

## **Middle States Division AAG Executive Board Meeting Approved Minutes Conference Call, March 13, 2014**

Present: David Fyfe (President), Mark Blumler (Vice President), Grant Saff (Regional Councilor)(Secretary), Jo Mano (Executive Director), Enid Lotstein (SAGE), Kelly Frothingham (Past President), Adam Kalkstein (Co-Editor, *Middle States Geographer*).

At 1:03 pm David called the meeting to order.

1) Minutes of Fall 2013 Meeting were approved by all.

2) Report on the 2014 meeting to be held at York, PA:

David confirmed that the dates for the meeting would be October 24-25. The meeting would not be held at York College due to space constraints. He has reserved a block of rooms at the Yorktown Hotel in downtown York. The costs of the meeting are projected to be the same as the past: \$50 for students and \$95 for faculty. At this stage the menu for the meeting has not been finalized. David is basing attendance numbers on past trends. At present, we do not have an AAG speaker confirmed. David has contacted Doug Richardson, but he has not gotten back to us yet. The organization re the Geobowl and hotel booking will be the same as last year. It is hoped that the AAG organized workshop for regional representatives at the AAG Annual Meeting in Tampa will provide guidance for us to do online registration via credit card for our meeting. We decided holding off on purchasing new software, such as Wild Apricot, until after the Tampa meeting.

Enid raised the possibility of field trips at the meeting. David is considering this. David asked how many people past field trips had attracted. Jo noted that responses in the past varied; at Shippensburg there was good attendance and that generally walking tours seem to work best. She noted that we should hedge our bets and not invest too much on such tours. Enid asked what would be the minimum attendance for a walking tour to take place. Jo noted that in the past they had been run with as few as one person attending. Kelly had tried to organize a wine tour at the Buffalo meeting, but this did not work out. Paul charged \$10 per person for the tour at Shippensburg, and noted that by setting a charge, you tend to get more of a commitment from attendees. Grant suggested looking into maybe doing Friday morning or Saturday afternoon. It was agreed that we would look into how to proceed after the Tampa meeting (where we hoped to see how other regions did this).

3) Financial Report (Jo)

Jo had previously sent the Executive Board a copy of our latest financial report and outlined the main points. The Full Report (March 9, 2014, is attached to the minutes). The main points from the Report are:

- The Annual Meeting in Buffalo had a profit of \$899.32 (Income \$3,790 and Expenses of \$2,628.30). This was in line with recent meetings (except for Kean).

- The current bank balance for the Region is \$40,379. This includes a CD which was cashed out.
- The account is to be moved to a new bank that has lower bank charges.

Jo noted that we should encourage more students to submit their work for awards. Given the low rates of return on our current account and CD, Grant suggested that in Tampa we discuss possible ways that the AAG may have to manage our finances. The Board thanked Jo for her hard work and approved the Financial Report that she submitted.

#### 4) Regional Councilor's Report (Grant):

Grant noted that the AAG has invested a lot of resources in the regional workshop to be held in Tampa. The AAG was hoping that from the discussion in Tampa, we would create a best practices handbook that could be shared among all the regions. He also noted that there is still no finality about Puerto Rico joining our region. PR have requested to join us but the AAG Council will vote on this request in Tampa. SEEDAG is also an option for them to affiliate with. Grant said that if Puerto Rico's request to join us was approved by the AAG Council, the MSDAAG would, in terms of our constitution, still have to put this to a vote at the Business Meeting in York. We would have to give notice to the membership prior to the meeting. Given the Board's vote to approve their joining us at the meeting in Buffalo, we could most likely offer them provisional membership until formal approval in York.

