

**2014-2015 ASA Council
Second Meeting
Final Minutes**

Saturday, February 7, 2015

Embassy Suites Washington DC Convention Center, Capital B Room
Washington, DC

Officers Present: Paula England (President), Cecilia Menjivar (Vice President), Ruth Milkman (President-Elect), Brian Powell (Past Vice President), Barbara Risman (Vice President-Elect), Mary Romero (Secretary)

Officers Absent: Annette Lareau (Past President)

Members-at-Large Present: Stephanie Bohon, Tina Fetner, Tanya Golash-Boza, Adia M. Harvey Wingfield, Margaret Hunter, Kelly Joyce, Peter Kivisto, Karyn Lacy, Leslie McCall, Dina Okamoto, Jane Sell, Patricia E. White

Staff Present: Janet L. Astner, John Curtis, Karen Gray Edwards, Sally T. Hillsman, Kareem D. Jenkins, Michael Murphy, Jean Shin, Margaret Weigers Vitullo

1. Introductions and Orienting Documents

President Paula England opened the second meeting of the 2014-15 Council at 8:32am on Saturday, February 7, 2015.

A. Conflict of Interest (COI) Statement

All Council members were requested to sign the COI statement and give it to Governance Director Michael Murphy.

B. Council Policy on Social Media Use during Council Meetings

The President reviewed the social media policy adopted last year by Council and reminded Council members that identifying individuals' viewpoints and comments was not permitted; only general content may be mentioned when discussing non-confidential items.

C. Approval of the Agenda

No changes were proposed.

MOTION: To approve the agenda. Carried (no opposed).
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D. Approval of the August 19, 2014 Council Minutes

No changes were proposed.

MOTION: To approve the minutes for the Council meeting on August 19, 2014. Carried (no opposed).

E. Approval of the August 20, 2014 Council Minutes

No changes were proposed.

MOTION: To approve the minutes for the Council meeting on August 20, 2014. Carried (no opposed).

2. Financial Reports and Budgets

The Secretary reordered agenda items so that Council could discuss the page increase for *Contemporary Sociology* before reviewing the proposed 2015 budget. Before proceeding, Romero advised Council members to read the material covering frequently asked questions about the ASA budget.

A. One Year Page Increase for Contemporary Sociology

The Secretary reported that the incoming editor of *Contemporary Sociology*, Michael Sauder, asked the Committee on Publications for an additional 50 pages for the 2015 volume year to help alleviate the backlog from the previous editor. The committee approved the request, which was then considered by the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB). The EOB recommended that Council approve the page increase for 2015.

MOTION: That Council approve a 50-page increase for *Contemporary Sociology* in 2015 at a cost of \$90 per page (\$4,500) to alleviate the excess backlog from the previous editor. Carried (no opposed).

B. Current (2014) Financials and Proposed 2015 Operating Budget

The Secretary reported that projections for 2014 were that revenues would be below budget by \$118,000 and expenses would be above budget by \$55,000, yielding a year-end deficit projection of (\$144,000). Membership continues to decline, as do most revenue categories tied to membership levels. Rental income dropped because the tenant space was empty for six months. Annual Meeting expenses were higher, and some personnel costs rose due to employee transitions.

The proposed 2015 budget anticipated higher revenues from the SAGE contract as well as an increase in Annual Meeting revenues. On the expense side, Annual Meeting expenses were raised to support an expanded program and the ongoing higher costs of audio visual support. Proposed revenues for 2015 were \$6,756,742 and expenses were \$6,725,870, resulting in a net budget that is positive by \$30,872.

MOTION: To approve 2015 budget proposal. Carried (no opposed).

C. Proposed 2015 Spivack Budget

The proposed 2015 budget for the Spivack Program was similar to its 2014 budget. The Secretary presented EOB's recommendation to approve the 2015 Spivack budget and noted that the program of the 2015 Annual Meeting will include a session that highlights the work done by some of the Community Action Research Initiative (CARI) grant recipients.

MOTION: To approve the 2015 Spivack Budget. Carried (no opposed).

