

AIC Member Business Meeting Minutes

Houston, Texas

2 June 2018

AIC Board President Margaret Holben Ellis called the meeting to order at 7:46 a.m. and thanked volunteers, members, and participants for all their efforts. She also acknowledged AIC and FAIC Executive Director Eryl Wentworth and staff for their work on the meeting and their performance over the year and then extended personal thanks to fellow board members.

Secretary's Report

Sue Murphy, AIC Secretary, stated that the previous year's meeting minutes had been posted on the AIC website after being approved by the AIC board of directors. With no discussion, questions, or comments regarding the minutes, Murphy moved to accept the 2017 business meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Barbara Appelbaum and was passed unanimously by all members present at the meeting.

Nominating Committee Report

Jodie Utter, AIC Nominating Committee Chair, spoke on behalf of the committee to convey the results of the AIC board elections. Board members Treasurer Sarah Barack, Secretary Sue Murphy, and Director, Committees & Networks Tom Braun were all re-elected to serve a second term.

Utter also announced that Penley Knipe had been elected to serve a three-year term on the Nominating Committee. Beverly Perkins is the incoming chair of the committee and will be succeeded by Fran Ritchie.

Treasurer's Report

Sarah Barack, AIC and FAIC Treasurer, began her report by acknowledging the assistance of the AIC staff, particularly AIC & FAIC Finance Director Linda Budhinata. The report provided an overview of revenues, expenses, and net assets at the close of 2017 as well as projections for 2018. She suggested members consider what each organization does and how the finances match those activities, which is reflected in the report.

Barack began with a financial summary for FY2017 for AIC. AIC ended FY2017 with a small surplus of \$6,246, which was due to high annual meeting attendance and stronger market performance of investments. The net loss projected in the FY2018 budget consists mainly of specialty groups spending down reserves. The projected loss totals \$23,533, with \$22,811 of that being anticipated specialty group spending. AIC total net assets at the close of FY2017 were \$861,604.

When moving on to discuss FAIC finances, Barack reminded attendees that generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) reporting should be considered when looking at FAIC's budget. Grant income is booked on the date of the award, not necessarily when the actual money is received. Following year one, multi-year grant reports show only expenses and no revenue.

The receipt of the Comprehensive Organizational Health Initiative (COHI) grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation resulted in a significant surplus for FY2017. The net income at the end of FY2017 was \$960,974. The projected net loss for FY2018 of \$579,005 will be

completely offset by grant income previously booked under GAAP, and \$10,647 is projected as net income in FY2018. FAIC's programs are very active, and that is reflected in our spending. At the close of FY2017, FAIC net assets totaled \$6,035,212, however members should bear in mind that net assets ebb and flow with grant income and market activity and GAAP need to be considered.

There was a request for additional information on the net assets held by FAIC that are designated for specific funds in support of membership. Additional transparency was requested regarding the existing amounts in each fund, especially when members are asked to make a donation toward funds that are used to provide individual grants to membership.

2019 Annual Meeting

AIC Vice President Suzanne Davis began by thanking all who had worked to make the meeting a success, especially Meetings and Advocacy Director Ruth Seyler. She announced that the 2019 Annual Meeting would take place in Uncasville, Connecticut, from May 13 through 17, with the Mohegan Sun serving at the host hotel. In addition to workshops and pre-sessions taking place on May 13 and 14, there will be programming across the New England region preceding and following the meeting.

The 2019 meeting provides a rare opportunity to host the meeting in New England. The Mohegan Sun is operated by the Mohegan Tribe, and the rates at the hotel have allowed AIC to provide excellent room rates to attendees, as well as a discounted room block for students. There are three casinos on site, but attendees will not need to enter any of them to enter the convention areas or sleeping rooms. The hotel is close to many local cultural organizations and sites, including the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center and Mystic Seaport. The location is in close proximity to New York City, Boston, Providence, Hartford, and New Haven, allowing programming in all of those cities. AIC will also provide transportation from New England airports to facilitate attendees' travel.

The theme of the 2019 meeting will be "New Tools, Techniques, and Tactics in Conservation and Collection Care." The meeting is open to all who work in conservation and collection care. The program committee will be exploring new types of programming, including TED-style presentations. Davis emphasized a focus on ideas, fostering learning, and presenting a diversity of voices. All members were encouraged to submit proposals for programming.

Membership Designations Working Group and Equity & Inclusion Working Group Updates

Murphy provided background on the creation and activities of the Membership Designation (MDWG) and Equity and Inclusion (E&I) Working Groups. In mid-2016, the AIC board decided to create the working groups to work with the Membership Committee, which has the sole purpose of bestowing member designations. Catharine Hawks, the Membership Coordinating Chair, has facilitated the activities of the committee and working groups.

