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

**January 7, 2016**

Bill Hirschman called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. EST. The following Ex-Com members were present: Jonathan Abarbanel, Charles Giuliano, Lou Harry, Brad Hathaway, Bill Hirschman, Wendy Rosenfield, Ed Rubin, and Martha Steketee. Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary; Barry Gaines, ATCA administrator; Jay Handelman, ATCA Foundation president; and Mark Lowry, ATCA treasurer, were also present. Erin Keane was absent.

Barbara had sent the minutes from the previous conference call by e-mail. There were several corrections that were noted and made to the minutes. Ed Rubin made a motion, seconded by Martha Steketee, to accept the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Barry reported on membership; we have 227 members, and all of them have paid their dues. There are 36 new members; they will get registration subsidies for the Philadelphia conference.

Mark made the treasurer’s report. We currently have $18,244.88 in the bank and $3,579.61 in PayPal. The PayPal figure includes $670 donated during the end-of-the-year fund-raising appeal by the Foundation, so the corrected PayPal figure is $2,909.61. Available funds therefore total $21,154.49.

Lou made a report for the New Plays Committee. The committee has 17 plays in hand for the Steinberg/ATCA Award with 3 additional ones in transit. Lou is currently following up on 9 additional plays; 3 plays were disqualified because they didn’t meet the criteria. He is expecting a pool of 29 plays. The committee will take its first ballot on February 6.

Barbara made a report on the Primus Prize. She has notified this year’s winner, Sharyn Rothstein, and she is very excited about receiving the prize. The other five finalists have also been notified and sent congratulations to Sharyn. Sharyn thinks she will be able to come to Philadelphia to receive her plaque since her latest play will be in rehearsal at the McCarter Theatre in Princeton at that time. The five finalists will also receive certificates. The committee received 39 applications last year for the Primus Prize, and it was difficult for everyone to be able to read all of them in an efficient time period. If that number applies again this year, the committee may divide the entries up so that each member doesn’t have to read all of the plays. Then everyone will read the plays that get through the first round. The committee will discuss the logistics by e-mail and in Philadelphia. Barbara mentioned that it was a great idea to have six finalists this year and that there was a lively e-mail exchange among the finalists and her; they are very supportive of each other’s work. It’s exciting and encouraging to see the quality of the plays being written by the women who applied. The Ex-Com members said they would like to be able to read the winning play, so Barry volunteered to e-mail *By the Water* to all of them.

Brad had sent the Professional Development Committee report to everyone prior to the conference call. He asked everyone to let him know if anyone is aware of any development resources or opportunities.

Bill made a report on the printed directory. He has talked to Robert Sokol, and he expects to finish up his work on the directory next week. There should be copy to edit by the middle of January, and he, Barry, and Anne Siegel hope to get the completed directory out by the end of the month. Bill said he would circulate it when he gets it to review so that the Ex-Com can look at it.

The next item on the agenda was the upcoming Philadelphia conference. Howard has to present a more detailed budget; he will try to have that ready within the next week. He is anticipating expenses of a little more than $12,500, but he is trying to trim those. There was discussion about what we should charge for the registration fee for the conference. We can’t advertise the conference online until we determine the figures for early and late registration. Howard anticipates that 75 to 85 people will attend. Figures ranging from $145 to $165 were discussed. Michael Grossberg has suggested that the amount of one night’s lodging makes a reasonable registration fee. Barry wondered if we could subsidize the conference slightly from the general fund if necessary. Brad Hathaway made a motion, seconded by Ed Rubin, to set the conference fees at $150 for the early bird registration and $175 for the late registration fee. The motion passed unanimously. Jonathan complimented Howard on planning such an interesting-sounding conference.

Bill said that he is trying to get a speaker for the Perspectives in Criticism presentation.

Bill said that the proposed San Francisco conference has encountered some problems. Robert Sokol thinks it will not be possible for him to be the chair. Susan Cohn says she will be happy to help organize the conference, but she needs help. Brad says he knows some people who can be on the committee. Bill said he will talk to Brad, Susan, and Robert and decide in the next few weeks whether that conference needs to be postponed.

Bill said that the website is looking great. Leslie Torvik is going to rework the front page of the Members Only section to make it more user friendly. She will also post the videos from the New York mini meeting and set up a way to post the minutes from Ex-Com meetings. Bill asked if we want to get some software so that we can discuss issues on the website. It could be an adjunct to electronic voting or help to get discussion going on important topics before annual meetings. It would be used only to conduct specific discussions on central issues. Members can be contacted and told to watch the website so that they can participate.

Bill said the Ex-Com needs to think about replacements on the board for Jonathan, who is cycling off, and Erin, who is going to be unable to complete her term. Susan Cohn is interested in running. Charles only has a one-year term, and he is interested in running for reelection. Mark Lowry wants to step down as treasurer and may be interested in running for the Ex-Com. He has volunteered to remain as treasurer until we find someone else.

Jay made a report on the ATCA Foundation. The Foundation received 22 donations plus 6 right at the end of the year; that is about 10 percent of the fund-raising requests, which is about average. The annual meeting will take place in Philadelphia. We need to decide about doing something with the Helbing fund. Wendy has some ideas, and we can use some of the money to underwrite the transgender workshop at the Philadelphia conference.

Bill reported on the International Committee. Brad, Marie Kilker, Misha Berson, and Michael Howley have all expressed interest in attending the World Congress in Belgrade. Jeffrey Jenkins will attend to represent ATCA and would like to have Bill go, but Bill thinks he won’t be able to attend and would like to give his spot to someone else. Marie Kilker is a very good candidate, especially because she speaks French. We can send three representatives.

Bill also reported on the Theater Hall of Fame. ATCA members make up the majority of the voters, but there is not very good participation. Only about 30 to 40 ATCA members actually vote, and Terry Hodge Taylor would like to add other critics to the voting bloc. Also ATCA makes no financial contribution to the Hall of Fame. It is uncertain whether Terry will do anything about this, but Bill wanted to make the Ex-Com aware of the problem. Barry suggested that ATCA can pay to mail the ballots to its members; we should definitely encourage our members to vote since it is one of the advantages of membership.

Bill reviewed issues that will be discussed in Philadelphia. One is expanding the membership criteria as the Ex-Com has discussed. How will we set that up, and when will it begin? The membership must also vote on the bylaw changes. How will we circulate information about that in advance of the conference?

In regard to electronic voting, Russell Warne has expressed some interest in being the election manager.

The business being concluded, Martha Steketee made a motion, seconded by Lou Harry, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 3:00 p.m. EST.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary.