

**Minutes of the Business Meeting of
The South-Central Renaissance
Conference, 5 April 2014**

1. In the absence of President Debra Barrett-Graves, Vice-President Tim Moylan called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Members present were given copies of the Executive Committee Meeting Agenda and Reports.
2. Moylan formally announced that over the course of this year we will, as an Executive Committee, continue deliberations on a possible by-law change to permit the Executive Committee to conduct a formal business meeting and vote electronically. Doing so has both advantages and disadvantages, both of which were made very clear to the Executive Committee over the course of this year and illustrated for us the need to address this specifically in our by-laws. The Executive Committee welcome any input the general membership may offer on this and encourage you to contact any member of the executive committee with your insights, suggestions and concerns. Because any change to the by-laws necessitates a vote by the general membership, we will vote on the change at our 2015 conference.
3. The major topic this morning was the possibility of entering into a contract relationship with a third-party publisher. Even more specifically, a contract that stipulates the sale of the copyright of the journal to that publisher. For accuracy and complete information for those members not present, below is an exact account of Moylan's explanation to the membership:
 - *A brief history: At last year's executive committee meeting we determined that rising*

costs, changing market conditions, increasingly scant home institution support, and changes in how academic journals are being published and distributed were all contributing to making the traditional means by which the journal was funded, printed and distributed difficult to sustain. The committee authorized our current editor, Tom Herron, to investigate alternatives involving third party publishing. From Tom we received initially two proposals, one from an academic press, UNC and one from a commercial publisher, Brill. The Brill proposal introduced a complication into this issue, namely that their contract stipulated that in exchange for considerable resource support, including extensive and aggressive marketing of the journal, indeed wide international distribution in both print and electronic media, and a stable income stream to the SCRC, we would have to cede to them the copyright to the journal. Please note that this is a condition they have for all journals they publish and that this does not cede to them editorial control, nor the right to determine the editor, a condition that we insisted on.

- *This led to considerable discussion among members of the committee as well as others to whom we turned for insight, including past editors. Opinions are both strong and varied, with some strongly opposing, many very nervous, concerned about what the short and long term implications would be, and others in favor. Recognizing that we had no provision for making a decision of this magnitude in*

extraordinary session and managing only with difficulty to conduct our discussion of it via electronic means, we deferred deliberations and a decision on a recommendation until the executive committee meeting held this past Thursday. I, unfortunately, was delayed in transit and arrived after midnight, so I was not in attendance at the meeting. Though I cannot speak to the substance of the discussion there, I can share with you that the result of the vote to consider a third party publisher, in this instance Brill, whose contract includes sale of the copyright was eleven in favor and two opposed.

- *Since the root concern here is the implications of such a sale, before entertaining any motion, discussion and membership vote, I wish now to invite Tom Herron, our editor and the one most familiar with contract to speak to those as well as to field questions from the floor.*
- 4. EIRC editor Tom Herron reviewed the three offers received from Brill Publishing, UNC, and Maney Publishing.
- 5. Discussion
 - a. Don Dickson questioned whether there was a stipulation of a certain number of subscribers of the journal. Herron said he would find out, and admitted that our numbers do fluctuate depending on conference attendance numbers.
 - b. Megan Conway asked what would happen if Brill went out of business—would they return the copyright? Herron responded that would be a possibility.

- c. Liana Cheney queried why we would choose Brill and not a university press. Herron explained Brill offered many “extras,” while with UNC we would only break even after 10 years. He acknowledged that Maney was also a good choice.
 - d. Carole Levin expressed her concern that institution subscription price may increase, prompting libraries to cancel subscriptions. Herron replied that Brill is a for-profit publisher and would not do anything that would lose money for them.
 - e. Frances Malpezzi commented that the institutional subscriptions they would lose would be our long-term, faithful members. Brill is out to make money, and in their proposal, authors in the journal would only receive an electronic copy of the issue. Herron said he will try to negotiate that point with Brill to allow authors to receive hard copies.
 - f. Martha Oberle suggested we consult an intellectual property lawyer to look over any proposal before a final decision, while Emma Wilson added that we should show the proposal to a library already subscribing to get their view of the proposal. Tom informed the group that he has already contacted a lawyer who has offered to help and introduced J. P. Conlan who was present at the meeting.
6. Moylan read, three times for clarity, this official motion to accept the third-party publisher Brill Publishing:
- o A motion to authorize the executive committee to proceed with and in time enter into a contract with a third party publisher even if

that contract includes the sale of the copyright to the journal. The motion to proceed in this way has the endorsement of the current executive committee; we have a current contract proposal in negotiations with Brill, which will not be finalized without securing a detailed review by legal counsel.