D. MFP Budget 2015-2016

The MFP budget for 2015-2016 proposed funding for 4 stipends and two non-stipendiary awards and requested that Council consider allocating support from the Spivack Fund to provide two additional stipends, as was done for 2014-2015. MFP Director Jean Shin reported that 108 applications were submitted for fellowships in the current round; the MFP Advisory Panel will make funding decisions in March. All MFP awards are given for one year; multiple year awards ended in 2010 when the NIMH training grant support terminated.

MOTION: To approve a 2015-2016 MFP budget of \$84,000 for four MFP Fellowship awards (at \$20,000 each) and up to two non-stipendiary MFP awards (at \$2,000 each) from General Fund #53, and authorize \$40,000 from the Spivack Fund for two additional stipends (at \$20,000 each), bringing the total budget to \$124,000 to support 6 MFP Fellows. Carried (no opposed).

E. Update on the Refinancing of the ASA Headquarters

ASA successfully completed its headquarters refinancing on December 1, 2014. These arrangements are in place for the next 10 years. Finance Director Les Briggs noted that the terms of financing included a provision that ASA must meet a minimum Debt Service Coverage (DSC) ratio of 1.20. The DSC ratio measure the Association's ability to pay its principal and interest on the loan.

The financial provisions also contain a Liquidity Covenant which requires the Association's unrestricted cash and investments not to fall below 75 percent of the loan amount. Briggs indicated there should be no difficulties meeting both of these loan requirements, as long as the Association keeps the operating budget stable and continues its long term investing approach.

3. ASA Investments and Reserves

A. General Financial Picture of ASA Investments

Briggs reported that net gains for the ASA investments through December 31, 2014 were \$344,571 which put the account at an approximate 4.5% total gain for the twelve month period.

In early January, the Investment Subcommittee met and reviewed the long term investments and also discussed the balance of the short term investments. Having agreed that the long term investments have performed well and that it was prudent to restore the short term investments back to their recommended \$500,000 level, the EOB Investment Subcommittee recommended (and Secretary Romero authorized) a \$200,000 transfer from the General Fund to the short term investments which took place on January 9, 2015.

Briggs concluded the report by noting that, if Council approved any additional large capital projects, it might necessitate withdrawing additional funds from the long term investments.

B. Bernhardt Year-End Investment Report

The report from Bernhard Wealth Management, ASA's investment advisor, was summarized, with specific notes about how well the portfolio is doing against industry benchmarks. The value of ASA's portfolio at the end of the year was \$7,703,000. The EOB Investment Committee intends to continue ASA's investment strategy which uses an allocation of 65 percent stocks and 35 percent bonds for the portfolio.

C. Reserves

ASA defines "reserves" as the unrestricted long-term investments of the Association, also referred to as the "General Fund Investment Account." As mentioned earlier, a \$200,000 transfer of funds to the short term investment holdings at Merrill Lynch was authorized by the Secretary in order to replenish them to their typical \$500,000 level. After that transfer, the reserve amount came to \$5,648,868, or 86.8% of the 2014 operating budget. It was noted that the increase in total expenses in the proposed 2015 operating budget will reduce this percentage as would a pull-back in the market.

4. Audit Committee

There was no report.

5. Publications

A. Subscriptions Report

Member subscriptions for all nine journals decreased at a rate greater than the membership decrease from 2012 subscriptions as anticipated. Additional individual member subscriptions have also declined because most members can get access to journal subscriptions via their institutions. The Secretary also noted that, beginning with the 2015 membership year, all members receive online access to *all* journals, so continued decline is anticipated and there is no particular cause for concern.

Although traditional institutional subscriptions to individual journals continue to decline slowly SAGE has significantly increased the exposure of the nine ASA journals it publishes through consortia arrangements and free access to libraries in developing nations. To achieve this way of expanding journal subscriptions was one of ASA's reasons for moving from self-publishing to SAGE.

B. Actions from Committee on Publications Meeting

(1). Selection of Editors

Council went into Executive Session to discuss the selection of new editors for the *American Sociological Review*, *Sociological Methodology*, and *Sociological Theory*, and to receive a briefing about the editorship of the section journal *City & Community*. Council members with potential conflicts of interest excused themselves from the discussion and left the meeting room.

