitted students; willing to admit students when GRE scores do not seem to match potential. How can we advocate to change these types of criteria that have been institutionalized?

Diamond noted that department support for alternative family structures seems to correlate with other aspects of diversity; maybe programs could endeavor to be more supportive of flexibility (e.g. part-time status, leaves of absence, etc.).

Recruitment strategies and the “marketing” of the discipline were discussed, especially in terms of relevant coursework and career possibilities, as well as reaching out to the K-12 population. Wentz noted that conversations with students (especially first-generation students) about career paths in the discipline may lead to increased diversity. Gilbert suggested that it would be helpful to have standardized material produced by the AAG that departments could tailor to help market classes and the major.

The mentoring of students (undergraduate and graduate) and of new faculty was also discussed. Harrington noted the need for and the challenge to departments of finding diverse mentors for students and maintaining these networks. Saff noted the existence of institutional and structural constraints; even when programs are producing good candidates, hiring institutions are not providing supportive environments through nurturing and mentorship. Council discussed the existence of “strategic” or “opportunity” hiring programs; the lack of a supportive environment was noted as a factor in unsuccessful outcomes from these programs. Maraffa noted some successes with tracking diverse graduates from one’s own institution.

Gilbert inquired whether there was a way to forge connections with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) at the association level. Richardson noted the association’s work with Howard University. Mote noted the Southeastern Regional Division’s HBCU outreach initiative, including financial support to attend meetings; maybe the association as a whole could consider a similar program? Mote further suggested reaching out to people doing work that is relevant to the discipline but not called “geography” at places with already diverse populations. Mensing noted the difficulty of establishing partnerships without a local network; progress will take time and capital. Tasch identified university partnerships with local neighborhood organizations as a way to help introduce local students to the university and to Geography; Towson University’s Office of Civic Engagement provides assistance to faculty in making local connections.

Domosh reminded Councillors of the Department Toolkit for diversity enhancement produced by the AAG’s Addressing Locally-tailored Information Infrastructure and Geoscience Needs for Enhancing Diversity (ALIGNED) project, as well as potential collaboration with AAG’s Enhancing Diversity Committee. Bednarz advocated for additional data collection on the issue and the identification of individuals to gather perspectives from. Winkler noted the importance of getting students to national and regional meetings and providing opportunities for social interactions once there; perhaps the Enhancing Diversity Committee could be involved in such initiatives.

Richardson noted the existence of the AAG’s Diversity Ambassadors program, as well as results of surveys completed through the Enhancing Departments and Graduate Education in Geography (EDGE) project on supportive academic and social environments for graduate students. He believes that commitment at the departmental level is also critical for success. He also suggested that diversity initiatives might tie in to health as a relevant and growing theme within the discipline.

Dupigny-Giroux noted that the conversation about diversity is easier in certain parts of the discipline, such as in general education courses that include topics of race and ethnicity. Hagelman suggested collaboration with more diverse departments within a home institution through events like guest lectures and colloquia to more quickly introduce diversity into a classroom. Hutchinson suggested that it would be helpful to have a resource library with truly substantive lessons or lab components that could be used in introductory-level courses that would get beyond our own personal research. Hagelman suggested that we might pursue a “best practices in classrooms” through sharing of resources

and data through the Enhancing Diversity Committee and the Committee on the Status of Women in Geography.

Dupigny-Giroux pointed out that even Council did not have a clear definition of diversity. The work will take significant effort and long-term commitment.

Executive Director's Comments

Executive Director Richardson reported that approximately 9,000 attendees were expected at the Annual Meeting, an incredible number. More than 30 percent of the attendees originated from outside of the United States and it is exciting to see that many drawn to an AAG Annual Meeting. Richardson thanked AAG staff for their work in implementing the new registration system in place at the meeting.

STATUS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Finances

Treasurer Saff noted that both the AAG Executive Committee and the AAG Finance Committee had made some recommendations for Council to consider. Saff, Wentz, and Maraffa will present a financial scenario report to provide context for discussion of a possible membership dues increase; Saff thanked AAG staff Michelle Ledoux and Teri Martin for providing data to run the scenarios.