The E&I Working Group began its year-long charge in December 2016. The E&I charge focused on internal education and engagement, increasing advocacy, enhancing recruitment and retention, and sustainability of efforts. The charge was completed, and the working group provided the board with a report of their recommendations, which was released in April. Murphy congratulated the E&I working group on their work and thanked all members who contributed. In order to pursue the recommendations provided by the working group, a charge was developed to establish an Equity & Inclusion Committee. Jennifer Hain Teper, who

served as chair of the working group, has agreed to serve as the committee chair, and will solicit additional members to fill the committee positions soon.

The MDWG began their two-year charge in June 2017, which is due to be complete in June of 2019. The members of the MDWG were chosen to reflect the diversity of experiences and concerns in the field. Nancy Pollak and Deborah Trupin are currently serving as co-chairs of the MDWG. Stephanie Lussier is no longer serving as co-chair due to work demands but remains a member of the group. Murphy encouraged members to reach out to Trupin and Pollak to engage with the working group. The results of the member-wide survey created by the MDWG earlier in the year are still being analyzed, but preliminary responses and analysis have been posted in the Online Member Community. Planning for the following year is underway and the MDWG will continue to actively involve membership, especially through surveys and on our online community platforms. She concluded by thanking the working groups and all members who will assist with the work moving forward.

Capitalizing on Opportunities

Eryl Wentworth, AIC and FAIC Executive Director, discussed the recent growth of both AIC and FAIC to meet the needs of the field. This growth has led to increased volunteer opportunities and improvements in technology platforms, better supporting member activities. Wentworth thanked all funders—private, federal, corporate, individual, and Specialty Groups—for their contributions. She additionally cited the work of member volunteers, the AIC and FAIC boards, and staff in the organizations' success. This funding and support has provided extensive opportunities for professional development, support for allied professionals, connections throughout the conservation field, and increased emergency preparedness in the cultural heritage sector. Our funders include the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Ironshore, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Getty Foundation, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Wentworth stressed the importance of the Comprehensive Organizational Health Initiative (COHI), as many grants do not cover overhead to support programming. The COHI grant will help FAIC become more financially sustainable and more effective in outreach and fundraising. The grant also complements the growth of the FAIC board, which has focused on expanding our presence in the public sphere and our fundraising capacity. The COHI grant has also provided the seed money for a special reserve fund, enabling FAIC to take on projects that will benefit the field.

The COHI grant has allowed AIC and FAIC to work with consultants to build and improve our messaging, fundraising capacity, and sponsorship programs. With new tools like Higher Logic, which hosts our new online community, we are better able to communicate and provide a space for collaboration. These efforts will improve our outreach into allied fields and allow us to reach new audiences. Using social media and creating a new "Friends"-style program will increase the public understanding and appreciation of conservation.

AIC and FAIC's outreach efforts are also evident through our expanding network of allied organizations. FAIC recently joined the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), and is the only member devoted to cultural material. FAIC will serve as a voice for the cultural community within NVOAD. AIC and FAIC also collaborate with the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), the National Humanities Alliance (NHA), the Digital Library Foundation (DLF), the Council on

Library and Information Resources (CLIR), and the College Art Association (CAA). Wentworth added that AIC and FAIC will be pursuing opportunities to work with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the Institute of Conservation (ICON), and the International Institute for Conservation (IIC).

In recent news with our partnering organizations, we have been in conversations with IIC about collaborations in coming years. In addition to supporting Americans for the Arts (AFTA) in their advocacy efforts, we are developing a proposal related to care of public art collections. The proposal focuses on supporting public art programs with resources and educational programming for conservators and administrators. We are creating a memorandum of understanding with the Association for Preservation Technology (APT), partnering on emergency preparedness and response and acknowledging where our interests and expertise intersect. Wentworth thanked ASG for bringing the organizations together to develop a new wiki page as well.

Our partnership with the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) has primarily focused on respirator fit testing, but through our Health and Safety committee, collaborative efforts have increased recently. These efforts have included joint seminars and an AIHA working group on risk management for historic spaces and collections. Wentworth noted that she serves on the board of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield (USCBS), which focuses on emergencies that affect global cultural heritage. Through FAIC's assistance, the USCBS was able to complete a project to provide information to troops in conflict zones about potentially at-risk cultural sites and cultural property. The project was funded by the Smithsonian Institution.

Wentworth encouraged members to consider potential collaborations for AIC and FAIC and ways they can get involved. She noted that both organizations and their boards strive to be good stewards of organizational resources, leaders who listen, and good partners to allied organizations. We will continue to seek ways to communicate effectively, provide resources for the field, and support members.

