**Minutes of First Ex-Com Meeting in Philadelphia**

**April 5–6, 2016**

In the absence of Ex-Com Chair Bill Hirschman, Vice-Chair Brad Hathaway called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m. EDT on April 5. The following Ex-Com members were present: Lou Harry, Brad Hathaway, Bill Hirschman (arrived at 3:45), Wendy Rosenfield, Ed Rubin, and Martha Steketee. Barry Gaines, ATCA administrator, Jay Handelman, Foundation ATCA president, Teddie Hathaway, ATCA treasurer, John Angel Grant, Anne Siegel, and Howard Shapiro were also present. Jonathan Abarbanel, Charles Giuliano, and Erin Keane were absent.

Barbara had distributed the minutes from the March conference call by e-mail on March 30. On April 1, Brad Hathaway made a motion, seconded by Martha Steketee, to approve the minutes with one correction—the spelling of Teddie Hathaway’s name. The motion passed unanimously by e-mail.

Barry made a report on membership. We currently have 233 members, including 30 new ones and 3 still to be processed. Barry and the Membership Services Committee recently rejected an application because of substandard writing skills. Barry spoke to the applicant who then sent him a letter with writing samples.

Howie Shapiro reported on the upcoming conference. Things are going well and the conference officially starts tomorrow. He asked the board to help organize people on and off buses. He said he has received really good support from the theater community.

Teddie Hathaway gave the treasurer’s report. ATCA is currently financially healthy. There was a surplus of $4,173 from 2015 due to the success of the conferences.

Wendy reported for the Communications Committee. She has the press releases for the ATCA new play awards and the Primus Prize. Chris has been maintaining the website; Martha complimented his work. Brad commented that the website “has turned the corner; Bill really raised our game.”

Lou reported for the New Plays Committee. He said that the Steinberg/ATCA and Osborn award winners are very excited about their awards. He will go to Louisville to present the awards at Humana, and ATCA will cover the expense. He is trying to make the committee’s work more efficient. There are currently delays caused by the need to have printed copies of the plays for some of the committee members. It might be more efficient to have a subcommittee do an initial screening of the submissions. The plays could be submitted electronically and the subcommittee could recommend or reject them. That would eliminate the plays that don’t receive any support. It would also be more efficient and economical if committee members who want to work from hard copy could print their own and save the theaters having to send them. Lou said there are now 19 members on the committee, and he wants to include everyone who would like to be involved. Erin Keane is helping him with the logistics.

Barry reported on Primus Prize submissions. Applications have begun to arrive; the cutoff date is April 30. Eventually there were 26 submissions.

At this point, Bill Hirschman arrived and took over chairing the meeting. He thanked Brad for filling in.

Charles Giuliano cannot attend the conference because of recent eye surgery but is interested in running for the Ex-Com. He is completing the remaining one-year term vacated by Myrna Petlicki.

Robert Sokol and Susan Cohn are planning on doing a presentation on a proposed conference in San Francisco. We need to find a good date for that.

There was discussion about where and when to schedule a 2016 mini meeting. Jay has been communicating with the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, but that won’t be held again until 2017. Should we even try and have a mini meeting in 2016? Chris Rawson has mentioned Pittsburgh in the past. Brad suggested a possible mini meeting in Seattle. Misha Berson is trying to organize a young critics’ seminar in Seattle, and there could also be a mini meeting there. The University of Washington can furnish rooms for the seminar. The charge would be $50 a room, and the seminar will cost about $2,500. Misha is planning on asking Foundation ATCA for funding; Jay suggested she should get some local funding for the seminar. He has sent a two-and-a-half-page proposal, and there can be further discussion at the Foundation ATCA board meeting. Also there was a question about whether Foundation ATCA brainstorming should be part of the next ATCA conference?

Brad Hathaway made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, that ATCA will not have a mini meeting in 2016. The motion passed.

There was a discussion of elections after we implement electronic voting. We need a budget and software to manage the elections.

The meeting tomorrow will consider marketing and member outreach. Also do we need to print a new brochure? And what about a new logo? Some people do not like the present one. We also need to discuss electronic voting and website changes.