Saff reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held April 7 in Washington, D.C. Saff noted that the most recent audit of the Association was extremely positive. The AAG auditing firm (Thompson, Greenspon) performed both a standard audit and a more detailed A-133 audit conducted on AAG's federal research grants and contracts. The firm found the AAG to be in the top 5% of similar organizations they audit; they found no deficiencies for the AAG, in contrast to 60 to 80% of other organizations they audit. Of particular note are the internal controls in place in the association through strong segregation of financial duties, and the fact that administrative expenditures as a proportion of mission-related program expenditures are low at 9 to 10% (anything below 25% is considered a desirable benchmark). The firm also appreciates board involvement in the association's activities. The AAG conservative investment strategy has been yielding consistent results and the endowment continues to grow. Saff presented the Finance Committee's recommendation that Council approve the proposed AAG FYE 2016 budget as submitted. Saff also presented the recommendation of both the AAG Executive Committee and Finance Committee to transfer \$950,000 from the current operating budget to the AAG's Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future.

Domosh moved to approve the audited FYE 2014 financial statement. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Saff moved, as recommended by the AAG Executive Committee and Finance Committee, that \$950,000 be transferred from the current operating budget to the AAG's Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future. Domosh seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Richardson noted that the first obligation of any board is its fiduciary duty to the organization and thus the financial audit is probably the most important document that Council considers. Richardson reviewed the association's financial activity since the fiscal year ended on August 31, 2014. Mensing inquired how the association's investment stocks and bonds were selected and whether any social criteria were employed in their selection. Richardson replied that the AAG has an investment advisor who works primarily with non-profit organizations, and that the selection of investments is strictly

fiduciary. Council has discussed alternative investment approaches in the past but each time has decided not to change the existing approach. Harrington advocated for making the association more “green” and having Council revisit this issue in the future as a responsible activity. Wentz suggested the possibility of adding higher-risk investments to the portfolio once a certain threshold has been met; Richardson was open to the suggestion but noted that the AAG has done well with the low-risk approach.

Saff moved, as recommended by the Finance Committee, to approve the AAG’s FYE 2016 budget as submitted. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Discussion of Financial Scenarios

Saff reminded Council of the request made at the Spring 2014 Council Meeting for additional information and greater discussion before voting upon the issue of a membership dues increase. A task force consisting of Saff, Wentz, and Maraffa utilized data received from the AAG central office to generate a series of financial scenarios, with a particular interest in exploring what would happen if the publishing contract with Routledge (which expires in December 2017) is not renewed near its current level. Maraffa expressed gratitude to Teri Martin, Director of Finance, Michelle Ledoux, Director of Membership, Doug Richardson, and others for their assistance in acquiring and interpreting the data.

On behalf of the task force, Maraffa presented an overview of key indicators. The AAG has experienced over a decade of growth and financial health due to the sound management and vision of the AAG leadership and hard work of its staff. AAG membership has experienced healthy growth since 2000. During the past five years, membership has on average remained stable, as has revenue from dues. Dues per member (membership revenue divided by number of members) has also remained relatively stable, while expenses per member have risen consistently over the last five years. As a result, revenue per member is decreasing; this can also be attributed in part to more members in low-dues categories such as student memberships and memberships in the Developing Regions category (currently the fastest-growing category of membership). Maraffa then presented a series of slides on other revenue sources (annual meetings, royalties, grants) and income and expenses. Since 2011, operating income (the difference between total income and operating expenses) has ranged from 4.5% to 6.5% of revenue.

Wentz then presented a series of scenarios for membership totals and dues, conference attendance and income, and publication royalties (the top three income categories). The first scenario assumed a stable trend in membership, the second a downward trend. The third scenario assumed increased revenue from conference registration. The fourth scenario reflected a worst-case scenario for publication royalties, zeroing out after 2017. The difference between income forecasted for each of the four scenarios and expenses was displayed. Wentz then presented the projected outcomes if only membership dues were adjusted vs. only meeting registration fees.