(2). Extension of Editorial Terms

Council had previously requested that any *pro forma* extensions on editors' terms that involved a change in the editorial structure be brought to Council. Two editorships are at the point of considering extensions, but neither involves any structural change. As an informational report only, it was noted that extensions were offered to the editors of the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* and *Sociology of Education*. Responses are expected by May.

(3). Anonymous Vision Statements by Editor Candidates

In December 2011, the Committee on Publications voted to begin posting anonymous vision statements from ASA editor candidates for member input. The concept was intended to increase transparency in the editor selection process, and to provide ASA members with an opportunity to provide input to the Committee on editor candidates' vision and plans for the journal without the identity of the candidates being public. Council approved this plan by the Committee on a three-year trial basis.

The Secretary reported that at the end of the three-year trial period the conclusion by the Publications Committee was that effort to get member responses on vision statements was not useful. For two of the three years of the experiment, the practice caused particularly delicate situations when there were late editor applications and/or too few applications. More important, actual member input in response to the posted vision statements was extremely low despite ASA advertising the availability for sociologists to do so. Furthermore, when input was received, it was not particularly meaningful or useful in the Publication Committee's deliberations.

Because the three-year trial created significant difficulty in the editor selection process with virtually no net gain, the Committee voted unanimously at its December 2014 meeting not to recommend its continuation to Council.

Council discussed the function of posting vision statements, viewing it as broader than just helping the Committee on Publications make decisions. Members could be getting something about of reading the statements, even if they do not submit comments. A question was raised regarding whether there was information on how many people viewed the webpages where the vision statements were posted. Further discussion was postponed until information on page clicks could be provided.

After the lunch break, ASA staff reported that, over a 13 month period, there were 219 page views of the webpage containing the vision statements. It was not possible to narrow down *which* ones were looked at by members because all the statements were on one page.

Motion: Council approves discontinuing the practice of posting “anonymous vision statements” for editor applications. Carried (no opposed).

Council took a short break at 10:18 – 10:40am.

(4). Proposal to Increase the Size of the Committee on Publications

Concerns had previously been raised in both the Committee on Publications and Council regarding the fact that the size of the Committee on Publications has not changed in over 30 years while the number of publications for which it is responsible has nearly doubled. With nine ASA journals and four section journals, the routine business of journal oversight—most notably editor selections—virtually eliminates any opportunity for the Committee on Publications to spend time on broader discussions of the ASA publications portfolio.

Secretary Romero presented the following recommendation, approved by the Committee on Publications at its meeting in August 2014.

The Committee on Publications recommends to Council that it amend the ASA Bylaws to increase the number of committee members elected by the voting membership from six to nine, with three elected each year for staggered three-year terms. Carried unanimously.

This recommendation was reviewed by the EOB Committee at its meeting in January 2015 for its budgetary implications. The cost of supporting the additional three members per year was estimated at \$4,000 (primarily for travel, lodging, and meals for the two-day mid-winter meeting). EOB saw no significant financial issue with expanding the size of the committee and gave its support to the recommendation.

Council inquired about the role of editors on the Publications Committee and was informed that editors attend the committee meetings in an advisory capacity, usually one editor from each journal. They contribute to policy discussions, participate in discussions of editorships, and serve on subcommittees that review editorship applications, but they are not present when the voting members cast their votes to rank order candidates or make other formal decisions.

The Secretary clarified that, if approved by Council, the change in the structure of the Committee will be proposed as an amendment to the ASA Bylaws, which would be presented to and voted on by the ASA membership in the spring 2015 ballot. Council easily reached consensus about expanding the size of the committee.

MOTION: That Council approve the formal process to change the ASA Bylaws to increase the number of members elected to the Committee on Publications by the voting membership of the Association from six to nine, with three elected each year for staggered three-year terms. Carried (no opposed).

(5). Proposed Revision of Council Guidelines for ASA and Section Journals

The current guidelines for journals specify that the Committee on Publications receives reports from section journals and has responsibility for advising sections on their selection of editors, but the committee does not approve the editors of section journals. Section councils are responsible for selecting editors of section journals.