- a. Catherine Campbell made the motion; Elizabeth Skerpan-Wheeler seconded.
- b. Voting results: For: 27, Against: 12, Abstain: 5.
The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned 8:31 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Faust
Secretary-Treasurer

**Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting of
The South-Central Renaissance
Conference, 3 April 2014**

Tucson, Arizona

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Marvell Society Rep. Alex Garganigo acted as secretary/note-taker while Joan Faust presided in place of Vice-President Tim Moylan, who was unable to arrive in time to attend the meeting. SCRC President Debra Barrett-Graves also was not able to attend.
2. Those in attendance additionally: Sean Benson, Past-President; Thomas Herron, Explorations Editor; Irving Kelter, At-Large; Greg Bentley, At Large; Mickey Wadia, At-Large; Ellen Longsworth, At-Large; Katherine Powers, At-Large; Elizabeth Skerpan-Wheeler, 2014 Program Chair; Meg Lota Brown, 2014 Local Host; Charles Breen, QEIS Representative; and Arlen Nydam, Webmaster and *Discoveries* Editor.
3. After passing out the agenda and printed reports, Joan read prepared words of welcome from Tim Moylan, and members of the committee introduced themselves. Joan explained that, in light of the pressing issues to be discussed, she will amend the order of the agenda to deal with routine matters first, ending with the decision of a 3rd-party publisher for *EIRC*.
4. Minutes of 2013 Executive Committee meeting were approved with some corrected spellings.
5. Reports
 - a. Tom Herron reviewed his written reported on *EIRC*
 - i. His promotion of the journal and solicitation of articles—he is not getting

enough submissions that are immediately accepted, and people are not responding to revise-and-resubmit requests.

- ii. In light of the increased attendance at the conference in New Orleans, a more populous place for the SCRC Conference would be better for the journal, yielding more conference fees and thus subscriptions to *EIRC*.
- iii. We have 85-95 institutional subscribers. But the uncertainty about the number is frustrating.
- iv. The present \$25 institutional subscription is low—we could definitely raise it.
- v. Tom explained that the rising cost of mailing the journal is unavoidable.
- vi. Reprint requests: Layman-Poupard is putting together online collections of *EIRC* articles. We could charge more for each article: not \$100 or \$400 but perhaps \$500.
- vii. Gale/Proquest's bankruptcy: loss of perhaps \$100-800 (which had helped with mailing costs). In light of this fact, Tom requested additional subvention to mail issue 39.2 and noted the journal does make money for SCRC; some of this profit could help with the mailing costs. Re: Tom's comment that bulk rate was a problem, Joan asked him to explain. He responded he is using bulk rate.
- viii. Joan called everyone's attention to the report by Jim Baumlin on the progress

of the 40th anniversary issue 40.1-2, being prepared by Jim and Tita Baumlin, Frances Malpezzi, and Raymond Frontain. Jim reported that they will require additional funding for cover design, layout, and mailing, since it is a double-issue.

- ix. It was moved and seconded that the Board approve additional funds for mailing funds for issue 39.2 of *EIRC*. The motion passed unanimously.
 - x. Sean's motion that we approve up to \$5,200 for the production/ mailing of the 40th anniversary issue 40.1-2 was seconded and unanimously approved.
- b. Arlen gave his report on *Discoveries* and the website.
- i. Arlen suggested we need new blood to revamp the website. There ensued a discussion of platforms for the website and a new abstract submission form: Easy Contact Forms is free and works well. Arlen thought someone more versed in current web design could do innovative things with the website, or perhaps we could hire grad students in design or another discipline (say, an MFA program, or graphic design program) to do this. Arlen offered to continue his help, but he would like to give up primary responsibility for the site. Though the Board discussed who we might ask to take over, we reached no definite solution. They requested Tim

- Moylan appoint a committee to find a new webmaster.
- ii. In response to an inquiry, Arlen reported that we pay \$120/year for the website's domain.
 - iii. Arlen suggested another helpful addition to our web presence would be a Facebook site for SCRC. Through social media, we could put together potential roommates to share costs in future conferences. A new webmaster would be able to do this.
 - iv. Arlen also requested to give up editorship of *Discoveries* since his work now is on a different trajectory. It was suggested we could seek a past editor of the newsletter to take over. The Board could offer no definite suggestions, but perhaps another committee to seek a new editor.
 - v. The entire Board gave Arlen a round of applause in thanks for his many contributions to SCRC.
- c. Joan offered the Secretary-Treasurer's Report (included in the appendices at the meeting).
- i. Finances are very good, and we have caught up from the deficit created by the New Orleans conference.
 - ii. Joan noted that we have a high amount in checking because we have still not gotten a definite figure from our hotel for the Omaha conference. She is still awaiting Matt Averett's final figures.
 - iii. In response to the question about how members received notices when dues are

due, Joan said she did send out a reminder with a form to fill out allowing members to pay for multiple years. She sends the notices to all members, even those who have not renewed membership for years, and this has resulted in a few additions.

