

Applied Geography Conferences

Fall 2020 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2020

Call to order

Board President Dwyer called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM (EDT) via Zoom. He started the meeting by lauding the AGC Board but especially Executive Director Rice for pulling off the first-ever online meeting.

Attendance

The following board members were in attendance: Board President Tom Dwyer, Executive Director Murray Rice, and Board Members Denise Blanchard, Harrison Campbell, Jon Comer, Tony Hernandez, Jay Newberry, Linda Peters, Wei Song, Sheila Steinberg, Chetan Tiwari, Clayton Whitesides, Brandon Vogt, and Student Representative Claire Burch.

I. Approval of June 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved unanimously after a motion by **Campbell** and a second by **Steinberg**.

II. Overview of AGC 2020

Tiwari reviewed the conference finances. The biggest expense has been the hotel conference cancellation for AGC 2020 of \$3,487. Other expenses and our publishing contract are also pending and we expect to finish 2020 with about \$12,000 in the account.

Comer and Newberry (program development team) then reviewed the issues they had with the information we could get out of Weebly concerning the abstract submissions and payment records. Next year they recommend that payment be required at the time of abstract submission, and that clearer instructions are posted to Weebly to make sure the name of the *presenter* is correctly listed in the registration. In some cases, an administrative assistant paid (with university P-Cards) but listed themselves as the participant, or a faculty member paid for several students at once but the students weren't listed in the registration.

Blanchard, Burch, and Peters (communications team) reviewed their process for communicating out information about the conference. Blanchard commented that next year they would like to see an internal communications structure and to provide instructions on how to navigate the technology. Burch noted that next year we need to exploit more AAG specialty groups to more broadly communicate information about the conference. Burch noted how actively Peters was in posting information about the conference.

III. AGC Plans: 2021 and Beyond

Rice noted that Toledo is very enthusiastic about hosting in 2021. Also, the AAG East Lakes and West Lakes divisions plan to make this a joint conference, so this will make a larger and more complex conference. The Chairs of those divisions are letting AGC take the lead on organizing the conference. Rice would like to form a coordinating committee to interface with East Lakes and West Lakes, and hopes to reconstitute the program development, communications, and technical teams again for the 2021 conference. Rice moved that we form a leadership team to work with the University of Toledo and East and West Lakes Divisions. Hernandez seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The committee will determine how we will relate to the University of Toledo, East Lakes, and West Lakes Division and develop an MOU with them. Negotiate a contract with one or two hotels that are of appropriate size in the Toledo area for the conference.

Steinberg was nominated by Peters to serve on this committee. Rice asked Dwyer to serve on this committee because of his expertise. Peters asked if Ratcliffe should serve since he was the main point person for Baltimore 2020 before it retreated online.

Steinberg asked if we would still have a virtual component even if the meeting is held in person. It was agreed to do this as it helps students and international scholars participate, but there was concern that it not seem like it is two separate components and degrades the quality of the conference. We will observe the 2021 AAG meeting and learn from it.

Rice wanted the Board to think about 2022 and 2023 locations. Vogt was asked about 2023 or 2024 in Colorado Springs and he volunteered to pencil that in for 2024 since we are looking to double up with the REP conference like we planned to do this year.

Whitesides noted that we did all this work for Baltimore, why not try again in the next few years? Maryland in general was widely agreed to be a population place and we should go there soon. DFW, Nashville, and other places were all mentioned.

The Board also thought that 2022 might be a good time to go to Colorado Springs and link with REP and push returning to Baltimore back to 2023.

Whitesides asked whether we should think about having an online-only conference every three years just to boost our revenues. What would the fees be to be equitable?

IV. AGC Leadership Discussion

President Dwyer noted that Executive Director Rice really needs an “understudy”, essentially an Assistant Executive Director to assist Rice and to be ready to take over for Rice sooner or

later. Dwyer would like to put out the call for someone to do this. We plan to meet again in a few weeks and hopefully we will have a volunteer at that time. Rice noted that he needs to spend less time on AGC and plan on a smooth transition to a new Executive Director.

Much discussion involved how much time is needed to do the job, what the actual duties are beyond the bylaws, etc. The Board agreed to meet in mid-November in hopes that a volunteer emerges and to receive from Rice a list of actual activities he performs throughout the year.

V. Bylaws Conclusion: Not-Quite-Formal Decision

Hernandez noted that the bylaws were basically ready for approval but term limits for Board members required some modification. Two consecutive three-year terms will be the limit but it will require setting up the “churn” cycle of who will be among the first to rotate off the Board. He noted that the new rules only require a person to be off the Board for 1 year before applying for an open position. Hernandez asked if we need to recirculate the bylaws?

It was also noted that the exiting officers would have Emeritus Board Member status which would retain some institutional memory. Various approaches were discussed in terms of length of emeritus status, who would get it, etc. Hernandez will recirculate the bylaws to propose language about term limits, emeritus status, and the Executive Director’s duties.

Dwyer asked for all who had amendments to suggest to send them in to him and Hernandez so they can be reviewed for possible inclusion. A new draft of the bylaws will be reviewed at a later date. The Board agree to review the bylaws at our next meeting.

VI. *Papers in Applied Geography Journal Update and Status*

Lee was not present to report on the journal.

VII. Other Business

Hernandez noted that we need to be thinking ahead about timelines vis-à-vis cancelling an in-person meeting in Toledo. The cancellation of Baltimore hotel contract cost us about half of our revenue for the year so we need to be mindful that travel restrictions may still be in effect into 2021.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

President Tom Dwyer adjourned the meeting at 3:32 PM EDT.

Minutes submitted by: Jon Comer, Secretary, October 21, 2020

Minutes approved by: Murray Rice, Executive Director, October 21, 2020