Aitken noted that many of the respondents to the lapsed member survey identified the cost of dues as a reason for not renewing their membership; he wondered about the tipping point for raising dues where membership would drop precipitously. Richardson noted that the association’s approach has been one of keeping dues low and instead increasing the total number of members; AAG dues have not been raised since 2009. Saff presented the Finance Committee’s recommendation for a 2 percent increase in membership dues for all categories except students, Developing Regions, and income < \$25,000. This increase in dues will not create a significant shift in revenue but will preclude having to raise dues at a steeper rate later on and help to keep dues in line with cost-of-living increases.

Council discussed the balance among dues and meeting registration costs, potential limits to membership growth, and annual meeting locations. Tasch inquired about meeting the needs of non-academic members, an especially relevant issue in the Middle Atlantic Division. Dupigny-Giroux suggested Council consider the needs of those who are not currently members but potentially could be. Domosh suggested that part of the new charge of the Membership Committee be to examine membership categories and the progressivity of dues.

Harrington inquired about the possibility of using returns on investment as an additional source of income (rather than annual reinvestment of those returns). Council discussed the use of the endowment and investment income, as well as the target amount for the endowment. Gilbert inquired about the possibility of a more aggressive investment strategy for the longer-term future, as well as the issue of social responsibility. She suggested a task force to explore these issues; Council also discussed the possibility of hiring a private firm to assist with projections. *Bednarz moved to task the AAG Finance Committee (with Mensing and Hutchinson as Council liaisons) to investigate an overall investment strategy, an investment social responsibility policy, and membership forecasting, and to provide Council with a report by the 2015 Fall Council meeting. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Maraffa moved to implement a one-time 2 percent membership dues increase for all membership categories excluding students, Developing Regions, and less than \$25,000 income. Bednarz seconded the motion. The motion did not pass with 14 opposed, 3 in favor, Richardson and Tasch abstained.

Saff noted that it would be useful to have data on number of members per dues category for the future Council discussion on membership categories.

Membership

Domosh updated Council on the status of the proposed climate survey of AAG members and the work of the task force (consisting of Domosh, Bednarz, Winkler, Dupigny-Giroux, Thomas, and Altha Cravey). A draft survey was distributed to Councillors. The AAG Executive Committee has recommended moving forward with McKinley Advisors, a consulting firm for associations, for assistance in designing the survey.

Bednarz updated Council on the status of the Geography Faculty Development Alliance (GFDA) and Department Leadership workshops. Long-term directors Ken Foote and J.W. Harrington, Jr. will retire from running the program after 2015. Derek Alderman will shadow the program to be held at the University of Connecticut this year and then host future workshops at the University of Tennessee.

Publications

Richardson updated Council on upcoming memorials in the *Annals*. *Richardson moved to request Fritz Nelson, and a co-author if desired, to author a memorial in the Annals of the AAG for AAG Past President J.R. Mackay. Domosh seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Aitken moved to request Stan Brunn to author a memorial in the Annals of the AAG for AAG Past President George J. Demko. Domosh seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Richardson reviewed the proposed editorial board for the *GeoHumanities* journal. Approximately half of the board members are Geographers and half are from Humanities disciplines and the creative and performing Arts. The AAG Publications Committee would like to see the Humanities better reflected in

the Associate Editors. *Aitken moved to approve the proposed editorial board for the GeoHumanities journal. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Diamond inquired about creating a graduate student internship position on an editorial board (e.g. *Annals of the AAG, GeoHumanities*). Richardson noted the opportunities provided at the Annual Meeting to meet with editors and publishers. Aitken noted that the AAG has regularly sponsored sessions to meet journal editors and that he would discuss further possibilities with Diamond.

Communications

Richardson updated Council on the new AAG video conferencing system (GoToMeeting) available for use by AAG committees, specialty groups, regional division executive committees, etc.

Richardson suggested the possibility of establishing a small group to oversee Wikipedia entries relevant to Geography; Pope noted that various members have produced the AAG entry over the years.

Meridian Place Operations

AAG Journals Managing Editor Miranda Lecea will be leaving in mid-May. Jennifer Cassidanto will start May 1 as *Annals* Managing Editor and Robin Maier will handle *The Professional Geographer*. Jenny Lunn will work with the editors as the in-house Director of Publications. Richardson will continue to handle all contractual matters regarding AAG's publications.