There was a question about how to pay for videotaping conference panels. Does ATCA pay for this or should the funds be part of the conference budget? The Perspectives in Criticism speaker receives an honorarium of $500, but this comes from the Foundation.

Ed Rubin made a motion, seconded by Martha Steketee, that ATCA use the spelling “theater,” instead of “theatre,” except where it is spelled that way by organizations or theater companies. The motion passed.

Brad and Wendy stated that the Ex-Com endorses the proposed bylaw changes.

The business being concluded, Martha Steketee made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 4:45 EDT.

Respectfully submitted by Barry Gaines in the absence of Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary.

The meeting resumed on the afternoon of April 6. Bill Hirschman called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m. EDT. The following Ex-Com members were present: Jonathan Abarbanel, Lou Harry, Brad Hathaway, Bill Hirschman, Wendy Rosenfield, Ed Rubin, and Martha Steketee. Jay Handelman, Foundation ATCA president, Teddie Hathaway, ATCA treasurer, and Chris Rawson were also present. Charles Giuliano and Erin Keane were absent.

The discussion began with electronic voting. Does ATCA want to base the Ex-Com elections around the annual meeting or hold them at a set time every year? Jay suggested that the elections be held right before the end of the membership year, which occurs in May. Chris suggested combining electronic voting with actual voting at the annual meeting. Jay thought it was not a good idea to try and combine the voting; all the voting should be online and conducted at the same time every year. There was discussion about a good date for the elections. Then Brad Hathaway made a motion, seconded by Lou Harry, that the annual elections should be held 30 days prior to the end of the membership year. Jonathan wanted to amend that to 60 days before the start of the next annual meeting or 60 days before the end of the membership year, whichever is earlier. The motion passed with one abstention.

Do we need to have nominations and seconds for candidates? That’s not necessary since the process relies on self-nominations.

How do we handle a quorum for the elections? The present bylaws state that a quorum at a membership meeting is 25 members. There was a suggestion that the online quorum should be 50 percent of all eligible members. Some people thought that was too many. Jonathan suggested it was more important to have a lower limit: the election should be invalid if fewer than 25 members participate. Brad explained that if 25 members attend a business meeting at a conference, only 20 of those have to vote. With electronic voting, all the association members are theoretically present, so 20 ballots would equal the 20 votes cast in a meeting where a quorum is present. It seems, then, that no quorum number is necessary in an electronic election. The election should just depend on plurality.

Will it be necessary to amend the bylaws further to activate electronic voting? It was decided to leave any decisions on this issue until later.

Chris gave a brief report for the Communications Committee. He is responsible for maintaining the front page of the website while Wendy takes care of social media—Facebook and Twitter. Brad asked if there are any statistics documenting page views or hits; it would be good to know how many people are visiting the website. Since we are now posting the videos of the conference panels and presentations, it would be great to get some feedback on how many are viewing those as well.

There was discussion of the 2016 budget. It is no longer balanced. The total expenses are projected to be $23,950, so we will be short $4,350. How should we deal with the deficit? We can try and reduce some of the expenditures or spend some of the reserves we have from conferences to supplement it. Brad said he supported this idea because we need a budget that reflects the needs of the organization. In the past, we had a budget that ran in the red for three years and then one that ran in the black for four. The consensus was that a deficit budget is acceptable. Jonathan Abarbanel made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, to approve the 2016 budget as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Down the road, we need to discuss membership and recruitment. We should come up with some concrete, specific plans on ways to increase outreach and membership and promote the visibility of the organization. Charles has already come up with some ideas, and other people on the Ex-Com should also think about the issue and make suggestions.

Bill commended Barry Gaines, Anne Siegel, and Robert Sokol for their extensive work on putting the new directory together. It turned out to be much more difficult and time consuming than they expected.

The business being concluded, Ed Rubin made a motion, seconded by Martha Steketee, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 3:32 p.m. EDT.

Respectfully submitted by Jay Handelman in the absence of Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary.