

# **AIC Member Business Meeting Virtual Meeting Friday, May 22, 2020**

Margaret Holben Ellis, AIC President, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and began with a land acknowledgement.

## **Secretary's Report**

AIC Secretary Sue Murphy noted that the 2019 Member Business Meeting minutes were shared with no comments from membership. The membership voted electronically to accept the 2019 Business Meeting minutes. With 40 abstentions and 231 approvals, the minutes were approved.

## **Nominating Committee Report**

Fran Ritchie, AIC Nominating Committee Chair, announced the outcome of the 2020 elections. The new AIC Board secretary is Jennifer McGlinchey Sexton and the new AIC and FAIC Treasurer is Elmer Eusman. Director, Professional Education, Molly Gleeson, and Director, Specialty Groups, Sarah Melching, were both elected for their second and final 3-year terms. Jessica Chloros was elected to a three-year term on the Nominating Committee. Ritchie thanked all who ran and voted, as well as all of the AIC board members currently mid-term.

Ritchie then described the work of the Nominating Committee, which identifies available board positions then solicits candidates. The call for nominations for the AIC Board is shared in AIC News and on the community. Ritchie encouraged members to self-nominate or put colleagues forward for consideration and candidacy. In developing the slate of candidates, the Nominating Committee considers candidates' skills, ability to represent the membership, balancing representation of specialties, and diversity of background, geographic region, career stage, and employment. She noted that some positions must be filled by Fellows, while other positions could be filled by a Professional Associate or Fellow. The Nominating Committee seeks multiple candidates to run for the same position, pursuing contested elections for all positions. Penley Knipe will serve as the next Nominating Committee chair, followed by Sarah Stauderman, then Jessica Chloros. She concluded by encouraging members to reach out to the Nominating Committee with questions or suggestions.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Sarah Barack, AIC and FAIC Treasurer, began by thanking her fellow board members, AIC and FAIC Executive Director Eryl Wentworth, Finance Director Linda Budhinata, and Institutional Advancement Director Eric Pouchot.

Barack noted the clear connection between the goals of the organization and the resulting spending. She also pointed out that due to the unusual circumstances precipitated by the pandemic, there will likely be large variances between the budget for this year, which was developed and approved in 2019, and current spending.

She spoke about AIC's spending for FY2019 in comparison to the 2019 budget, as well as the 2020 budget. The projected deficit for FY2019 was larger than was borne out by spending, with only a \$16,000 deficit. Barack noted that much of the Annual Meeting costs are preliminary, but also that a significant amount of spending was related to Specialty Groups spending down reserves. Membership dues are a significant part of income, which is reflected in spending on

member-related activities. The net loss anticipated in FY2020 also reflects the spending of Specialty Group reserves. The net assets for AIC show an apparent downward trend, however, this indicates that reserves are being spent on member activities.

Barack then discussed the FAIC budget and actual spending for 2019 and the 2020 budget. She reminded members that FAIC's finances utilize Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), which require all grant funds to be booked in the year they are received, even if funds will be used across multiple years. With GAAP taken into account, FAIC had a net profit of more than \$10,000 in 2019. Grants were the primary driver of both income and spending in 2019 and this is anticipated in the 2020 budget as well. The 2020 budget also reflects grant funding we anticipate being awarded, with an anticipated \$225,000 net income for the year.

## **2020 and 2021 Annual Meetings**

Suzanne Davis, AIC Vice President, began by acknowledging member frustrations regarding messaging and notifications surrounding the 2020 Annual Meeting, citing legal constraints and fiduciary responsibilities, as the meetings team worked to prevent any possible legal action. Davis noted that by waiting to negotiate a new contract to hold the Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in 2024, AIC avoided financial penalties, reducing the monetary impact on the Annual Meeting.

