

ATCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Meeting Minutes | December 9, 2019 • 6:30 PM EDT

PRESENT: David John Chávez, Amanda Finn (Secretary), Charles Giuliano, Jay Handelman (Foundation ATCA), Lou Harry, William Hirschman (Past Chair), Mark Lowry, Kelundra Smith, Martha Steketee (Chair).

ABSENT: Chris Jones, Frank Rizzo, Wendy Rosenfield

SECRETARY REPORT (Finn): The minutes of October 14 were approved. (M: Mark, 2: Kelundra, Unanimous.)

The minutes of October 31 were approved. (M: Mark, 2: Lou, Unanimous.)

TREASURER REPORT (Bennett): Martha: Currently transitioning the treasury duties to Scott

Scott: There were irregularities from a financial standpoint. Instead of a cashier's check [the balance] was run on the Wells Fargo account and unavailable until Dec. 11. That's created problems with international dues and other issues...I have printouts of financials but no digital accounts.

Martha: Didn't [former treasurer] promise to share the software, accounting software, he'd share that software he'd been using.

Scott: he sent a Quickbooks file in October but only goes to the beginning of October. I am now looking at PDFs. The only other one is a spreadsheet having to do with the NY conference. He also said in the last email he would send a QB file. At this point, I have to do this manually. There are calculation errors in the draft. I'm trying to figure out exactly what's going on and where we stand.

FOUNDATION REPORT (Handelman):

Bill: The international meeting went very well and people were happy with it. Financially I wrote the check and we may not have made money but came very very close. People like Chris Jones and Jeffrey and Jonathan made additional financial contributions on their own. Apparently, it was quite successful and everything was lovely.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Advance reports were distributed as submitted by the committees. Additional reporting:

- **COMMUNICATIONS** (Rosenfield):

Martha: Chris and Wendy have been heading up the public website. They're working to get the website updated with current committees and leadership. Things have gotten out of date.

- **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION** (Smith-Chávez):

Kelundra: We don't have a major update at this time. The committee is in the process of completing a survey to guide our strategies for 2020. We want to find what our big thing for 2020 is going to be.

Charles: Possible thumbnail of where you're going?

Kelundra: Based on the past few meetings and the survey results, based on what we know from our most recent meetings, the EDI members want to be pushing for two things: 1. Some kind of way to have funding for critics from ATCA beyond NCI and having some sort of live event for critics in underrepresented groups in conjunction with what we do in NY or elsewhere. A big push for a large event for underrepresented critics.

David: We acknowledge having members moving on or moving on to other professional obligations, we're restructuring and once this week is up and Kelundra and I speak we'll have a better sense of what we have to work with.

- **MEMBERSHIP** (Kelsall-Lowry):

Mark: The new member letter outlines the committees and who to contact. It outlines briefly what they are. It doesn't go into much detail but does encourage participation.

Lou: If at all possible please have the contact info on there

Kelundra: With that, one of the things we've had conversations about on our committee [EDI] is time to equip ourselves as an organization becomes more diverse to not be the catchall for diverse people. We have to have something for people to do. If you want a network of critics of color that's something we can give you without you being on the committee. That's one of the challenges our committee has been discussing. How do we serve the purpose we need to serve and serve the membership and not become a catchall?

Mark: The big thing is the membership tier vote. 97 participants, 40% and 90% yes for the new tiers. As the guest editor of the update, I sent you all the updates. The fees we talked about in the initial list is no at bylaw, we do want to address that the second tier of emerging critic \$75 is a little high while the others are \$50.

Martha: The way we confused ourselves around bylaw calculation at the beginning of the past year we clarified it. I went back to the notes....it's 2/3 of those who vote. Eligible voters and it's not of the universe of people, but the people who actually voted. Bylaw changes needs 2/3 to pass.

Mark: Amanda, Nancy and I will work on the next SurveyMonkey vote. Once that is approved we will do updating to the website with new tiers. This next year will be really experimental because I have a feeling the number of people will change, who knows how that will change income.

Bill: I'm curious, it is really encouraging to see updates with all the new people joining. Are there people in the pipeline?

Mark: Tomorrow there will be 3 more. There is one person who we approved and he noticed that currently on the site if you join at the year and pay in January it gets you a year and a half, it's gaming the system. We're going to honor that. He's going to wait and pay in January so his membership is good through June 2021. That's something we need to discuss.

Bill: What are our numbers now?