Because a journal editor is seen as a face of the Association, the Committee on Publications is considering whether all journal editorship selections should go through the committee prior to formal selection. A subcommittee of the Committee on Publications is currently reviewing the ASA portfolio guidelines, including this matter.

(6). Update on Socius

The Executive Office has been working on arrangements for new online journal. The contract with SAGE has been signed, and a profile of the inaugural editors is scheduled for an upcoming issue of *Footnotes*.

C. 2013 Annual Report

Copies of the 2013 Annual Report were available for reference.

6. Membership

A. Membership Report

The 2014 membership year ended with a final count of 12,585, a decrease of 438 compared to the 2013 year-end total of 13,023. This represents an overall decrease of 3.36 percent, with decreases in most regular and student categories. The exceptions are two of the three highest income categories (with the highest category--\$150,000 and over—showing a 4.97 percent increase from 2013). There was also a significant increase (5.88%) in the number of emeritus members, likely a result of eliminating the 10-year membership requirement, increasing benefits for that membership category, and promoting the new ASA Opportunities in Retirement Network.

While some potential “fallout” from the 2013 change in the dues structure was anticipated, the ASA membership department did not receive a significant number of complaints related to the change. Instead, members indicate either an inability to afford membership or a view that membership doesn’t provide enough “value” to compensate for the cost. The latter is particularly common in any year in which they do not plan to attend the Annual Meeting but will renew in a year in which they do plan to attend.

Last year Council approved several new membership benefits for 2015 which are expected to have a positive effect on membership by year’s end. The major new benefit—free online access to all journals—is likely to be of most interest to members outside academia and those located at smaller higher education institutions. The partnership with Interfolio, which provides free access to *Dossier*, will likely benefit students and lower income members.

On the departmental side, access to Interfolio’s *By Committee* module will be free to sociology departments that join the Department Affiliates (DA) program. One year of free membership is also being offered for first-year graduate students in DA departments. At this stage in the renewal process, it appears that these benefits are having positive effects on membership renewal and DA participation.

President England invited Council invite members to look at the table that outlined the official membership counts for 1906-2014. ASA currently has about the same membership as it had back in 1968, and it is clear that membership has wandered up and down since that time. While it is more desirable to have membership increase than decline slightly, invoking a crisis mentality seems unnecessary.

Council discussion elicited a suggestion to that ASA review the pattern of membership and income categories. There was some concern that the association might be heading in the direction of having an increasing proportion of members in higher income categories. It was clear that Council did not want the association to become an organization of only elite sociologists. The ASA Research Department will provide Council with an analysis of the ASA membership on this issue.

Another suggestion proposed giving free access to TRAILS to members in the lower income categories. This idea was already on EOB’s agenda as possible future benefit for all members.

Rather than providing more services to attract members, a different tactic that was discussed was to consider whether the cost of membership and/or registration fees could be reduced, even though these fees have not increased much, if at all, beyond the rate of inflation for at least two decades. Nonetheless, ASA’s member services may not be viewed as making up for the relatively high cost of ASA membership (not compared to other national associations but compared to regional and specialized associations). From a member’s viewpoint, the whole package of costs (general membership, section dues, meeting registration, and more) can be formidable.

The possibility of having joint memberships with regional societies was brought up. This is problematic because the ASA Bylaws specify the membership categories, making it impossible

for the association to add any new types of memberships unless the bylaws are changed. ASA has, however, sometimes arranged for a special promotion or package deal so that a member of a regional society can get a discount on ASA membership for one year.

Executive Officer Hillsman noted that the EOB Committee has started looking at long-term trends in costs and will eventually have some information to share with Council. When the dues structure was changed in 2013, the salary structure for the categories was adjusted to reflect the current salary levels in the discipline, much of the increase due to inflation. Mid-level salaries did not experience much increase, but members' perceptions and realities are not entirely consistent. It is definitely the case, however, that a significant number of members do not renew when they are not planning to attend that year's Annual Meeting.

As discussion came to a close, it was pointed out that many public sector universities have not raised faculty salaries in five years, so the CPI may not be the right measure to use in calculating income adjustment.