She encouraged members to learn more about the program for the Virtual Annual Meeting, discussing the registration rates, which reflect best efforts to minimize loss on both attendees and organizers' parts. More than 400 abstracts were submitted, a new record, and there are more than 100 hours of programming planned this summer. Attendees will be able to attend sessions live and later view sessions on demand as well. She thanked staff, particularly Meetings and Advocacy Director Ruth Seyler, for their efforts to transfer the meeting into a virtual format as well as speakers and attendees for their patience and willingness to try this new format. Davis also thanked all of the program committees and the special task force that provided input on navigating the shift from an in-person meeting to a virtual meeting.

The 2021 Annual Meeting is still currently scheduled to take place in Jacksonville; however, Davis acknowledged the possibility of impacts from COVID next year. She emphasized that members' health is our biggest concern and that both program committees and staff will be continuously monitoring and evaluating the situation. She also noted that AIC is developing increased capacity to deliver virtual content and will be considering ways to maintain some virtual programming even in years when the meeting is in person. She encouraged members to contact her with questions or feedback about the Annual Meeting.

## **Message from the Executive Director**

Eryl Wentworth, AIC and FAIC Executive Director, discussed the challenges of future planning amidst shifts to working from home and a new virtual meeting, thanking members for their steadfast support. She was careful to note that impacts from the pandemic will be felt for years and that staff is evaluating ways to decrease expenses while increasing revenues. FAIC was awarded a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan which will help support staff and operating costs, putting both organizations in a stronger financial position. Funders have also provided support through their flexibility and by allowing changes to program costs to reflect necessary changes in scheduling and program needs.

Despite these challenges, AIC is still advancing strategic goals and partnerships with the [Climate Heritage Network](#), the [Linked Conservation Data project](#), and the [REALM Project](#). Wentworth emphasized the importance of continued advocacy for the preservation field as organizations determine how to safely open or provide access to cultural heritage. She concluded by thanking the board, staff, and members for their work.

## Message from the President

Margaret Holben Ellis, AIC President, shared initial results from the COVID impact survey which was circulated recently among AIC members. Ellis acknowledged that many members were concerned about personal impacts from the pandemic, but also the impact on their workplaces and professional lives. The results of the survey will help guide AIC in advocacy, work with allied organizations, and how best to support members. There will also be “pulse” versions of the survey to continue to track impacts and concerns over time. She thanked the survey team, including BPG Chair emerita Sarah Reidell, who was the primary author on the survey. Ellis concluded by thanking Wentworth, the AIC and FAIC staff, and fellow board members for their work.

## Equity & Inclusion Committee (EIC) Update

Anisha Gupta, committee Co-chair, began by directing attendees to the recently released [EIC strategic plan](#), which provides a roadmap for committee action over the next 5 years. The committee considered both their goals as well as structural impediments and will build an action plan to further guide the committee’s work. The committee is focusing on holistically changing organizational culture, providing a foundation for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) efforts to be successful and sustainable.

Gupta cited four goals from the strategic plan:

- Goal I: Foster an inclusive and welcoming organizational culture
- Goal II: Increase DEIA training and resources for AIC members
- Goal III: Improve sustainability of DEIA funding sources
- Goal IV: Integrate DEIA into all AIC programs

She noted that the committee would be hosting an open house later in the summer to discuss and receive feedback. The strategic plan was the result of an in-person meeting of the committee in December of 2019, which included working with a facilitator, and was supported by funding from AIC and the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation.

The committee has also created accessibility guidelines for presenters and moderators, focused on supporting those with disabilities, but which also help all attendees, including non-native speakers. The guidelines were originally created for an in-person meeting, and not all accommodations are possible in the meeting platform, but the committee will continue to update the resource and gather feedback. These guidelines, as well as guidelines on creating land acknowledgements, are hosted on the [AIC Wiki](#). Gupta reinforced the importance of including a land acknowledgment, which acknowledges the importance of people in AIC’s mission to preserve history as well as the impact of colonialism and displacement. She additionally thanked former committee member Kimi Taira for her work on this subject.