Richardson updated Council on the plan for implementation of the AAG name change from Association of American Geographers to American Association of Geographers. The AAG's attorneys have recommended making the change via DBA (doing business as) so that the association will not have to redo all its contractual papers and can legally use both names. However, all logos, journals, outreach pieces, etc. will need to be updated; the office is aiming for a formal switchover of January 1, 2016. *Following upon prior Council resolutions supporting the name change and a binding AAG membership vote approving the name change, Richardson moved that the AAG Council hereby formally approve changing the name of the Association from Association of American Geographers to American Association of Geographers effective January 1, 2016, and to do so via doing business as (DBA) American Association of Geographers. Pope seconded the motion. It passed with 18 in favor and 1 opposed.*

AAG Archives

Proposals to host the AAG Archives were received from both the American Geographical Society (AGS) Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The proposals received from each site addressed the following topics: complementarity with existing collections; location and storage; access and user support; acquisitions; ownership, administration, and management; electronic records; financial support; outreach, publicity, and public relations. A subcommittee of the AAG Archives and Association History Committee visited the two libraries; the subcommittee provided to Council a report on information gathered from the submitted proposals, site visits, and additional information requests. Domosh noted that it is an enviable situation to have two great places interested in hosting our archives.

As the Council representative to the Archives and Association History Committee and as a member of the subcommittee that visited the two proposed sites, Hagelman presented information about the two sites from the subcommittee report and showed slides of the physical facilities. Hagelman reviewed the types of archive materials found at each location (including materials located at the Meridian Place central office that have not yet been transferred elsewhere), as well as the process for cataloging and

accessing materials at each location. Hagelman reiterated that it is a “problem of success” to have two highly-respected organizations interested in hosting the AAG’s archives. Hagelman also noted that no matter which location is selected, significant time and money will need to be invested to professionally maintain our archives and make them accessible. He also suggested that the entire association must act as stewards of our archives, and that our goal should be comprehensive management and ready access.

Following on the information contained in the proposals, subcommittee report, and presentation slides, Council discussed issues of digital access to past and future materials, lending of physical materials, and cataloging systems. Council also discussed the desire of both locations to host the complete AAG archives and not have them split between two locations, as well as the American Geographical Society Library’s possession of a portion of the AAG archives and the Library of Congress’ possession of a portion of the AAG archives. Hagelman stated that this will be an issue for the Executive Director and central office to negotiate; Richardson stated that the Association would be supportive of any transfer or digitization of materials.

Maraffa moved that the AAG Council has reviewed and considered the report of the AAG Archives and Association History Committee on the future location of the AAG archives and thanks the committee for its work. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Domosh moved that the AAG Council reaffirms its previous decision (the unanimously approved Council Resolution from Fall Council Meeting, November 1-3, 2013) that it is in the best long-term interests of the Association to consolidate the archives of the Association of American Geographers at the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Long Range Plan Update

Ken Foote visited Council to update Councillors on Long Range Planning Committee activities and to present a second full draft of the new long range plan. The draft plan outlines 22 important long-term goals in five categories: research, education, member services, outreach and engagement, and organizational strength and sustainability. For each theme there is a broad set of goals with accompanying action items. The Long Range Planning Committee is looking for feedback on the desired time frame for the plan as well as the level of detail to be included in the plan. The committee would like to receive comments by mid-May, after which the draft will be circulated to the AAG membership via the website, and brought back to Council in the fall for a vote.

Long Range Planning Committee member Maraffa thanked Foote for his shepherding of the planning process; committee members Winkler and Richardson also expressed their appreciation. Maraffa noted that the plan should be a roadmap for the organization for whatever time frame we decide is appropriate; other potential plans should be informed by this document.

Councillors offered feedback on the draft plan, including suggestions to identify short-, medium-, and long-term objectives for every major goal, and to clarify what is meant by references to the AAG throughout the document. The format of the document as a blend of strategies and tactics was noted; Bednarz recommended the plan should focus on strategies. The utility of the plan for various groups (departments, Council, Executive Director) was also discussed.

Policy and Outreach

John Wertman, AAG Senior Program Manager for Government Relations, updated Council on recent educational policy issues. The AAG sent a letter to U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander, Chairman of the

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, explaining the need for funding for K-12 geography as part of the committee's proposed reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, currently known as No Child Left Behind). Wertman has followed up with Senator Alexander's staff and has met with staff to other key U.S. Senators and Congressmen to respond to questions relating to the importance of federal funding for geography education.