B. Section Report

The 2014 membership year ended on a mixed note for sections, with less than half of the 52 sections experiencing an increase in members. As of October 3, 2014, after the close of the membership year, there were a total of 28,312 section memberships, just one hundred short of last year's all-time high. It is important to note, however, that 2014 is the second year in a row that section memberships have held steady or grown despite declines in general ASA membership. Some of this can be attributed to the large scale purchase of student memberships by section chairs and membership committees. At least 277 gift memberships were purchased by a handful of sections in the closing weeks of September 2014.

Year 2014 also saw a continuation of the trend towards a larger number of section memberships per ASA member. There are fewer total people engaged in sections, but those who remain tend to be more active. As of January 26, 2015, all Sections had filed the required Annual Reports for the 2014 membership year.

A question was raised about whether there is any policy to deal with sections whose membership drops too low. There continues to be six sections with membership levels below or wavering around 200. While there is a policy that sections will be disbanded if their membership falls below 200, this policy has never been implemented. The reason is that the policy permits exceptions to be made based on the *vitality* of the section, as measured in several different ways, and many of the smallest sections are very active. The Committee on Sections (COS) reviews the annual reports from all sections, and based on that review, COS has not found any section to be moribund.

Another question raised the matter of section dues especially that a portion of those dues goes to ASA, not the sections. It was noted that this has always been Council policy reflecting some recognition of the costs the ASA operating budget incurs in supporting sections. Among others, there is the work of the ASA Business Office to manage the finances and bills of the sections, the costs associated with space usage and related services provided sections at the Annual

Meeting, staff support for routine section activities throughout the year, the inclusion of section elections in the ASA annual election, and provision of webpages and Listserv services.

(1). Section bylaws changes

Seven sections requested amendments to their Section Bylaws in 2015. These were: Section 17: Political Economy of the World System (PEWS); Section 22: Comparative and Historical Sociology; Section 28: Communications and Information Technology; Section 29: Latina/o Sociology; Section 40: Economic Sociology; Section 47: Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity; and Section 49: Global and Transnational Sociology. Council approval was needed to place the proposed amendments on the ASA annual election ballot.

A bylaws amendment for one section (17: Political Economy of the World System) proposed a term of editorship for a section journal that did not align with the ASA policy for editorial service. There were no issues with the bylaws amendments for the other six sections, so Council members proposed to deal with those sections first.

MOTION: To separate the bylaws amendments for Section 17 from the amendments from the other six sections. Carried (no opposed).

MOTION: Council approves the proposed bylaws amendments for Sections 22, 28, 29, 40, 47, and 49 so that they may be included in the 2015 ballot. Carried (no opposed).

Publications Director Karen Gray Edwards indicated that the guidelines for section journals assumes that term limits for section editorships are the same as for ASA journal editorships. Nevertheless, sections with journals do not always adhere to this policy. There have recent discussions with the PEWS Section about its desire to extend the editorship of its journal for longer than is appropriate.

Secretary Romero reminded Council that a subcommittee of the Committee on Publications has been formed to review the current guidelines for section journals. That subcommittee has not met yet, so there is nothing to report to Council at this time. A recommendation was made to send this one section bylaws amendment back to the section, pending a report from the guidelines subcommittee.

Some background information was provided on some of the unique arrangements that have been accommodated for the *Journal on World Systems Research* (JWSR) at the request of the PEWS Section. Council considered several variations on wording for the bylaws amendment that includes the term of editorship but decided against editing amendments proposed by sections. There was consensus that any amendment containing language that conflicted with established ASA policies should not be included on the ballot.

MOTION: To approve the proposed bylaws changes for Section 17, excluding the sentence under Committees (d) about reappointment of the section's journal editor which is tabled until the report of the Committee on Publications' subcommittee on guidelines for section journals is received. Carried (13 yes, 2 no, 0 abstention).

Council took a break for lunch at 12:05 – 1:05pm.

