

# ***Applied Geography Conferences***

## ***Spring 2020 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes***

April 9, 2020

### **Call to order**

Executive Director Rice called the meeting to order at 12:01 PM (EDT) via Zoom.

### **Attendance**

The following board members were in attendance: Executive Director Murray Rice, and Board Members Denise Blanchard, Harrison Campbell, Dawna Cerney, Jon Comer, Tony Hernandez, Michael Ratcliffe, Wei Song, Sheila Steinberg, Chetan Tiwari, Clayton Whitesides, Brandon Vogt, and Student Representative Claire Burch.

### **I. Approval of January 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Minutes were approved unanimously.

### **II. Welcome to New Board Members**

Rice introduced the three new Board Members: Denise Blanchard, Texas State University; Sheila Steinberg; Brandman University, and Student Claire Burch, University of Oklahoma. Rice asked them to say a few things about why they were interested in joining the board. The importance of the applied nature of the conference, the smaller and more manageable size of AGC versus (for example) AAG, and student engagement were all themes that were brought up.

### **III. Bylaws Discussion**

Hernandez reviewed the substantive changes to the Bylaws document that still governs the Conference Board in its original, non-digital format. Notable reviews:

- Article II, Statement of Purpose – reformatted and highlights that both the conference and the *Papers in Applied Geography* are the venues through which the AGC promotes applied geography.
- Article IV, Board of Directors – adjusts the size of the Board slightly and establishes limits on the number of Student Members. Changes also include implementing term limits, clarifying procedures for filling vacancies and forcing removal of members, updates the timing of Board Meetings, and enhancing language pertaining to the avoidance of conflicts of interest vis-à-vis contracts, compensation, and duties of the Board.
- Article V, Officers – adds the office of Treasurer to the Board, and provides clearer language on the selection, terms of office, and qualifications of officers.
- Article XIII, Amendments – clarifies how amendments to the bylaws can come about.

- Article XV, Audit of Corporation – changes this article title to Financial Reporting and updates the language on how the Board will review finances of the AGC.
- Article XVIII, Dissolution – updates language on how the AGC might be dissolved.

Rice asked that Board Members review these changes to the bylaws so that a vote on adopting the new document can occur at the annual conference in October.

#### **IV. AGC Financial Update for the Year 2019**

Tiwari provided an update on AGC finances, which are in relatively good shape. A balance sheet was provided to the Board and reviewed. Tiwari and Rice have been working with an accountant to more logically and transparently categorize expenses in order to assure that the Corporation's 2019 tax returns are compliant. Hernandez noted that it would be useful if a list of future commitments was developed for planning purposes; much support for this idea was voiced. Hernandez motioned and Blanchard seconded accepting the financial report. Vote carried unanimously.

#### **V. AGC 2020**

Ultimately, items 5-7 on the agenda coalesced into an overarching discussion of the upcoming meeting in Baltimore in October. Rice shared pertinent aspects of the contract with the Hotel Indigo Baltimore concerning Cancellation and Force Majeure. Discussion started by noting that we are still in the 25% cancellation period (of our \$8,450 commitment to room revenue, or a \$2,112.50 surrender for cancellation). The fact that the Race, Ethnicity, and Place (REP) conference is meeting immediately before AGC at the Hotel Indigo complicated the ability of the AGC to act unilaterally, as we have worked very hard to coordinate and collaborate with the REP conference. Many Board Members contributed stories of how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting travel in their states, policies at their universities, and how everything is so unpredictable right now.

Rice noted that there was a rapidly growing consensus that it would be better to surrender the 25% fee, move the conference online only in October 2020, and take control of the conference's destiny than to wait and react to events as they unfold throughout spring and summer 2020. Cerney moved and many Board Members seconded the motion to cancel the hotel contract and hold the AGC 2020 meeting online in October. Motion passed unanimously.

The fact that AAG is at this very moment conducting the annual meeting online means there are people and resources we can tap for expertise on handling this format. Rice asked if it would be helpful for a small group of Board Members to form a working group to lay the groundwork. Ratcliffe, Rice, Steinberg, and Tiwari volunteered to comprise this group. It was also recommended that we reach out to Board Member Linda Peters (ESRI) as she facilitated two AAG sessions relating to Applied Geography, and to Emily Fekete at AAG as well.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Rice announced that he would like to convene another Board Meeting in June. All agreed.

Rice adjourned the meeting at 1:11 PM. (EDT)

Minutes submitted by: Jon Comer, Secretary, April 12, 2020

Minutes approved by: Murray Rice, Executive Director, April 13, 2020