## Membership Designations Working Group (MDWG) Update

Nancy Pollak and Deborah Trupin, working group co-chairs, provided context for MDWG efforts and provided information about current initiatives. Pollak noted that since the release of the first draft of the new member designation proposal, there have been more than 960 comments on the draft, which the committee tracks and records. Since then, the MDWG has also sent out three surveys and has been working on revising the Essential Competencies document, creating a rubric for applications, devising a continuing professional development system, and taking member feedback into account when developing the second draft of the membership designation proposal. These documents will be reviewed by the AIC board as well as relevant committees and groups, prior to review and comment from the full membership.

Pollak and Trupin pointed out some significant proposed changes: the change of the term “associate member” to “member” and “Professional Associate” to “Professional Member.”

Professional Members will be able to apply under one or more of three categories, Conservation Practice, Preservation Practice, and Conservation Science. The Professional Member's category would be listed in Find a Conservator and in their online profile but would be called simply "Professional Member." Current Professional Associates would automatically become Professional Members. The work requirement would include two years full-time experience or part time equivalent after training.

Fellow would be renamed AIC Fellow. Members who are actively practicing in their fields will be expected to maintain their Professional Member designation and will be identified as an AIC Fellow and Professional Member. Members who are no longer working in their field will be identified only as AIC Fellow and will no longer be listed in the online guide to professional services, also known as Find a Conservator. Current Fellows will come into the new system as AIC Fellow and Professional Member; the exact mechanism is still being explored.

Pollak and Trupin encouraged members to provide comment and engage with draft materials and proposals, and to contact MDWG members to discuss. The final proposal will be voted on by all members, prior to approval from the Board and any necessary Bylaws changes.

A moderated discussion followed, discussing the following topics and providing clarification:

- Rubrics for evaluation will provide a structure for reviewers on the Membership Committee to evaluate applications but will also be available to applicants for use in crafting their applications.
- The new membership designation would be heavily promoted and advertised to the public, organizations, employers, and other stakeholders.
- Fellows may choose to maintain their Professional Member designation if they are actively practicing, which would include meeting continuing professional development requirements, but if they are not actively practicing, they can choose to let their Professional Member designation lapse but remain an AIC Fellow.
- Different views on the work requirement were expressed, ranging from support for an established number of years of post-graduate work experience to the suggested elimination of additional post-training work experience requirements.
- Members will be able to apply under multiple categories.
- The need to re-evaluate requirements for volunteer leadership positions, such as Board President or Vice President being required to be Fellows.
- Using the Essential Competencies and Rubric to allow applicants with different training backgrounds to be equally evaluated and for applicants to self-assess preparedness to apply.
- The competencies will not be voted on by membership but will be approved by the board. Members should provide comments to express their thoughts or concerns.
- Ensuring that applicants have access to and can develop relationships with prospective sponsors to be recommended for Professional Membership.
- Addressing application questions for conservators in management or educational positions.
- Verification of continuing professional development requirements.

## **Old Business**

A question was asked regarding how registration costs were established for the Virtual Annual Meeting and the potential financial impacts of changes to the meeting. Davis responded that the prices were established by considering virtual attendance in comparison to the in-person experience and registration costs. While fees were also established with the goal of minimizing financial loss, it is still expected that there will be a net financial loss from the Virtual Meeting, however, that will not be able to be determined until registration is closed and final costs can be calculated. Further information can be found in the additional responses linked below.

## **New Business**

Questions on the following topics were briefly discussed during the Virtual Member Business meeting, but more complete responses were provided in [a post on the AIC Member Community](#).

- Clarification was requested on FAIC's PPP funding
- Membership trends
- Annual Reports and financial summaries
- Alternative and virtual meeting formats, as well as future meeting sites
- Supporting student meeting registrations

Ellis moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Pamela Hatchfield. The meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.