7. Annual Meeting

A. Update on the 2015 Annual Meeting and Related Presidential Activities

Admitting to some personal bias, President England commented that the program for the 2015 Annual Meeting will be “very cool.” The Opening Plenary on Friday night will look at abortion in America, featuring the only doctor providing abortions in Mississippi. The Welcome Reception afterwards will have alternating periods of quiet and music, thanks to ASA Past President Bill Bielby's band. Other plenary sessions will focus on the politics of same sex marriage, modern romance, the rise of non-marital births, and internet dating.

One project in support of improving the Annual Meeting program was undertaken during the past year by a Council *ad hoc* committee consisting of all the elected officers (Presidents, Vice Presidents, Secretary) to review the long-standing template of Regular Session Topics for the open submission of papers. Some subject areas are routinely oversubscribed with submissions while others receive few submissions. The committee revamped a few topics, dropped some, assigned some to alternate years, and broke some up into smaller topics. This template will be used for Regular Session roster in for the 2016 opens process. England hoped that the incremental changes would make the process easier and more efficient for session organizers and paper submitters.

B. Update on the 2016 Program Committee

President-Elect Ruth Milkman indicated that the Program Committee was still in the relatively early stages of planning for the 2016 Annual Meeting. Invitations are being issued to plenary speakers, and more information will be available by August.

C. Response to Petition on Time and Venue of Annual Meetings

(1). “More inclusive scheduling of annual meetings” (change.org petition)

President England provided a brief summary of the online petition started at change.org last summer by members with concerns about the ASA Annual Meeting. Their two primary issues were the timing of the meeting and the cost to attend it. Meeting dates for 2015 and 2016 are later in August than usual, which the petitioners viewed as teaching-unfriendly and parent/family-unfriendly. The petitioners also posted views (not all of which are correct) such as that costs would be lower at different times of the year and in smaller cities.

Council members Paula England, Peter Kivisto, Stephanie Bohon, and Mary Romero sent a message to the petition site indicating Council's awareness of petition and the expectation that the issues would be discussed by Council. People were invited to send comments to Paula; one email was received from someone at a community college.

England reminded Council that selection of every meeting site is voted on by Council. She suggested that Council should not try to address each of the petition's concerns at this meeting but to set up a working group to look at the issues surrounding site selection and meeting cost. Council would charge the working group to get information on the relative costs of different things, come up with recommendations, consider doing a survey of members about date preference, and look at disseminating information to members.

Discussion started with comments that these are not new issues, and that the petition is a new way to communicate about these issues. The American Political Science Association (which holds its annual meeting over Labor Day weekend) has received a similar petition, so ASA is not alone in hearing from members via this mechanism. These are issues that come up every few years as new cohorts of sociologists join the association. They are, however, very important issues to be addressed by Council at regular intervals and about which Council should regularly communicate with members. While the general criteria for meeting site selection are posted on the ASA website, it has been some time since there was a *Footnotes* article on this subject.

Changes have occurred with meeting dates and site selection preferences over the years. In earlier decades, ASA met for five days (Monday-Friday) and only went to San Francisco over the Labor Day weekend (which APSA still does) when hotel rates were usually lower. The switch to a four day meeting, which occurred for the 2001 Annual Meeting, was due to several factors including hotels being less interested in booking long meetings and ASA members wanting to reduce the cost of attendance.

In the 1980s ASA began experimenting with meeting over a weekend, due in large part to the shift in the airline industry toward "supersaver fares" that required a Saturday-night stayover. This change helped reduce members' costs, but it increased meeting expenses due to higher labor costs on weekends and for weekend overtime. This was one of the first attempts to deliberately shift of meeting costs away from attendees and onto the association. It was noted that in the 1970s, only 20-25% of the membership attended the Annual Meeting, whereas attendance is now above 40% of the membership.

The last time Council dealt with meeting dates, it specified a preference for dates over the second or third weekend of August, but recognized that space availability would necessarily mean occasional shifts outside this window. In addition, since that time, the starting date for K-12 schools in some but not all parts of the country has been moving earlier, which creates conflicts for members in those regions who have children. Council members expressed support for the idea of a survey that would include questions about date preferences, both in August and at other times of the year.

The importance of communicating information about site selection to the membership was emphasized. This would include the fact that meeting sites have already been selected through

2024 to insure meeting space and locking in the lowest possible costs in sites that Council has selected, so implementation of any changes could not appear immediately.