- iv. Our North Carolina location next year should be an opportunity to draw more people and increase membership.
 - v. Irving Kelter raises issue of making more money from our own money by investing in money market certificates. Joan said she would investigate other savings options.
- d. Meg Lota Brown's 2014 Local Host report
- i. Meg Lota offered thanks to G.A. M'Balia Thomas, Program Chair Elizabeth Skerpan-Wheeler, Sean Benson, Past Sec.-Treas. Pat Garcia, and Joan Faust for their help in organizing the conference venue.
 - ii. Looking at past conference attendance, Meg Lota said she overestimated attendance at this year's conference. We expected 200 and had about 120. However, through the generosity of the U. of Arizona and her own fund-raising efforts, Meg Lota was able to raise over \$41,000 to supplement the conference, allowing attendees to enjoy the catering and other services but only paying 1/3 of the costs. This allowed her to keep registration costs low, attracting more attendees. The U. of A. covered the

entire cost of the hotel—\$27,000, so we're in great shape.

- iii. In awe and disbelief of her fundraising efforts, the Board gave Meg Lota a round of applause and heartfelt thanks for her efforts.
- e. Elizabeth Skerpan-Wheeler's Program Chair report
 - i. Elizabeth will write up a list of suggestions for future program hosts. For example, the responsibility for the Martz lecture is in rotation among our various sub-societies, but there is no posted order of rotation, resulting last year in two organizations inviting speaker. We should put something in writing about how the rotation works and post it on the website.
 - ii. According to our latest lectures, the Martz rotation should be the following:
 - 2015: SRAH
 - 2016: QEIS
 - 2017: AMS
 - iii. Elizabeth also suggested that we need an organizational chart of responsibilities in running the conference (with a visual).
 - iv. Elizabeth had to deal with last-minute AV/IT requests that were costly and difficult to accommodate. She suggested we set a definite deadline for changes.
 - v. Another suggestion was that the program chair should determine the date for posting conference program on website. We again need a deadline for confirming the program to post on the

website to avoid confusion. Last-minute withdrawals also cause headaches.

- f. Sean Benson: Nominations Committee
 - i. Recommendation for Members at Large: Patricia Garcia and Raymond Frontain. They were unanimously approved.
 - ii. In light of Jacob Blevins's resignation as archivist, the committee recommended Raymond Frontain, especially since he already has most of the archives for the 40th Anniversary Issue of *EIRC*. He was unanimously approved.
 - iii. Nominations for next year's President (Tim Moylan); VP (Elizabeth Skerpan-Wheeler); 2015 Program Chair (Sean McDowell). All unanimously approved.
 - iv. In light of the recent dispute over parliamentary procedure in conducting business electronically, it was suggested we elect or appoint a parliamentarian. After some discussion, the Board concluded that we seldom have any such issues raised, and electing/appointing an official parliamentarian is not necessary at this time. We will just consult Robert's Rules of Order in times of doubt (though one Board member mentioned that there are different versions of Robert's Rules, even in the latest edition.)

6. New Business

- a. Fiduciary Use of Membership Dues: with discussion of agreeing to a 3rd-party publisher which would take our membership dues as subscription dues to the journal, a question was raised as to how much of our dues should go to

EIRC and how much should be retained to help conference expenses. If the publisher expects \$25.00 per person for a subscription to the journal, we may have to raise dues to be able to retain some funds for SCRC; however, if the society does make a profit each year from the publisher, we may not have to do this.

