

**SHAFR Council Meeting**  
**15 June 2021 via Zoom, 9 a.m.-1:15 p.m. EDT**

Present: Andrew Preston, presiding; Shaun Armstead; Laura Belmonte; Vivien Chang; Emily Conroy-Krutz; Peter Hahn; Kristin Hoganson; Daniel Immerwahr; Andrew Johns; Barbara Keys; Kyle Longley; Kelly Shannon; Lauren Turek; Karine Walther; and Amy Sayward, ex officio

Attending: Faith Bagley, Kelly Cook, Megan Black, Anne Foster, Petra Goedde, Ryan Irwin, and Trish Thomas

**Introductory issues**

Meeting started at 9:05am EDT

Andrew Preston gave opening remarks and reviewed votes taken between meetings (no discussion or amendments). He also moved a resolution of thanks for outgoing committee members and task force members:

- Megan Black, Program Committee co-chair
- Ryan Irwin, Program Committee co-chair and Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize Committee chair
- Program Committee members Paul Adler, Michael Brenes, Brandon Byrd, Benjamin Coates, Kate Epstein, Adom Getachew, Daniel Immerwahr, Hideaki Kami, Monica Kim, Elisabeth Leake, Stephen Macekura, Aaron O'Connell, Kenneth Osgood, Katharina Rietzler, Daniel Sargent, Stuart Schrader, Sarah Snyder, and Lauren Turek
- Kristin Hoganson, Ways & Means Committee chair
- Richard Immerman, Historical Documentation Committee chair and Development Committee member
- Christopher Jespersen, Development Committee member
- Vivien Chang, Graduate Student Committee chair
- Varsha Venkatasubramanian and Savitri Sedlacek, Graduate Student Committee members
- Andrew Rotter, Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize Committee member
- Daniel Bessner, Stuart L. Bernath Scholarly Article Prize Committee chair
- Erez Manela, Dissertation Prize Committee chair
- Paul Thomas Chamberlin, Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize Committee chair
- Jussi Hanhimäki, Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize Committee member
- Jessica Gienow-Hecht, Michael H. Hunt Prize for International History chair
- Theresa Keeley, Myrna Bernath Book & Fellowship Awards Committee chair
- Vanessa Walker, Marilyn B. Young Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee chair
- Kelly Shannon, Conference Conduct Task Force and Reporting Team

Preston added a special motion of thanks to Richard Immerman for his great work and lengthy service to SHAFR's Historical Documentation Committee and the U.S. State Department's Historical Advisory Committee. Kristin Hoganson moved the motion, Daniel Immerwahr seconded it, and it passed unanimously (14-0-0).

### **Financial issues**

Amy Sayward summarized the mid-year financial report she had provided to Council as well as updated numbers regarding membership numbers and conference costs. She highlighted that *Diplomatic History* had earned above the contractual minimum; she stated that she was unsure if this was an aberration or the beginning of a trend, therefore she had not used the higher number in the projected budget for fiscal year 2021-22. In terms of income, she also pointed to one-time monies received from Oxford University Press as part of last year's transition in the management of the membership and collection of membership fees. On the expense side of the report, Sayward pointed out that she had increased budget items for travel, hotel, and legal expenses in the proposed budget for next fiscal year.

On the long-term projections report, Sayward identified that it was likely that SHAFR would run deficits in the years when its conference was housed at a D.C. hotel but could potentially recoup that money in the off years by utilizing campus-based conferences. She also reviewed the endowment spending report, highlighting that SHAFR had not had to draw on its endowment for the past two years and had received a sizeable stock gift in honor of Michael Hunt. She also provided updated projections for the current fiscal year reflecting a higher-than-expected number of conference registrations, memberships, and donations as a result of this year's conference registration process. She reported that current membership now exceeds 1,200, the highest number for the past six years at least.

Hoganson then summarized the Ways and Means Committee's report. The committee endorsed the request to hire a communications manager for an initial two years. Committee members believed that a podcast coordinator could be a step following this hire. They also endorsed a request for \$4,500 for a book manuscript workshop specifically for contingent faculty, which could serve as a model for future workshops. They also supported requests for \$10,000 for the 2022 Summer Institute to help with participant travel; a proposal to offer the executive director a \$2,000 raise (8.5%), effective immediately, that would carry through the remaining years of her term; and a \$1,000 cash stipend for each of the program committee co-chairs, due to the extraordinary and unique circumstances of this year. Hoganson highlighted that all of these suggestions were subject to Council approval. Sayward recused herself before discussion of the renewal of the term for the executive director position.