MOTION: That a working group be appointed to communicate information about current Annual Meeting site selection criteria and policies to the membership, in collaboration with Executive Office staff; survey the ASA membership about meeting site and date preferences; explore possible cost savings for the meeting; and develop recommendations for Council's consideration. Carried (17 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention).

Council members requested that the working group think about potential compromises, such as rotating to smaller cities once every four or five years. The composition of the working group was discussed, starting with a suggestion to include several Council members, ASA staff members, and other members of association. There was clear consensus that the group should embody a full spectrum of opinions and experience, including members who do not often attend the meeting.

MOTION: The President is authorized to appoint members of a Working Group on Annual Meeting Timing and Costs. The composition of the group should include the ASA Secretary, the ASA Executive Officer and appropriate ASA staff members, at least two ASA Council members, and several ASA members who either signed the online petition or are interested in proposing changes to meeting site selection criteria. Carried (none opposed).

Attention turned to a possible timeline for the working group to report back to Council. There was acknowledgment that this group would need significant support from Meeting Services staff as well as the ASA Research Department.

MOTION: Council requests that the Annual Meeting working group submit an interim report in August 2015. The final report with recommendations about criteria for future meeting dates and site selection is due by mid-January 2016 so that it can be considered at the winter meeting of the 2015-16 ASA Council. Carried (no opposed.)

(2). *"Scholars Challenge Costly Annual Meetings as Too Exclusive"* (CHE, September 8, 2014

Available for reference.

(3). *Facts about the ASA Annual Meeting*

Available for reference.

D. Annual Meeting Improvements

(1). *Annual Meeting App*

Noting that it is now standard for every meeting/convention to have its own mobile App, Meeting Services Director Kareem Jenkins provided some background on ASA efforts. In 2012, ASA staff opted to build a mobile/web-based App "in house" rather than contract with an outside vendor. The two primary reasons for this approach were to (1) gauge meeting attendee utility and experience (without adding a direct cost to the Association's budget) and (2) further explore options for integrating the multiple databases and software systems used to produce the schedule of all events at the Annual Meeting.

Based on this experience, an App development vendor was contracted for both 2013 and 2014 to provide a more robust mobile App. Each App included the full pocket program (posted on the first day of the meeting), information about getting around the meeting site, maps and floor plans of the facilities, and hours and locations for various Annual Meeting services. The Apps have also served as the virtual *Convention Bulletin*, continuously updated by ASA meeting staff with program corrections and changes.

A subcommittee of the Task Force on Engaging Sociology solicited feedback about meeting Apps for the 2014 Annual Meeting. A summary of "wish list" items was included Jenkins' report to Council, along with notations about which were achievable for 2015 and which were targeted as future goals.

For 2015, Meeting Services expects to work with a new vendor to develop a truly mobile App that will be available this summer in expected locations (Apple store, GooglePlay). There was some discussion about the feasibility of getting feedback from the meeting attendee viewpoint in the early summer so that adjustments could be made before the meeting opens in August. Given the lead-time necessary to get everything in motion, and that fact that major outlets like Apple require Apps to be totally completed before they can be made available in its store, it is unlikely that anything other minor tweaks can be accomplished. Feedback and comments from users are always welcome though. However, the Task Force subcommittee will work with ASA staff to provide input from the perspective of attendees.

(2). Open Submission Session Organizers' Survey

The findings from the 2014 Survey of Session Organizers suggested that respondents did not have major dissatisfaction or undue difficulty with the session organizing process. However, the findings also suggest that it is important to regularly assess the submission system and organizational processes from the users' perspective. For example, at least 60 percent of regular and section session organizers reported not watching one or more of the online instructional videos for the organizing process. These findings indicate that ASA staff needs to develop new strategies for orienting session organizers to the online training videos and familiarizing organizers with other resources available to them.

