**Minutes of July ATCA Ex-Com Conference Call**

**July 19, 2017**

Bill Hirschman called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. EDT. All of the Ex-Com members were present: Charles Giuliano, Lou Harry, Brad Hathaway, Bill Hirschman, Kerry Reid, Frank Rizzo, Ed Rubin, Simon Saltzman, and Martha Steketee. Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary; Teddie Hathaway, ATCA treasurer; Robert Sokol, ATCA operations manager; Jay Handelman, the ATCA Foundation president; and Anne Siegel, chair of the Membership Services Committee, were also present. Jonathan was present for part of the meeting.

Bill welcomed the new board members, Simon and Frank. In Barbara Bannon’s absence, Kerry Reid compiled minutes of the meetings in San Francisco. She is putting them together, and they will be available soon.

Teddie Hathaway made a treasurer’s report. She said that she and Robert have been having trouble using the QuickBooks computer program so they are now using the online version. Currently we have $33,700 in cash in the bank. The profit from the San Francisco conference is about $2,700. Expenses so far this year are about $8,100; we are running at a loss of $5,500 because membership renewals have not yet started coming in. She and Robert are in the process of reconciling their figures and will make a full report within the next couple of weeks.

Robert said that people who cancelled late or never appeared for the San Francisco conference are not eligible for refunds of their registration fee.

Robert reported that there are 244 members currently listed on the database. Brad and Robert are verifying that number is correct. Membership renewal invoices will go out next week. Bill mentioned that some members are not opening their e-mails so we may not have their current e-mail addresses. We need to verify that we have everyone’s correct address.

Lou made a brief report for the New Plays Committee. He has received recommendations for about seven or eight plays so far.

Barbara reported on the Primus Prize. We have still not received the check from Barry Primus, so we have been unable to send the check to Lauren Yee, last year’s winner. Chris Rawson will try to contact Barry again to see when we can expect the check. We need to work out a more efficient and dependable process for the Primus Prize for the future. If we can make Barry a more active part of the award process, that may help with communication. The committee is about to start reviewing this year’s applications; Robert needs to forward these to the committee members. He thinks he has about 15 to 17 applicants this year, and Barbara has 4 that she has received.

Bill said that J.W. Arnold is working on some ideas for recruiting new members. He and his committee have drafted a survey to be sent to members to identify who and where they are, what publications they write for, and any other pertinent demographic information. They have also promised to submit some definite recruitment proposals before the New York mini meeting so that we have a definite recruitment campaign in place for next year.

The Ex-Com election process ran very smoothly, especially considering it is the first time we have tried electronic voting. There was a 55 percent response rate, which is about three times the number of members who get to vote at the annual conference. In the future, we need to coordinate the Ex-Com and Foundation ATCA board elections; the foundation normally holds its election at its annual meeting, and that occurred before the Ex-Com elections. Since all the Ex-Com members are also foundation board members, it was impossible to know who they would be at the time of the foundation board election. Bill thanked Russell Warne for his work in coordinating the election along with Jay and his committee.

Robert reported on the San Francisco conference, which did well financially. The cash expenditures amounted to about $16,000, but when you factor in the in-kind donations, the overall value was much more. The pace was a little hectic, but the conference was one day shorter than usual. The biggest expense was definitely food. Robert said he is sending a survey to attendees to get their feedback on what worked and didn’t work. He is also trying to determine how many articles about the conference and the theater productions attendees have written. Bill congratulated the San Francisco conference committee on the great job they did.

Sherry Eaker, Martha Steketee, and Jonathan Mandell are working to put together the New York mini meeting, which will be held from November 3 to 5. Sarah Ruhl and Paula Vogel will participate on panels.

The dates for next year’s annual conference at Spring Green, Wisconsin, are July 11–15. The committee is putting together a grant application to try and get funding for transportation to the conference from the nearest airports for attendees.

There was a discussion about emeritus membership. Anne Siegel and the Membership Services Committee have proposed a number of people for emeritus membership, but people seem to be unclear about the qualifications. Barry Weiner, Rob Hurwitt, and Dan Sullivan, three of the people suggested, are no longer members of ATCA; should they be considered for emeritus status? Jay said that emeritus members should be contributing actively to the organization or certainly should have done so in the past. Brad Hathaway made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, that the Membership Services Committee should devise a definition of an emeritus member and submit it to the Ex-Com for review. The definition will clarify what criteria should apply to emeritus membership. The motion passed unanimously.

Anne said she felt it was really important for the organization to recognize the members who have been active and contributed through the years. Robert suggested that the membership should be included in the process; we should let members know that they can submit names of people they think deserve emeritus membership.

There was discussion about the membership renewal process. What should we do if a member does not respond to the initial membership renewal request or a reminder? Robert said he will be able to determine the logistics for follow-up, whether it’s a phone call or snail mail request. It’s important, however, to establish a time limit. Bill said that every member has an e-mail address at this point, so a 60-day limit for renewals seems reasonable. Anne asked if it would be possible to spread out payments, especially since we have just increased the dues to $100. The feeling was there was no need to do that.

There has been some question about the honorarium for Perspectives in Criticism speakers. Previously speakers have received $250, and that money has come from Foundation ATCA. It’s unclear who is supposed to cover travel or any additional expenses. It was decided that Perspectives in Criticism speakers at the annual conference should continue to receive $250. The money for travel and additional expenses should come from the conference budget, so that needs to be built in to the expenses. There was discussion about whether the speaker could be a member of ATCA; there was some feeling that a retired member, but not a currently active writer, could be considered. Bill said he would appoint a subcommittee to study the issue.

There was discussion about what to do, if anything, about the controversy over Hedy Weiss’ review. There has been a good deal of online discussion about this matter, and Bill formulated a statement that pulls together the important points. Wendy and Kerry volunteered to edit Bill’s statement and propose a final version to the board to vote on. It is important to keep from being specifically focused on the particular controversy and create a general statement on the issues of free speech, individual responsibility, and sensitivity to diversity involved. The statement should include a proposal for ongoing action. See addendum for the final outcome of this statement.

The final item of business was electing officers for the Ex-Com board for the next year. Since Bill is a current officer, he asked Barbara to conduct the elections. Brad Hathaway nominated Bill Hirschman as the ATCA Ex-Com chair. Lou Harry seconded the nomination. Bill was elected unanimously.

Bill Hirschman nominated Brad Hathaway as vice chair. Ed Rubin seconded the nomination. Brad was elected unanimously.

Kerry Reid made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, that Barbara Bannon and Teddie Hathaway should continue as secretary and treasurer. The motion passed unanimously.

Bill said there would be another teleconference meeting in August, and there might be e-mail motions before then. The logistics of the recruitment campaign and the statement on diversity and cultural competency still need to be discussed. We also need to discuss having smaller, regional ATCA sessions.

The business being concluded, Kerry Reid made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, to adjourn the meeting, and it ended at 4:50 p.m. EDT.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary.

**Addendum**

The following motion was made and passed by e-mail.

On July 7, Wendy Rosenfield made a motion, seconded by Kerry Reid, to adopt a statement drafted by Bill Hirschman on the issues raised by the controversy over Hedy Weiss’ theater review that was accused of insensitivity. The statement was revised by Wendy and Kerry and submitted for approval on August 12. The motion passed on August 14 with one person not responding. A copy of the statement is attached to these minutes.