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

**September 29, 2015**

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

Barbara had sent the minutes from the previous conference call by e-mail. Martha Steketee made a motion, seconded by Wendy Rosenfield, to accept the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Bill made a membership report. He has talked to Barry and Anne Siegel. Thirty new members have applied in the last few months. Twenty-six old members have not renewed their membership. Anne, Charles, and the members of the Membership Services Committee are contacting them, and most of the ones they have talked to plan to stay members. Ed Rubin will follow up with those who remain unpaid. It still says the membership dues are $55 on the website; that needs to be fixed. People who are no longer working critics can still be associate members. Anne found 45 people from 10 years ago who are no longer members. We can send them a letter inviting them to continue with ATCA. We will see where we are by the time of the New York meeting and then plan a membership drive. Perhaps we can use the alternative weekly writer list as a source.

What about minority members? ATCA has very few. Is there a way to attract and contact them to become members? Wendy said we need to involve them in our programming. We should try and have some minority speakers at conferences. There was a discussion of the possibilities. Jonathan suggested sending a delegate to minority conferences to invite and attract their members to ATCA.

Anne and her committee are trying to formulate some membership criteria for the bylaws.

Mark made a treasurer’s report. We currently have $24,353, $14,888 in the bank and $9,465 in our PayPal account. It looks as if we will have a budget surplus this year. We will have to figure out what to do with the extra funds.

Lou reported on the New Plays Committee. He said that 17 or 18 nominations for the ATCA/Steinberg Award have already come from 14 or 15 critics across the country. The committee is open to new members. He discussed the question of the rolling world premieres from the National New Play Network. Plays should be nominated at the end of the cycle, after they have had their final production, not at the beginning. However, critics can nominate a play when they see it, and Lou will hold the nomination and recheck with the critic later to see if he or she is still in favor of the nomination.

Bill reported that ATCA’s conference next April in Philadelphia is the same weekend as the presentation of the ATCA/Steinberg Awards at the Humana Festival in Louisville. We will still be able to cover the awards, however.

The upcoming New York mini meeting was the next topic of discussion. Currently 33 people have signed up, but there are still six weeks before the meeting. The Early Bird registration ends on October 1; we can extend that if we want. Ira and Sherry need to check the break-even figure. They are reaching out to the New York critics to encourage them to attend. Bill said that Ira and Sherry have done a great job in organizing a very interesting meeting. Members are encouraged to bring guests as long as they pay. It is possible that Barry can team up members who are looking for someone to share a hotel room. A list of press agents will be posted on the website for those critics who want to try and get theater tickets.

It has been suggested that we videotape the panels at the Lark. Can we do it ourselves if we buy a camera? Sherry has gotten permission from the panelists and is investigating someone who can do the taping. Bill will formulate a release for the panelists to sign.

Bill reported on the Philadelphia conference. Howard Shapiro has presented a tentative schedule. Bill will send it to the Ex-Com members so that everyone can review it and make suggestions. We will discuss it at the New York meeting. Howard has scheduled business meetings for three mornings as usual; if electronic voting is in place by then, we may not need all three meetings. Everything at the conference is within walking distance of the hotel. The Ex-Com will meet on Tuesday, and the conference will run from Wednesday to Sunday.

We need to start thinking about a Perspectives in Criticism speaker. Bill has some names already; the Ex-Com can suggest others. We should focus on practicing critics and have a backup in case someone is suddenly unavailable.

Brad made a report on the Professional Development Committee. The subcommittees are working. Brad is working on an e-blast asking the membership about any training possibilities they are aware of.

The subcommittee on designing electronic voting procedures has also been working. Jay, the chair, sent a memo outlining some procedures the committee is considering for elections to the Ex-Com board. The process needs to be easy. Either an election chair or an election committee can manage the logistics. The ballots can be distributed probably by Survey Monkey. With electronic voting, ATCA can hold regular elections and not have to worry about when conferences are being held. The subcommittee will continue to refine the proposal. The Ex-Com should provide some feedback, and we can have an online discussion. The subcommittee should have a final proposal by the New York meeting, and hopefully the Ex-Com can vote on accepting it there. Everybody should give Jay some feedback within the next couple of weeks. It may be necessary to modify the bylaws to conform to the new electronic voting procedure. We will also have to determine the number of members that will constitute a quorum for voting.

Bill, Barry, and Anne Siegel are working to put together the new printed directory. We should have the directory done by the end of the year. Robert Sokol and Leslie Torvik are also helping.

Victor Gluck and the Ethical Standards Committee are looking for some direction on the new code of ethics. Should it be a code of conduct simply for ATCA members or a code of ethics for the profession? We need to decide and let the committee know. During the New York meeting, we need to establish a consensus on how we want to go forward with the code of conduct. The Ex-Com should review the present proposal that was discussed in New Orleans and come to New York with some specific ideas. Wendy suggested that the Ex-Com also look at other similar codes of conduct. Barbara will make sure that the Ex-Com members all have a copy of the present proposal along with the suggestion that Jonathan made about appropriate language. Charles noted that it is important to use the code to define who we are and attract new members.

Erin announced that she will not run for reelection to the Ex-Com.

The business being concluded, Wendy Rosenfield made a motion, seconded by Martha Steketee, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 2:45 EDT.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Bannon, ATCA secretary.

Addendum:

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

On October 15, Brad Hathaway made a motion, seconded by Erin Keane, to authorize $500 to prepare video coverage of the panels during the New York weekend conference and that the resulting videos be posted with password protection Vimeo and the password posted on the Members Only section of the ATCA website. The motion passed.

Bill also pointed out that the board seems to be in consensus that we should also experiment with making these videos ourselves with simple equipment to see if the quality would be satisfactory. Wendy suggested that the board may want to think about videotaping other ATCA presentations such as the Perspectives in Criticism speeches. Chris Rawson pointed out that transcripts of the recent Perspectives in Criticism speeches are posted on the website.