Advertising and Advocacy for Ourselves and our Services

AIC President Margaret Holben Ellis spoke about the need for advertising and advocacy for conservators and their services, as seen through the lens of her experience as AIC board president.

She began by acknowledging the importance of advocacy for the field and its benefits but noted that conservation professionals as individuals were sometimes overlooked in these efforts. Ellis emphasized the necessity of having a role in planning processes and creating policy, but also being credited for work in media coverage and acknowledged as an authority on cultural heritage. She encouraged attendees to focus on the "who" of conservation work and encouraged understanding through shared competencies with other fields and commonalities with other fields, such as medical professions or engineers.

Ellis also stressed the importance of utilizing member designations to help define professionalism in the field, and the work of the MDWG to advance those designations. She added that allied professionals who also care for collections need to have a role and place within AIC's membership. The need for conservation to be seen as "part of the scene," not behind the scenes, was also discussed, highlighting the importance of advertising.

While acknowledging concerns that advertising could be seen as too commercial, Ellis encouraged a strategic and thoughtful approach to making conservation more approachable, especially in the context of our organizational identity. She concluded by noting that with increasing fundraising initiatives from FAIC, it will be essential to evaluate how we present our organizations, conservation, and conservation professionals to the general public.

Leadership Skills and Advocacy for the Profession

Brenda Bernier, AIC Board Director, Communications, led a moderated discussion on how AIC might help members in acquiring leadership skills and advocating for the profession. Bernier began by citing AIC's vision statement and noted that for preservation and conservation to be recognized as critical endeavors, members need to be seen as collaborative thought-leaders in the cultural heritage field.

We have previously offered workshops, webinars, and courses on leadership and advocacy, but want to expand opportunities for members to develop their skills in these areas. Members were asked to identify leadership and advocacy skills they hoped to develop and types of programming that could benefit them.

Many members spoke about programming they had participated in that they had found helpful and expressed a desire to develop these skills for conservation advocacy and for personal advocacy as a professional. The topics discussed included:

- The importance of the "elevator pitch," including the difficulty of concisely but accurately describing conservation, as well as the full range of activities performed by conservation professionals, not only treatment
- An interest in overall public speaking resources and training, including responding to press inquiries
- Developing language to explain the necessity of involving conservators in planning and help in approaching administrators and institutional colleagues to increase their understanding of conservation
- Performing outreach to non-conservation professionals who are involved in any kind of restoration work to "bring them into the fold"
- Increasing advertising of AIC resources and promoting public awareness of AIC as a resource for professional information on conservation, including developing resources to give to clients
- Centering language about conservation on the personal, human aspects of preserving cultural heritage and how conservators aid global understanding
- Consistently attending conferences and meetings of partner organizations, including creating joint sessions and programming at those meetings
- Creating programming with allied fields, including appraisers and art advisors, and on related topics, such as risk management and insurance, to promote a mutual understanding and advocacy
- The need to correct misperceptions about conservation, including what types of objects merit treatment
- Holding "open house"-style events to give institutional colleagues and the public opportunities to better understand conservation
- Engaging in political advocacy and taking advantage of trainings provided by other organizations, such as AAM's Advocacy Day

- Learning from models of leadership/mentorship programs in higher education or related fields, like libraries. Some of these models include shadowing a peer or a mentor, which could be done across organization types or specialty
- Serving as a mentor for local educational institutions, introducing students to conservation and its value
- Participating in general leadership training opportunities and promoting them within the membership

Members were encouraged to continue this conversation through reaching out to the board and opening discussion on the Online Community.

Old Business

No old business was raised.

New Business

AIC members were encouraged to consider additional memberships in organizations like ICOM, through ICOM-CC, as a way to expand conservation networks and connect with allied professionals in the museum field.

There was a request for information on how AIC documents working procedures, as well as guidelines, gray literature, and organizational and volunteer histories. Bernier provided an update on current work to develop a draft preservation policy for analog and digital resources, which will be created by AIC member Joey Heinen. The policy will not be a “how-to” guide, but a high-level document to provide guidance on documenting our publications and organization. The Publications Committee will review the policy and then present it to the Board for approval.

A concern was raised that many presentations at the Annual Meeting were not being captured in Postprints and that publishing them in JAIC might not serve as a solution. Davis and Bernier discussed the logistical challenges of creating a separate Postprints publication and committee and stated that the JAIC editors were also considering how best to approach this process. Members were encouraged to submit presentations that would not otherwise be published in Postprints to JAIC.

It was noted that EMG has been creating collaborative notes in a Google Doc, which is a method that could be utilized by other groups and sessions to capture information about meeting activities.

It was moved to adjourn the meeting by Paul Himmelstein and seconded by Barbara Heller. The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 a.m.