

2010 Board Meeting
North American Patristics Society
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza
26 May 2010

Attending: Virginia Burrus (Pres), Dennis Trout (Vpres), Brian Matz (Sec/Treas), Paul Blowers (Recent Past Pres), David Hunter (Interim Editor, PMS), Elizabeth Digeser (MatL), Jeffrey Bingham (MatL), Wendy Mayer (MatL), David Brakke (*J ECS* Ed), Erik Kolb (Student Rep), Rick Layton (Nominating committee), Debbie Cowen (event coordinator).

Virginia Burrus called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

1. The President welcomed the new Members-at-Large (Mayer/Digeser). Also welcomed student rep (Erik Kolb). Also welcomed Debbie Cowen of SMI.
2. Debbie Cowen's report.
Registrations reached a record this year, at 316 as of this meeting, although approx. 25 walk-ins are expected on top of that.
Expressed plan to fix online submission program to disallow more than 500 words entered into system as abstract.
3. The Board reviewed the minutes of the May 2009 meeting. A motion to accept the minutes without correction was offered (Digeser), seconded (Trout) and approved.
4. Officer reports
 - a. Secretary-Treasurer (Matz)
Matz reviewed the financial health of the society. [The written report is on file in the office of the Secretary/Treasurer].
Membership numbers are on the decline for regular members but on the substantial increase for student members.
Encouragement to consider some better uses of our excess resources than just transfer to investments.
Motion was made to accept the Sec-Treas report. It was seconded. All approved.
 - b. VP Report (Trout)
[The written report is on file in the Secretary/Treasurer's office].
Explained the online submission process had some snags and some changes may come this year. Nine of the eleven pre-arranged sessions made it to the program. The other two did not have enough submissions. Some of the nine accepted sessions had so many submissions they were split into more than one session. Concern was expressed not to let the pre-arranged sessions colonize the program.
Trout acknowledged the role of Andrew Jacobs for taking on leadership of this year's pre-conference session on teaching the profession.

Trout explained there is some discussion among membership on whether dessert receptions can be used as a platform for universities to acknowledge members. Burrus expressed this should not be a pattern. An earlier instance of this was turned down a few years ago. Hunter said he found no problem with it, but thought it was nice that this year's event was not only honoring a long-time member and past pres of NAPS, but also announcing a new grad program in theological studies. Burrus said no action needed on this, but wanted record to reflect some need for balance in these types of sponsored events in the future.

Program is full this year. Nine rooms to meet and seven time slots. Thus, sixty-three sessions available and all are used. Do we need to do anything to accommodate future growth? Cut more papers, extend time frame for sessions, or add more rooms? Burrus asked for some discussion on this. Burrus expressed no more than one submission allowed per person as a rule of the submission procedure. Bingham suggests limit "appearances" on the program to two, including as session chairs. Trout says we need session chairs, so let's not make that a limiting item. Also, Trout says appearances on book panels should not count against this limit. Burrus agreed with Trout, because both session chairing and book panel contributions are service to society/colleagues. Kolb says students would be fine with limit of one abstract submission. Brakke noted that, with NAPS and unlike SBL, offering more than one submission to NAPS actually creates competition against yourself. Burrus moved for agreement to create a rule for only one submission in the future. Digeser seconded. All approved.

Hunter still wonders if we have solved the original problem – what to do with the limit we've reached on the size of current meeting sessions (i.e., 63). Layton says we cannot really expand time slots. Mutual agreement reached – no increase in number of time slots for conference. Digeser proposes greater strictures on abstract reviews. Burrus says this is for the Program Cmte to really enforce. Hunter and Burrus proposed eliminating pre-arranged sessions and just make each topical session an open-call session. Hunter says this would help people find each other better, since he, for example, did not know about some pre-arranged sessions that he would have like to have been a part of had they been open-call sessions. Layton suggests open-call sessions have more than one organizer. Brakke says we are over-thinking the problem. The problem, as he sees it, is the preponderance of pre-arranged sessions. We should just limit the allowed number of slots for pre-arranged and open-call sessions. They should not cannibalize the program. It should not be the case that, to get on the program, you have to fit into some scholars' personal agenda or research interest.

Burrus proposed no more pre-arranged sessions. Brakke supports this, but still have a limit on these, and leave that number to the judgment of the VPres. Bingham asked where do we put in this system a situation where some archaeologists want to give a report on their recent dig. They don't want an open-call session. Burrus says this would be a panel. Burrus says we want to keep at least 50% of program open for general submissions. Layton wonders whether we could just move deadline for pre-arranged sessions/panels earlier than open-call sessions. Burrus retracts proposal and suggests we just leave everything as it currently is and leave judgment to VPres. Mutual agreement expressed on leaving matters alone for 2012 and see if the problem gets out of hand.

Burrus then proposes we eliminate "pre-arranged session" and combine this into "pre-arranged panel." Panels must bear the burden to explain the need for this exclusivity in

who is invited to be on the particular panel. Brakke summarizes VPres needs to refine language to of pre-arranged panels to make sure it is clear we want higher standard of burden of proof that the panel is needed. Trout agrees, saying abstracts should be requested both for panel and for each presenter on the panel. Brakke seconds this. All approved.

