

MINUTES

WPSA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, August 28, 2014

Hotel: Marriott Hotel

Room: Wilson A

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Members present: Louis DeSipio, Julie Novkov, Jeanne Morefield, Jessica Lavariega-Monforti, Martin Johnson, Tony Affigne, Chris Shortell, Michael Genovese

Ex-Officio Members Present: Richard Clucas, Elsa Favila, Jason Maloy, Jeanette Mendez, Eric Waltenburg, Mark Button

Members Absent: Victoria Farrar-Myers, Carrie Currier, Michael Bowers, Mark Bevir, Mary Caputi, Gabriel Sanchez, Kim Nalder, Regina Branton, Celeste Montoya Gary Segura

Guests Present: David Boyt, Leah Fargotstein, Pei-te Lien, Mark Lutz, Michelle Phillips, Jerry Morris, Edel Heslin,

Call to Order: President Louis DeSipio called the meeting to order to 7:06 p.m. without a quorum present in order to discuss informational items.

I. Approval of Minutes

ACTION: Council members present voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the April 2014 Executive Council in Seattle, Washington. [At the end of the meeting, after a quorum had been established, the Council voted unanimously again to approve the minutes.]

II. Reports

A. Executive Director's Report: Richard Clucas

Richard Clucas reported on several areas of work in which he has been involved since the Seattle meeting. These included a brief discussion of Post Seattle follow-up, a site visit for the Las Vegas meeting, a discussion of the scheduling of the annual meeting, and financial matters, especially the development of a donations page on the WPSA website.

He noted that the conference next year will be April 2-4 at Caesars Palace Hotel in Las Vegas, and that the guest room rates are \$185 a night. Clucas,

Louis DiSipio, Victoria Farrar-Myers, and Elsa Favila conducted a site visit to tour the Caesars Palace conference facilities. He reported that the meeting rooms and guest rooms are located in a single tower. The application deadline for the conference is September 15, 2014. He had contacted all organized sections with a suggestion to develop mini-conferences within the conference. A main concern in advance of the meeting he expressed was that Association members may seek less expensive lodging near the conference.

He further noted that there had been discussion about shifting the San Francisco meeting from 2019 to 2018 and moving the San Antonio meeting from 2018 to 2019 in order to avoid labor disputes. He had scheduled a planning site visit with the Long Beach Hyatt hotel. A related issue is the specific timing of the meeting on a holiday or non-holiday weekend.

Finally, he discussed financial matters, including the expanded availability of opportunities for members of the WPSA community to donate to the Association and its awards via an online contribution page at the WPSA website.

B. Local Arrangements Seattle: Elsa Favila

Elsa Favila and Richard Clucas reported that the Seattle meeting was successful, netting about \$92,000 with a few outstanding invoices.

C. Local Arrangements Las Vegas: Louis DeSipio, Mark Lutz

Louis DeSipio reported that arrangements for the meeting in Las Vegas are going well. The site visit team met with Tiffany Howard, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, during its Las Vegas visit and found the conference would be staged in a very coherent space. They also reported that the issue of secondhand smoke and smoke odor from the Association's previous Las Vegas experiences is non-existent in the Caesars Palace conference facility. Mark Lutz, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, reported that Las Vegas remains a vibrant city with wonderful weather in early April.

At this point in the meeting, as the Council moved into matters requiring authoritative action, Richard Clucas and Louis DeSipio noted that of 22 Executive Council members, 12 were present, but only 10 of 20 voting members were present. They proposed the Council proceed as though this represented a quorum, and that Richard Clucas would confirm Council quorum rules and thus the validity of votes from the meeting. There was no

objection. (After the meeting, Richard Clucas reported that all Council members are considered when taking roll, so a quorum was present.)

D. Nominating Committee Report: Pei-te Lien

Pei-te Lien presented the report of the Nominating Committee, chaired by Stacy Gordon, University of Nevada, Reno. The report listed the Committee's recommended slate of officers, which will be presented at the WPSA Business Meeting in Las Vegas in April 2015.

In response to a question concerning pursuit of *disciplinary* breadth, Lien noted that the Committee examined a variety of diversity considerations. Several members of the Council commented that the slate is strong.

E. Membership Report: Elsa Favila

Elsa Favila reported that the Association's membership had decreased by 24 members. The Council discussed potential sources including an increase in membership fees and the growing participation of graduate students in the annual meeting.

III. Old Business

A. *Politics, Groups, and Identities* Editor Search: Richard Clucas

Louis DeSipio reminded the Council that the term of the current PGI editorial team ends in December 2016 and that the Council's approval is needed to begin the search process. Following the approval of the Council, incoming President Victoria Farrar-Myers will appoint a search committee.

Richard Clucas presented a proposed timeline for the Council's approval. He also emphasized the excellent job of current editorial team.

ACTION: Council members present voted unanimously to approve the timeline and to begin the search process.