Wertman noted four recent successful state battles (New York, Nebraska, Tennessee, Texas) in which Geography was well supported. The AAG encourages its members to express their own views to Congressional representatives. The Association provides numerous analyses and informational materials that might be helpful to AAG members or their Congressional representatives. The AAG attempts to educate a variety of constituencies, regardless of party affiliation.

Projects and Programs

Richardson briefly discussed the AAG's research projects and outreach programs, including updating Council on development of the AAG/Esri GeoMentors network to support the U.S. Department of Education's ConnectED Program, for which Esri has agreed to donate GIS software to all K-12 schools in the U.S. GeoMentors will help teachers and schools incorporate GIS and geographic learning into their classrooms. Richardson encouraged Councillors to promote the recruitment of mentors for the initiative.

CONTINUING AND NEW BUSINESS

Honors and Awards

Richardson reviewed the 2015 AAG Honorees and Awardees. He announced that the amount awarded for AAG Dissertation Research grants has been increased to \$1,000 per recipient; the AAG will allocate funds to top off the awards to \$10,000 (to fund up to ten awardees per year at \$1,000 each) for a period of three years. The AAG Award for BA/MA Program Excellence has been established and an award committee formed; nominations for the award will be generated through the regional divisions.

Bednarz proposed the establishment of an AAG Fellows program. She noted that in many departments faculty are increasingly being measured in terms of awards, and that Geography is at a disadvantage because it offers relatively few national awards. Bednarz offered that a Fellows program could help to raise the profile of Geography and help geographers compete in a metric-driven world. She would like Council to discuss the possibility of such a program.

Domosh noted that many physical science organizations have such programs, but there are few in the social sciences/humanities. Some Councillors offered their support for the idea and noted that such a program would not incur a cost. Harrington offered his support for this type of recognition, but would like to use a more inclusive term (e.g. "scholar" in place of "fellow"). Bednarz commented that "scholar" connotes research leadership only, while she would want broader criteria to be considered (e.g. service, innovation).

Domosh expressed reservations about the idea, noting that the AAG has been forward-thinking about the equality of its members no matter where they are coming from. MacDonald described the perception of American Geophysical Union Fellows as an exclusive club, consisting only of senior scholars. Aitken offered that the AAG could be more radical in its development of a program; Tasch liked the potential but expressed concern that the selection criteria would need to ensure that all could equally compete. Wentz wondered what other factors beyond metrics might motivate us to support a

Fellows program? Gilbert offered that such a program could tie to other initiatives, such as enhancing diversity.

Bednarz will chair a task force consisting of Pope, Hagelman, Tasch, Aitken, and Wentz to explore the idea of a Fellows program for the AAG.

Annual Meetings

Richardson noted that a record number of participants are anticipated for the Chicago Annual Meeting, as well as the very successful launch of the on-site childcare program. Future AAG annual meetings will take place in San Francisco (2016), Boston (2017), New Orleans (2018), and Washington D.C. (2019). Denver, Detroit, Minneapolis, San Diego, and Vancouver are possible sites for meetings in 2020 and 2021.

Committees; Specialty and Affinity Groups

Smith provided a summary of the reports received from AAG standing committees; in general, there was a low response rate from the committees. A number of the awards committees expressed disappointment over low numbers of applicants for awards.

Richardson expressed concern over the long-term inactivity of some committees. A task force consisting of Richardson, Smith, and Mote will review all standing committees and make recommendations for potential changes to committee structures.

Smith distributed a slate of appointments to fill committee vacancies for the terms ending June 30, 2015. The Committee on Committees reported receiving more nominees for committee vacancies this year and thanked the Regional Councillors who encouraged their regional membership to consider serving. There are two new committees this year: Harm J. de Blij Award Committee and BA/MA Program Excellence Award Committee. Terms for the four vacancies on the Finance Committee were staggered (two terms for two years, two terms for three years) to get back in rotation. The Committee on Committees recommends reducing the size of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee; only a Council representative will be appointed this year. Bednarz will serve as the new Council representative to the AAG Archives and Association History Committee. Harrington reminded Council that a new Council representative will need to be appointed to the Stand-Alone Geographers Affinity Group; Council should also be thinking about Council representatives to other Affinity Groups.