Preston provided an oral report about the process undertaken for considering the renewal of the executive director's term for an additional three years (to end on July 31, 2025). The recommendation to Council was for the renewal and for a raise of 8.5%, which was endorsed by the Ways and Means Committee. After discussion, Barbara Keys moved to approve the

recommendation to renew the executive director's term and provide a raise; the motion was seconded by Peter Hahn and passed unanimously (14-0-0).

On the recommendation from Ways and Means to increase the allocation for the Summer Institute by \$10,000, Kelly Shannon abstained, since she will be one of the presenters at the institute. The final vote on this issue was 13-0-1. Council then turned to the Ways & Means Committee's support for a \$4,500 allocation for a manuscript workshop for contingent faculty. The Council expressed appreciation for Andrew Rotter's initiative in developing the proposal in conjunction with the Task Force on the Jobs Crisis in Academia and for the willingness of all those who volunteered to read manuscripts as part of this project. Various Council members made suggestions for how the project might be improved and how it could become a model for additional workshops to serve SHAFR members. There was also some discussion, but no decision, about ways that the William Appleman Williams Junior Faculty Research Grant might be repurposed to provide additional support for contingent and precarious faculty. Hahn moved that Council approve the proposal in principle, empower the SHAFR President to discuss some possible changes with Rotter, and launch the project with a budget of \$4,500. Immerwahr seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

On the proposal from the Development Committee to launch an inclusion initiative, there was broad consensus to move forward.

### **Publication issues**

Sayward summarized the reports on the website transition and affiliated requests from various committees. The consensus that emerged was that there was a need for a dynamic site, but there was no commitment from various stakeholders (such as SHAFR committees) to regularly provide such content. It therefore seemed that a paid staff person would be needed to move this forward; like an editor, this position would solicit and schedule content and would work in tandem with an advisory committee. Such a position might also include social media (thereby addressing a need identified by the Public Engagement Committee) and advancing content from SHAFR's other publications. Ultimately, the decisions that Council needed to make were a commitment (or not) to a dynamic website platform and whether or not to hire a communications manager (or other appropriate title) to move the initiative forward. Council discussion included a concern that in the past SHAFR had sought to communicate the content that it had, but this seemed to be an effort to communicate without evidence that there was sufficient content. Another concern was that there might be some overlap with *Passport* content. Discussion of the type of person who would be needed included the comment that this would have to be someone who knows the field and can engage with issues as well as someone who would liaise with the Public Engagement Committee. Others mentioned that a more dynamic media presence could grow SHAFR's profile beyond its membership. The consensus was that if Council approved the position for two years (the recommendation of the Ways and Means Committee), Council could then evaluate the success of the initiative. Keys moved to hire a communications manager for a two-year term; Immerwahr seconded the motion, which passed 13-1-0.

After considering all of the individual budget issues, Council approved the Ways and Means Committee's recommendation to approve the budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 (as amended by the approved financial proposals) unanimously (14-0-0).

### **Conference issues**

Sayward then summarized the report on the New Orleans 2022 conference on the Tulane campus. She highlighted that the campus has easy access to public transportation and low-cost dormitory housing. Since the 2022 American Historical Association meeting is also in New Orleans, it gives the Program Committee chairs and staff an opportunity to visit campus for planning purposes. The draft agreement is pretty standard and does not include any costs for AV. It does include cancellation arrangements in case of public health issues or hurricanes, but Sayward anticipated a low conference subsidy based on a current assessment of projected costs. The New Orleans conference might also include some virtual elements, given the success of this year's virtual conference registration.

Sayward also raised the question in the Conference Coordinator's report (and the long-term projections report) about whether SHAFR might approach the local arrangements committee for the 2024 SHAFR Conference in Toronto about the possibility of a campus-based conference. Council was generally supportive of starting this conversation.

A brief discussion about Council meetings going forward ensued. Preston summarized some problems associated with the January Council meeting at the American Historical Association meeting. Some members may not be able to travel, and a hybrid meeting would require approximately \$2,200 of AV expenses. There was discussion about decoupling future Council meetings from the historical conferences (like the present meeting) and having shorter quarterly meetings (as Council began doing with its meeting in April 2021). The consensus was to have a remote meeting in January and to consider whether or not to keep this model moving forward.

Megan Black and Ryan Irwin joined the meeting to summarize the Program Committee's report. They highlighted the theme interviews that are available asynchronously as well as special events such as the graduate student happy hour, trivia night, and the Looking Back and Looking Forward plenaries. Preston expressed thanks and awe for Irwin and Black's efforts before they left the meeting.

### **Membership issues**

Council considered the report from the Membership Committee on a retiree membership rate, recommending allowing retirees to opt for the reduced (\$35) membership rate by listing "retiree" as part of this category in membership materials. The Ways and Means Committee supported this proposal, which passed unanimously (14-0-0).