Bingham still wonders do we not want to require panel and open-call session members be from more than one institution? Brakke, Burrus and Trout think this is VPres job to monitor this.

Trout raises AV-equipment needs. Many more papers than we could accomodate wanted PowerPoint access. Trout and Burrus says we should discourage use of PowerPoint for more than just presentations with images/material studies. Matz discusses the buy-versus-rent option. Brakke proposes we pay for one room for one more day of use with video projection equipment for 2012 meeting, and see if it is a further problem. Mayer seconds. All approved.

c. President (Burrus)

Thanks to Matz and website designer for new website. It works and looks great. Robin Jensen worked with the aesthetic elements of the site. Thinks the site makes NAPS looks much better.

5. Committee Reports

a. Nominating Committee (Layton)

[The written report is on file in the Secretary/Treasurer's office].

Layton acknowledged the other members of the committee: Bill Harmless and Catherine Chin.

Reported that 12 nominations were submitted for MatL. Committee proposes, for MatL, Caroline Schroeder and Geoffrey Dunn.

Reported that 8 nominations were submitted for VP. Committee proposes Ken Steinhauser.

Reported that 4 nominations were submitted for Student Member. Committee proposes Kyle Smith (Duke University).

Burrus expressed appreciation for the committee's work. Blowers moved to accept the committee's report. Matz seconded. All approved.

Raised issue of student member. What if person is a student now, but will graduate before next Board meeting? Is it required the student member be a student now or as of next Board meeting? Hunter says they should be a student at time of vote, since what we really want is the student perspective, even if the person graduates during their tenure. Nominating committee is obliged to ensure student rep will still be a student as of Business Meeting at which they will be elected.

b. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* (Brakke)

[The written report is on file in the Secretary/Treasurer's office].

Reported 58 submissions to JECS during May 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010. Journal accepts about 17% of submissions.

Two associate editors come to an end of their terms this year. Lucas von Rompay and Dennis Trout. Brakke says he will announce in coming months replacement nominees to the Board for a vote via written correspondence.

Journal has expanded its paper numbers and, thus, workload by about 25%. Thus, editorial assistant needs about \$2k more in salary. Digeser moved to raise the salary of the editorial assistant. Mayer seconded. All approved.

c. Patristic Monograph Series (Hunter)

Two manuscript submissions in last six months. Hunter pitched to JHU Press the prospect of a JECS supplement series. JHU passed on this. Brakke says JHU told him, "We are getting out of ancient religion." Hunter now thinks keeping with CUA Press is okay, since the high subvention we pay does seem to come back to us over time in shared profits from book sales.

As for editorship issue, Hunter says he declined search committee's earlier request to serve as editor. However, now, after seeing the workload is not so heavy, he is willing to serve in a permanent rather than an interim capacity. Hunter proposes also forming a panel of editors, as he is also now the editor of the CUA Press' *Fathers of the Church* series.

Christopher Beeley could be someone to add as a part of this panel. Also would be good to have someone from eastern Christian languages/literatures.

Burrus suggests now a search committee should be constituted to replace Hunter as interim editor with Hunter, perhaps, and others on a panel as co-editors. Brakke asks what do the By-Laws of NAPS oblige us to do in terms of having a single versus panel of editor(s). By-Laws were checked. No direction is given on how many editors there may be. President may convene the search committee to decide on this.

Trout moves we extend Hunter's appointment for one more year as interim editor. A search committee will be convened by Trout to decide on a replacement. Mayer seconded. All approved.

d. Best First Article Prize

Benjamin White was selected for "Best First Article" prize for his upcoming article in JECS.

Brakke reminded everyone the prize now will be given in an every-other-year format, so the next prize year is 2012.

5. Other Business

- a. Should we update our dues structure? (Matz). Burrus tables this issue until next Board meeting, since NAPS finances are in good shape right now.
- b. Should we pursue a joint membership option with CSPA?(Matz) Decision was made to table this decision until after some discussion with Geoffrey Dunn.
- c. Should we produce a printed member directory? (Matz) Brakke moved we no longer print a member directory, since all information in the directory is otherwise available online through the JHU Press site with NAPS member logins. Burrus seconded. All approved.
- d. Should we sponsor a day of SEERI for \$675? (Burrus) This was a request from Susan Ashbrook Harvey. Brakke moved we approve this. Digeser seconded. All approved.

- e. Book exhibit (Burrus). Burrus tables this for next Board meeting.
- f. How can we better support our student members? Travel grants? "Best paper" prizes? Lower registration fees? (Burrus). Burrus proposes we decide something specific to help grad students who come to the conference and present a paper. Erik Kolb suggests we look for students who lack institutional support. Digeser proposes we form a committee that evaluates travel grants and to consider other types of awards/grants. Brakke expressed agreement. Burrus adds a proposal that we give 5 \$250 awards for paper prizes. Mayer suggests we have two paper prizes and then separate need-based travel grants. Brakke says we should go with the 5 \$250 awards for 2012 meeting and call it a pilot project, and then let a committee work out some ideas for permanent system. Mayer withdraws her alternative proposal. Burrus repeats proposal for 5 \$250 awards and constitution of three-member committee. Digeser seconds. All approved.

6. New Business? None raised.

Burrus adjourned at 11:54.