Because of the possibility of a revised committee charge from Council, the Committee on Committees has not provided nominees for the three current vacancies on the Membership Committee; Councillors are encouraged to generate nominees for these vacancies after discussion of a new charge for the Membership Committee.

Bednarz moved to approve the proposed slate of new Committee appointments for 2015. Maraffa seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Domosh announced that Kujawa had been elected to serve as Chair of Regional Councillors and Dupigny-Giroux as Chair of National Councillors for 2015-2016. Pope will serve as Chair of National Councillors for 2016-2017. The Executive Committee recommends Mote be appointed as AAG Secretary and Gilbert as AAG Treasurer. *Domosh moved to appoint Thomas Mote as AAG Secretary. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Mote abstained. Domosh moved to appoint Melissa Gilbert as AAG Treasurer. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.*

Wentz reported that a question has been raised by Specialty Groups about access to Specialty Group websites being limited to group members. Council briefly discussed the benefits of Specialty Group membership and the purpose of membership dues, as well as the liability that AAG holds for Specialty Groups as subdivisions of the AAG.

Council

The Fall 2015 Executive Committee meeting will be held in conjunction with the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers Regional Division Annual Meeting in Palm Springs, CA on October 24-25, 2015. The Fall 2015 Council Meeting will be held on November 6-8, 2015, in conjunction with the AAG Southwestern Regional Division Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX.

Tom Baerwald, Program Director and Senior Science Advisor at the National Science Foundation, visited Council to promote opportunities in the Geography and Spatial Sciences Program at NSF and to encourage applications.

Resolutions

Domosh read the following resolutions:

Whereas, Julie Winkler, as Vice President, President, and Past President of the Association of American Geographers has ably guided and served the Association to address the challenges facing the discipline of Geography, particularly by promoting greater cross-disciplinary outreach and visibility to other disciplines; raising the visibility of the AAG (particularly among the geosciences); improving membership, greater journal readership, and greater participation in AAG meetings on the part of geoscientists; 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 Association of American Geographers, assembled in Chicago, Illinois on the occasion of its 111th Annual Meeting, heartily thanks Julie for her leadership of the Association during the past three years, especially for her efforts to advance collaboration across disciplines, and for her efforts to encourage the AAG to reach out to geographers in the physical sciences.

Whereas, Councilors of The Association of American Geographers expend substantial time and effort advancing the causes of the Association and the discipline; and

Whereas, the Council of The Association of American Geographers has confronted numerous challenges and responded to many opportunities during the last three years;

Therefore Be It Resolved that The Association of American Geographers, assembled in Chicago, Illinois on the occasion of its 111th Annual Meeting, extends warm appreciation to Past President Julie Winkler, National Councilors John Harrington, Jr. and Elizabeth Wentz, East Lakes Division Councilor Thomas Maraffa, Middle States Division Councilor and Treasurer Grant Saff, and Southwest Division Councilor and Regional Councilor Chair Ron Hagelman, and West Lakes Division Councilor and Secretary Laura Smith for the energy, time, and talent they have contributed to the Association during their terms on the AAG Council.

Whereas, Members of The Association of American 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 Association of American Geographers, assembled in Chicago, Illinois on the occasion of its 111th 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.

Adjournment

There being no further business, President Domosh adjourned the Council meeting at 10:52 a.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Smith
AAG Secretary