Preston reported on his recommendations for creating a Sanctions and Appeals Committee to make final decisions on violations of SHAFR's code of conduct. He proposed a Sanctions and Appeals Committee composed of five people that would render a verdict on a member who had

been reported as violating the code of conduct and would determine whether or not to enact sanctions or grant appeals. Preston moved approval, Karine Walther seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (14-0-0).

Vivien Chang and Shaun Armstead offered an oral report from the Graduate Student Committee. Its primary project over the last year has been the mentorship program, which has enjoyed lots of enthusiasm and support. The committee is also hosting a grad student happy hour at the conference. The committee had been charged with discussing the pros and cons of a virtual meeting from the graduate student perspective. Positives included more access to SHAFR and a broader audience, however, Zoom and social media shut-downs in certain countries prevent their participation; and the consensus was that face-to-face interactions were preferable overall. Other issues raised in the Graduate Student Committee were diversifying the reach of the committee and hosting virtual workshops on becoming adept at social media and getting involved in SHAFR.

Hoganson raised an issue that had come up in the most recent, broadcast meeting of the Historical Advisory Committee (HAC), which was that when the National Archives and Records Administration reopens its facilities, there are no budgetary resources to expand hours or staff in order to meet the pent-up demand by researchers, which would be especially acute for graduate students trying to complete their dissertations in a timely manner. The need to start hiring and training staff as well as a way of encouraging researchers who have flexibility to hold off visiting during the initial reopening are real challenges that will be forthcoming. The question raised was how to best advocate for needed budgetary resources and whether there was a need to create a task force to connect graduate students and other researchers (along the line of the pandemic document-sharing service). Preston suggested that he send a letter in his role as SHAFR President and that Council continue considering what it might do to have a positive impact.

Kyle Longley recommended that SHAFR's distinguished service award be made an annual award rather than its current biannual status, which can cause confusion about whether or not this was an award year. Longley moved approval of his proposal, which was seconded by Hoganson. Hahn (for whom the award is named) abstained, and the rest of Council voted in favor (13-0-1).

The report of the Jobs Crisis Task Force recommended renewal of the committee (with new members and chairs) and payment of the contingent and precariously employed members of the committee. Although the proposal had come in after the meeting of the Ways and Means Committee, this line item of the budget had been carried over to the 2021-22 proposed budget. Council unanimously approved this proposal from the task force (14-0-0).

### **Publication issues (continued)**

Trish Thomas and Kelly Cook of Oxford University Press joined the meeting. Thomas highlighted some areas of the Publisher's Report. Given the pandemic, usage in 2020 had dropped in the spring but has returned to robust engagement in 2021, and interest in open access materials and digital subscriptions is growing. *Diplomatic History* has a good impact factor

among its peers, and the editorial office is a model in the field for timely delivery of issues (any delays were due to distribution and most recently production issues in India). Cook discussed an increase in new-issue and advance-article alerts. She also highlighted a couple of successful campaigns for cross-journal collections that resulted in an uptick in usage for *Diplomatic History* articles.

Council unanimously passed a resolution of thanks for Trish Thomas upon her retirement and wished her well. Thomas and Cook then left the meeting.

*Diplomatic History* editors Petra Goedde and Anne Foster later joined the meeting, highlighting some aspects of their editors' report for Council. The journal has not yet experienced a dip in submissions as a result of the pandemic but expects that this will occur in the near future. However, they have a sufficient backlog of quality submissions to be able to weather a temporary downturn. Foster and Goedde noted an increase in submissions from across the world, which in part resulted in a lower percentage of overall submissions being from women (as men are more likely to submit internationally). However, the editors noted that women have a higher publication rate than their male counterparts. Goedde and Foster also commented briefly on their suggested appointments to the editorial board, noting that they try to ensure that there is a balance in terms of expertise, background, geography, and other factors on the board. Emily Conroy-Krutz moved that Council approve the suggested appointments, Immerwahr seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously (13-0-0, Longley having left the meeting).

### **New business**

After Goedde and Foster left the meeting, Walther raised an item of new business, requesting that SHAFR sign on to the American Historical Association's "Joint Statement on Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism and American History." Given time constraints, the length of the statement, and the desire to read the statement carefully, consensus was reached that Council should vote on the issue shortly following the conclusion of the conference and, if approved, the resolution would then be forwarded to the membership for final approval.

Before the meeting adjourned, Hoganson expressed gratitude to Preston and Sayward for their leadership of SHAFR during the pandemic, and Walther expressed gratitude for Shannon's work on developing and instituting the code of conduct. There was general assent, and the meeting adjourned at 1:15pm EDT (ahead of schedule).