Mark: 233. We are at a net loss, quite a few people dropped out. One I'm really upset about is Naveen Kumar who felt he wasn't getting anything out of it. What are you putting into it? Once we get all this cleared the big thing for the committee to work on in January going forward is to talk about how we can retain members and get new members and start on that plan we've talked about when Bill was president of doing hardcore outreach at colleges and universities and journo associations.

Bill: What Naveen said is something we've talked about for a long time. We need to think ahead about the next 12 months about what we can offer people that feels somewhat tactile or concrete that people can see what they get out of it. What he said is something we've heard from people who have left.

Mark: Can we offer online sessions? Professional development? This is where regional conferences come in.

- **PROGRAMS | Events – ATCA-SC20 (Harry):**

Lou: One thing I'm happy to report as much as it was a stressful process to sort out, the folks at Louisville were wonderful. I thought there would be soreness pushing back but they were cool with it, they understood. It wasn't appropriately accommodating for an awards presentation like this. That was a remarkably easy phone call.

First, the awards presentation, that has been locked in now. It's ideal. What we'll do is at 8 o'clock on Saturday of the festival we will present directly before the performance of a play. (25th of April) To make it better, the play is only 90 minutes. People won't have to sit through our presentation and then Grapes of Wrath. All that is worked out really well.

AS to a possible conference, I just got information back from the folks at South Coast Rep. Here is the rundown:

-Program is very condensed on Friday-Sunday

-2 full productions and 5 play readings of new work

-2 full productions are set, the five readings do not have made final selections

-Friday/Saturday we'd go to 1/2 readings and two productions. The fifth one is too small to accommodate all of us.

-Their schedule is tight on those days. It's unlikely we'd have programming there on those days. They really can't accommodate to do any kind of programming within the theater for us. What that means is the number of nearby hotels, one of which is considered a hotel for the festival, \$125 per night, I just have gotten this need to contact hotels and how that would work. In theory, we could have meetings and events/panels or whatever we program on the hotel space or any space I can find. What that will cost us I don't know yet.

-South Coast Rep is willing to give members tickets to events, no number yet for guests

Kelundra: Dates again?

Lou: April 23-26 the core is 23, 24, 25. Based on past numbers about 35-40 [attendees]. Is that a realistic assessment?

Bill: if we can give people a strong idea of professional development it'll attract people to make them decide to come. BUT, as we learned in others, if we wait to nail down what we can say concretely, the harder it is to commit to flying across the country.

Lou: We should know by 2nd week of January what the titles of the readings will be. We can certainly if we decide to do it, look at the programming well before then.

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Charles: Everything depends on how central things are. In Winston-Salem, it's getting buses back and forth.

Lou: All the readings and productions are in their complex. The hotels are all in .1 miles.

Charles: [So it's] basically across the street. That would seem to accelerate the possibility of taking in plays and readings as opposed to running around all the time.

Lou: Very little running around. It cuts transportation time, no hour between things, it does give us a little more opportunity. If we're comfortable doing everything at the same time. I like conferences at \$100 or less

Kelundra: Reach out to Disney to do programming.

Lou: The challenge is fitting in a trip to Disney Land if we overlap it would have to be Wed/Thurs.

- **PROGRAMS | Events – ATCA-Provincetown 20** (Smason): No report.
- **PROGRAMS | Events - ATCA-Seattle21** (Berson): No Report
- **PROGRAMS | Events - ATCA-Atlanta22** (Smith): No Report

- **PROGRAMS | Awards – Steinberg-Osborn** (Harry):

Lou: We were delayed in sending letters, couldn't send until we had this stuff nailed down. All the letters have gone out to playwrights thus far. Recommendations through the end of the year, still accepting but making clear that we want excellent plays. Ones that weren't just good, we don't want it crowded with "this was pretty good." We have 23 plays recommended representing 8 different states. The South Coast Rep festival is later and buys us an extra week or so.

- **PROGRAMS | Awards – Primus** (Reid): No report.
- **PROGRAMS | Awards – Loney** (Rizzo): No report.
- **PROGRAMS | International** (Jenkins): No report.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

- **TOPIC:** Details.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **TOPIC:** Details.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 PM EDT. (M: XXX, 2: XXX, Unanimous.)

NEXT MEETING: Monday, January 13, 2020 • 6:30 PM EDT

[Minutes recorded by Amanda Finn, secretary. Submitted January 13, 2020]