Summary of Resolutions

- *Bednarz moved to approve the agenda. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 1)*
- *Domosh moved to approve the audited FYE 2014 financial statement. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 4)*
- *Saff moved, as recommended by the AAG Executive Committee and Finance Committee, that \$950,000 be transferred from the current operating budget to the AAG's Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future. Domosh seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 4)*
- *Saff moved, as recommended by the Finance Committee, to approve the AAG's FYE 2016 budget as submitted. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 5)*
- *Bednarz moved to task the AAG Finance Committee (with Mensing and Hutchinson as Council liaisons) to investigate an overall investment strategy, an investment social responsibility policy, and membership forecasting, and to provide Council with a report by the 2015 Fall Council meeting. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 6)*
- *Maraffa moved to implement a one-time 2 percent membership dues increase for all membership categories excluding students, Developing Regions, and less than \$25,000 income. Bednarz seconded the motion. The motion did not pass with 14 opposed, 3 in favor, Richardson and Tasch abstained. (p. 6)*
- *Richardson moved to request Fritz Nelson, and a co-author if desired, to author a memorial in the Annals of the AAG for AAG Past President J.R. Mackay. Domosh seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 6)*
- *Aitken moved to request Stan Brunn to author a memorial in the Annals of the AAG for AAG Past President George J. Demko. Domosh seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 6)*
- *Aitken moved to approve the proposed editorial board for the GeoHumanities journal. Gilbert seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 7)*
- *Following upon prior Council resolutions supporting the name change and a binding AAG membership vote approving the name change, Richardson moved that the AAG Council hereby formally approve changing the name of the Association from Association of American Geographers to American Association of Geographers effective January 1, 2016, and to do so via doing business as (DBA) American Association of Geographers. Pope seconded the motion. It passed with 18 in favor and 1 opposed. (p. 7)*
- *Maraffa moved that the AAG Council has reviewed and considered the report of the AAG Archives and Association History Committee on the future location of the AAG archives and thanks the committee for its work. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 8)*
- *Domosh moved that the AAG Council reaffirms its previous decision (the unanimously approved Council Resolution from Fall Council Meeting, November 1-3, 2013) that it is in the best long-term interests of the Association to consolidate the archives of the Association of American Geographers at the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress. Bednarz seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 8)*
- *Bednarz moved to approve the proposed slate of new Committee appointments for 2015. Maraffa seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 10)*
- *Domosh moved to appoint Thomas Mote as AAG Secretary. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously; Mote abstained. (p. 10)*
- *Domosh moved to appoint Melissa Gilbert as AAG Treasurer. Hagelman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. (p. 10)*
- *Appreciation for service of Past President Julie Winkler (p. 11)*

- *Appreciation for service of Councillors (p. 11)*
- *Appreciation for service of AAG committee members (p. 11)*

APPENDIX: Summary of Top News Items from Regional Councillor Reports

East Lakes (Tom Maraffa)

There has been growth of new programs in the region, particularly those that are interdisciplinary in nature (often inspired by a focus on STEM). Programs within the region are adapting to the growing influence of STEM at our institutions.

Great Plains/Rocky Mountains (J.M. Shawn Hutchinson)

The 2015 GPRM Regional Meeting will be hosted by the Department of Geography at the University of Nebraska-Kearney on October 2-3, 2015.

The 2016 GPRM Regional Meeting will be hosted by the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs on October 21-22, 2016.

Middle Atlantic (Jeremy Tasch)

The Richard C. Jaffeson Middle Atlantic Division (MAD) Fund: More than three decades ago Richard C. Jaffeson, AICP, MAD-AAG President for 1975-1976 and then again MAD-AAG President from 2002-2003, established a fund for the benefit of MAD-AAG. With his closing of the fund in 2014, MAD received just in excess of \$8,300 in residual funds. The MAD Board formed a subcommittee to help determine the manner by which MAD's membership can best benefit from Richard's foresight and generosity.

MAD comes to Towson: If the annual MAD-AAG conference was ever hosted by Towson University, the division's longest serving members do not recall and the university's Department of Geography and Environmental Planning has no records. Thus, until shown otherwise, fall 2015 will mark the first time that Towson University will host the annual MAD-AAG Conference. Among the planned highlights, the conference will feature the international research and instruction being conducted by the Division's members; an interdisciplinary celebration of "place" as imagined through geography and poetry; and an evening performance by the only American Master of Mugham (planned, but not confirmed).

Middle States (Grant Saff)

At the Fall Annual Meeting the membership unanimously voted to amend the Constitution and admit Puerto Rico as part of the Division.

In accordance with offers of assistance made by the AAG to provide web hosting of the Division's websites, the Board turned over the future hosting of the Division's website to the AAG.