- b. Adopt PayPal for Payment of Conference Fees:
Joan suggested that since many of our conference attendees prefer to pay by credit card, and, because of money conversion issues, our international attendees are forced to pay for their registration by cash at the conference, we should offer PayPal payments to members. The fee is between \$2.50-\$3.00 per transaction, and we could make it clear that this cost is passed to the member using the service. The Board approved, and Joan will try to set the service up for the 2015 conference.
- c. Graduate Student Travel Awards (Joan)
 - i. We do offer a general Graduate Student Travel Award for the best student paper at the conference, but also a separate award for the Soc. of Ren. Art History, originated and maintained by donations from the SRAH. This year, a donation from the QEIS offered another award for a QEIS graduate paper. Joan noticed that in past years, if the SRAH fund was low, the amount was supplemented by our general fund for that award. She thinks this gives the SRAH grad students an unfair advantage since they are chosen from a smaller pool. Joan asked for permission to offer the SRAH and

- future QEIS awards only if their donations can cover the awards. The Board approved.
- ii. At the luncheon, we will have a quick presentation of the awards for AMS (Wallace Award), SRAH, and QEIS, ca. 12:15 p.m., 15 minutes before the speaker is introduced (at 12:30).
- d. Upcoming Conference Venues
- i. 2015: Raleigh, March 12-14, 2015, Sheraton Raleigh Hotel (local hosts Charles Beem, The University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and Tom Herron, East Carolina University)
 - ii. St. Louis, March 24-26, 2016, Parkway Hotel (local arrangements host Tim Moylan, St. Louis College of Pharmacy)
 - iii. Austin, month and date still to be determined for 2017 (local arrangements hostess Patricia Garcia, The University of Texas)
7. Scholar's Choice: Joan has contacted Scholar's Choice to see if they would organize a book display at our conferences to allow SCRC members a means of advertising their publications. The Board approved of the idea and encouraged her to pursue the issue.
 8. Some sending papers to the conference have tried to submit two different abstracts to increase their chance of acceptance. It was decided we would only accept one abstract per person.
 9. The subject of changing the meeting dates of SCRC to fall because of conflicts with other conferences our members attend has been brought up in years past. The Board recommended that Tim Moylan appoint a committee to study how many of the major

Renaissance conferences convene in fall and in spring to determine whether we should make the move, probably in 2017. End September-early October seemed to be the best time window.

10. Third-Party Publisher for *EIRC*

- a. Joan explained Tim Moylan's instructions to guide the discussion: 1) decide whether to sell the journal to a 3rd-party publisher, and if so, 2) whether our society would agree to cede the copyright to this publisher. If the copyright sale is approved, then 3) decide whether any decision involving giving away our copyright should go to the general membership and not rest solely on the Board's decision.
- b. After much discussion, it was decided any decision on a 3rd-party publisher should go to the general membership, though the Board could/should make a recommendation. But then the question arose: should we vote at the Business meeting Saturday morning involving only the members present, or should we email all members, giving a time period for them to vote yes or no and to ask questions.
- c. Because our By-Laws do not specify allowing electronic voting, and allowing this type of vote would involve an amendment to the By-Laws, members checked the wording of the procedure for amendments. The By-Laws state that members must be given adequate notice before any vote to amend the By-Laws; since we have given the members no notice, we would not be able to allow electronic voting until the next conference, when members can vote on the amendment at the business meeting. Therefore, it was suggested that only those members

- present at the Business Meeting be allowed to vote on the 3rd-party publisher decision.
- d. Question: have we given the membership adequate notice on the publisher issue to present at the Business Meeting? The consensus was that the suggestion of a 3rd-party publisher was stated in the 2013 minutes which have been posted on the website for months. This gives the membership adequate notice. The Board unanimously approved presenting the publisher decision for a vote at Saturday's Business Meeting.
- e. Discussion on Brill vs. Maney (and any other university press), particularly with the important decision to give up copyright:
- i. Tom argued that it's not that big an issue, that giving up copyright isn't catastrophic.
 - ii. Should we have sole power over the choice/retention of the editor? With recent rewording of Brill's offer concerning control of editorship, they would only retain the power to remove an editor of *EIRC* for gross incompetence, but SCRC still would choose the editor.
 - iii. Irving acknowledged that this is an emotional issue, particularly for long-time members/former editors of *EIRC* who have worked to bring the journal from its meager beginnings to the respected position it has today. The Board must be sensitive to that.

- f. After much discussion, the vote was taken on whether to choose a 3rd-party publisher. It was unanimously approved.
 - g. The vote on who the third party should be: 9 (for Brill); 2 (for Maney). Brill was approved. (**NOTE:** The vote announced at the Business Meeting was 11 (for Brill) and 2 (for Maney). However, this was an error on Joan Faust's part, since she was not taking the minutes of the Executive Meeting and did not record the accurate number. The vote of 9-2 is the accurate count.)
11. With no further business (or energy), the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Notetaker: Alex Garganigo
Editor: Joan Faust