B. Future Convention Sites: Elsa Favila, Richard Clucas

Richard Clucas reported that confirming the 2020 conference, planned for Long Beach, was difficult to act because he is waiting on proposal from the Long Beach hotel. He reported that the timing of future meetings frequently generates complaints from members of the Association celebrating religious holidays, raising concerns about the broad

inclusivity of the Association. However, these concerns are balanced by financial and locational considerations, notably that the present timing helps Association schedule an affordable San Francisco meeting.

Victoria Farrar-Myers asked Clucas to provide documents in future Council meeting packets detailing the advantages and disadvantages of the presenting timing to help the Council weigh this complex issue. For example, while holiday scheduling lowers the lodging costs, Jeanne Moreland noted that it raises travel costs for Association members. Tony Affigne estimated that the airfare difference was less than the increase in hotel costs by moving from the holiday date. Elsa Favila raised the concern that increased hotel costs would encourage Association members to book lodging outside of the conference hotel, making it difficult for the Association to make its contractual level of expenditure with the San Francisco Hyatt. Chris Shortell suggested that the scheduling question did not need an all-or-nothing decision, that the WPSA could try to avoid scheduling in conflict with religious holidays, but use the Passover/Easter timing to facilitate meeting in San Francisco.

Peri Schwartz-Shea proposed a survey, focused on the timing of meetings to assess the extent of the issue for WPSA members. Victoria Farrar-Myers noted that there are a variety of issues that a survey could address, including the implications of the growth of the WPSA, regionalism, the involvement of community college faculty, and graduate student participation. However, whatever the extent of the survey, it would not field in time to help guide planning for the 2018 meeting.

These longer-term issues notwithstanding, Louis DeSipio indicated that the Council needed to make a more pressing decision about the location of upcoming meetings, shifting the San Francisco meeting from 2017 to 2018 and the San Antonio meeting from 2018 to 2019 in order to avoid labor disputes. Richard Clucas noted that this proposed switch was recommended on presumption that the San Antonio contract would feature room rates consistent with recent meetings, in high \$100s, with reasonable catering charges.

ACTION: The Council members present voted unanimously to approve moving the San Francisco meeting from 2019 to 2018 and the San Antonio meeting from 2018 to 2019. The motion allowed the Executive Director the power to not sign new contracts with the two hotels if he was unable to acquire a deal that would work for the association.

IV. New Business

A. Future Planning Committee

ACTION: The Council members present voted unanimously to form a Future Planning Committee to be appointed by incoming President Victoria Farrar-Myers.

B. Mid-Year Budget Report: Elsa Favila

Elsa Favila reported that the WPSA budget looks strong at this mid-year point.

C. The Western Editor Search: Richard Clucas

Richard Clucas noted that the current editorial team at CSU-Fullerton, Steve Stambough and Valerie O'Regan will serve one more year. The WPSA President appoints *The Western* editor. Louis DeSipio and Victoria Farrar-Myers asked Richard Clucas to prepare a proposal for a search. Richard Clucas presented a Call for Editors to the Council for its approval.

ACTION: The Council members present voted unanimously to approve the Call for Editors of *The Western*.

D. Cancellation insurance for all meetings: Richard Clucas

Richard Clucas gave a report on the costs associated with acquiring cancellation insurance for future meetings. He described two options. One option would be to just have cancellation insurance that covers just our total costs and expenses for cancelling a conference. The premium for this would be \$600.25 for covering up to \$245,000 in expenditures and lost revenue for each conference. The second would be the insurance for covering not only expenditures and lost revenue, but also paying a hotel penalty for cancelling within 6 months of the conference. For the Las Vegas conference, for example, the penalty for cancelling in the last 6 months would be \$279, 280. The cost for the additional coverage would be \$564. 19.

E. External Audit of Association Finances: Richard Clucas

Richard Clucas reminded the Council that in its most recent meeting, it was noted that the Association had never conducted an audit and that an audit would be a sensible financial practice. Victoria Farrar-Myers proposed the Executive Director should have discretion to search for a firm with no specific dollar limit on the contract. Elsa Favila reminded that the WPSA budget would need amendment to include this expense.

ACTION: The Council members present voted unanimously to approve the Executive Director search for an auditing firm, though the Executive Director was required to bring the proposal back to the Council if the costs would exceed \$5000.

F. Executive Director Contract: Victoria Farrar-Myers

G. WPSA Wage Committee Policy Clarification: Victoria Farrar-Myers

The Council met in session without Richard Clucas and Elsa Favila present.

ACTION: The Council members present voted unanimously for the WPSA Wage Committee to review the contract and compensation of both the WPSA Executive Director and Associate Director. The committee consists of immediate Past President of the Association, the current President, and the next President (i.e., the current Vice President/Program Chair). This committee will make a proposal at the Executive Council meeting in April 2015.

H. Betty Moulds Lifetime Service Award: Richard Clucas

Richard Clucas reported that he had made Betty Moulds aware of the proposed award and that she was pleased and honored to be its namesake.

ACTION: The Council members present voted unanimously to create the Betty Moulds Lifetime Service Award, supported by an endowed fund of the WPSA. The award specifically honors her contributions to the WPSA as well as someone new each year who as also made significant contributions to the Association.

The meeting was adjourned by Louis DeSipio.

Respectfully submitted,
Martin Johnson for Carrie Currier