New England/St. Lawrence Valley (Richard Kujawa)

The 2014 Annual Meeting was hosted by the University of New Hampshire. We had 25 papers including 6 by students. An all-student poster session attracted the display of 8 projects. The World Geography Bowl, won by a team from U. Mass-Amherst, attracted a record 11 teams. A well-attended keynote by well-known historian Jeffrey Bolster, from UNH, focused on Human Impacts on the Piscataqua Estuary and Gulf of Maine: The Long View. Awards were given for both undergraduate and graduate student papers as well as for Distinguished Service (John Hayes from Salem State University) and Lifetime Achievement (Mark Motte from Rhode Island College).

Geographers at NESTVAL member institutions continue their leadership in program and curricular development. In addition to core roles in several Environmental and Global Studies Programs, Geographers are integral to other developments. Examples include: New collaborative courses

“Mapping American Childhoods” (with a sociologist at the University of Vermont); a service-learning collaboration with the Nature Conservancy focused on Dendrochronology (also at the University of Vermont); and a new #blacklivesmatter course at Dartmouth, hosted in Geography. Other initiatives include new tracks inside of Geography majors; continued engagement with the niche of GIS in higher education and the community. For example, a new interdisciplinary Minor in GIS at Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts and continued development of the Community GIS lab at Keene State in New Hampshire. The University of Maine at Farmington continues its practice of engaged scholarship with its undergraduate majors with almost 100 papers and posters in the last 5 years. Finally, Southern Connecticut State University is in the process of building a collaborative relationship for seamless Study Abroad experiences at Liverpool’s John Moore’s University in the UK in Geography and Marine Studies.

Pacific Coast (Scott Mensing)

The Spatial Sciences Institute at the University of Southern California, under the leadership of John Wilson, has shown impressive growth in the area of GIS education. In particular, the Institute has added or had approved six new programs over the next two years. These include new interdisciplinary Bachelors, Masters and PhD programs created in collaboration with other departments, including Public Policy, Architecture, Medicine, and Computer Science.

Fall 2014, the University of Arizona School of Geography and Development (SGD) launched a new online Masters of Science in Geographic Information Systems. This is a one year Masters’ degree that has over 30 students enrolled. In the fall of 2015, the SGD will begin a new Bachelor of Science in Geographic Information Systems Technology program.

At the University of California, Davis, the Geography Graduate Group is thriving and published their first newsletter, available online. The incoming class in fall 2014 had 21 students.

Southeastern (Thomas Mote)

SEDAAG will hold its 70th meeting November 22-24, 2015, in Pensacola, Florida, hosted by the University of West Florida. Pensacola will be the first SEDAAG meeting using the AAG Eventbrite system for registration.

The SEDAAG annual meeting continues to grow in its diversity of opportunities and as such is finding it difficult to complete the meeting in just 1.5 to 2 days. This problem will be before the Steering Committee at the Pensacola meeting.

Southwestern (Ron Hagelman)

The Fall 2016 meeting will be held November 4-7th in San Antonio, Texas. The meeting will be held jointly with the Applied Geography Conference and is being organized locally by Texas State University and The University of Texas-San Antonio.

With unfortunate exception of the impacts of continuing budget cuts in Louisiana higher education, SWAAG has a number of new programs and degrees this year including: a new self-standing Dept. of Geography at Texas Christian University (Fort Worth, Texas); a new minor in Geography at The University of Arkansas Fort Smith; a new undergraduate BS degree in Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIST) at Texas A&M; a new minor in Geography at Tarleton State University (Stephenville, TX); and a renaming of Texas State’s PhD in ‘Environmental Geography’ to a PhD in ‘Geography.’

West Lakes (Laura Smith)

The 2015 West Lakes Annual Meeting will be hosted by the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, October 15-17. Although we have host institutions identified for 2016 (Northern Michigan University) and 2017 (Eastern Illinois University), we were having difficulty finding an institution that was available to host in 2015. We are appreciative of Paul Kaldjian and his colleagues for stepping up to host again just two years after they previously hosted.

Geography at Gustavus Adolphus College will return to three tenure-track lines plus one adjunct faculty member this fall after several years of uncertain times. They are grateful for the support provided by the AAG, especially the Healthy Departments Initiative, which helped bolster the case to keep Geography intact at Gustavus.