#### 5) Expectations for the regional workshop in Tampa and raising attendance at our annual meeting:

Kelly noted that we needed to be clear about what we wanted to learn from the meeting in Tampa, and that we should formalize a list of items that we wanted feedback on. In this regard, the main issues were: how we could process credit card payments for our meetings, what software was recommended for handling these payments, how other meetings handle payments, how to improve attendance at our annual meeting, how other regions structure their boards (and rotation on boards). Jo and Kelly both noted that we should discuss how to get the research institutions more involved in the region (and attending the annual meeting). All the Board members who are going to attend the workshop in Tampa will try and meet up on the morning of the workshop to coordinate expectations for the workshop.

Jo noted that to dispel notions that it was not advantageous for faculty/students to attend the regional meetings, the President of the AAG should write a column about the importance of supporting the regional meetings. Enid suggested that to help raise attendance we should personally get in touch with the Chairs at major research institutions that were close to where the regional meeting were to be held. David will contact some regional universities close to York, such as Temple, Penn State, West Chester, Shippensburg and Millersville. Kelly noted that we really needed to get more

faculty on board in supporting the regional division. She volunteered to reach out to Delaware. It was agreed that to reach students we should get the call for papers out early. Kelly has a distribution list of Chairs and secretaries that can be used for outreach, and Grant noted that he had compiled a similar spreadsheet that also had some student organizations. We expected to create a flyer to send to students about presenting papers and posters in April/May. We discussed the possibility of creating a new student award for posters presented at the annual meeting. Mark moved to create the award, and this was unanimously approved. The new award will be structured as follows: A first prize of \$100 for both the best UG and Graduate posters. There would currently be no second prize for posters. There would also still be a \$100 prize for the best paper for both UG and Graduate students, and also runner up prizes of \$50 each. Jo would allocate a total of \$500 for these prizes. The poster award would be judged by the Secretary, SAGE Rep and a third member to be chosen at a later time.

6) MSDAAG Journal:

Regarding the 2013 Edition, Adam noted that there had been 10 submissions. Once again there had been a few problems finding suitable reviewers. At this stage, all articles have been reviewed and the comments relayed to the authors. Currently, Adam is running the review process and Paul is doing the editing. It is anticipated that the Journal should come out earlier than last year. Jo asked Adam if there was anything else we could do to aid them. She also noted that they could email the Board to ask for suggestions re reviewers and that many people had a fairly broad knowledge of geographic fields. Adam noted that currently the journal was moving along satisfactorily.

7) Elections:

David had nothing to report at present. We will still have to solicit applications. Ideally the next secretary should come from New Jersey or perhaps Hunter. Enid agreed to reach out to Hunter regarding this and greater participation at meetings. It would also be good to see more attendance/support from Rutgers and Rowan.

8) Newsletter:

David reported that the newsletter is on track. David expected to get a draft out to the Board within a couple of weeks. Grant, Adam, Kelly, and Enid would need to add their parts to the draft. The aim is to have it out sometime in April.

9) SAGE:

Enid will contribute to the newsletter. She also would try and set up a SAGE panel/session at the annual meeting. David would coordinate with her and send her a copy of the Listserv to do an email blast to members. This would happen after the newsletter goes out in April. She also asked that we put SAGE on the agenda at the

workshop in Tampa so that we can mobilize more support for SAGE faculty to attend the annual meetings. David noted maybe the region could also work out a way to provide more support for SAGE.

10)Other business:

David updated us on the situation regarding purchasing of buzzers. The AAG will pay for half and 3 regions will together pay the remaining half. Jo thought that the AAG should pay the full amount as we support the Bowl. After discussion, it was decided that we should go ahead and contribute to the purchase of wireless buzzers. These buzzers would be maintained by Jamison Conly (West Virginia). The cost of the buzzers to MSDAAG would be \$205.17 for this year. Kelly proposed a motion that we go ahead with the purchase, Grant seconded and it was passed unanimously. Mark will contact Jamison and have them shipped to York for the annual meeting.

Grant noted that we needed to pay for the cost of registering our web domain name. The cost for the year is \$25.98 to Bluehost. Jo said that she would cover the cost and payment was subsequently made.

The Meeting adjourned at 2.15 pm.

Submitted by Grant Saff (Secretary)