Last year President Lareau expressed interest in having ASA make it possible for additional "reviewers" to access the online paper queues so that session organizers with an exceptionally heavily load of submissions could get some assistance from appropriate colleagues. The ASA customized All Academic submission system allows only one person—the session organizer—to have administrative rights over each queue in order to ensure that the person appointed by the

Program Committee is the person conducting the reviews and managing the paper flow. ASA staff worked with All Academic to make adjustments that allow a session organizer to appoint one additional person as a “reviewer,” but with *read-only* access to the queue. It is anticipated his will help some organizers who receive large numbers of papers do an initial read of the submissions without creating confusion by allowing someone other the person appointed by the Program Committee to enter the final decision into the official Annual Meeting Program.

There will be follow-up with session organizers for 2015 to see whether this new function was useful.

E. Clarification of Policy on When Children Can Be in the Exhibit Hall

There was some confusion at the last Annual Meeting and the August Council meeting about whether there are restrictions on the access of persons under age 16 to the Exhibit Hall during the Annual Meeting. The policies regarding access to the ASA Exhibit Hall are as follows:

When the Exhibit Hall is open to registered attendees at the Annual Meeting, there is no restriction on access by children accompanying the registered (and badged) attendee.

When the Exhibit Hall is under construction/installation prior to its initial opening, *no one under the age of 16* is permitted to enter the construction area for safety reasons. This restriction also pertains to the period after the final closing of the exhibit hall while it is being dismantled.

When the Exhibit Hall is closed (at the end of service hours each day), only credentialed ASA staff and exhibitors are permitted in the hall being managed by ASA-contracted security provider and the security personnel of the meeting facilities.

8. Status Committee Updates

A. Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology (CSWS)

At its August meeting, CSWS was informed about a new component in the NSF Advance faculty gender equity program, focused particularly on disciplinary societies. The Committee supported submission of an ASA proposal, and several committee members who had experience with Advance programs on their campuses offered suggestions of resources. ASA staff sociologists submitted the ASA proposal in October, with a letter of support on behalf of the Committee and provision for an advisory committee that would include members of CSWS. A decision from NSF is expected sometime in April.

B. Committee on the Status of GLBT Persons in the Discipline

This committee is likely to submit a request to Council to change the name of the committee to reflect more current usage and mirror the name of the LGBTQ Caucus.

9. Task Force Updates

A. Task Force on Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major, 3rd edition

Although the original proposal for this Task Force stated that it would have only 6-8 members, a recommendation was presented to seat all of the ASA members who volunteered as members of the Task Force. This recommendation was based on the intention to establish three subcommittees within the Task Force each of which will be charged with addressing one of the three task force focus areas: online courses and programs; employment outcomes; and pressures to establish a core. Because the Task Force's charge includes responding to pressures to establish a core set of learning outcomes for the sociology major, it may also be beneficial to have a large and diverse group of ASA members behind any Task Force recommendations in this area.

It was also recommended that Jeffrey Chin and Edward Kain be appointed as the permanent Co-Chairs for the Task Force. If approved by Council, the Task Force would have 22 members, plus the ASA staff liaison, resulting in three subcommittees with 7-8 members each.

MOTION: Council approves the proposed membership of the Task Force on Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major, Third Edition. Carried (no opposed).

B. Task Force on Sociology and Global Climate Change

In August 2012, the Publications Committee and ASA Council approved moving forward with plans to make the Task Force's edited volume an official ASA publication. In May of 2013 the ASA signed a contract with Oxford University Press to produce the volume. The peer-reviewed manuscript with thirteen chapters and more than 600 pages has been submitted to Oxford, and the editor (James Cook) is working to have it ready in time for the Annual Meeting in August 2015.

The publication showcases all new material, prepared by 39 contributors, related to what sociology has to say about human causes of climate change. There is potential for significant media impact when the book is released. Council expressed hearty congratulations to Riley Dunlap and the members of the task force on completion of this major project.

C. Task Force on Community College Sociology Faculty

The Task Force conducted and transcribed two focus group interviews to provide additional qualitative data to better understand the experiences of community college faculty in sociology and to help interpret results from the Task Force's survey of community college faculty teaching sociology. That survey includes 718 responses from faculty teaching at a random stratified sample of community colleges. Survey response rate was 41 percent.

Steven Sweet, Editor of *Teaching Sociology*, received approval for a special issue devoted to sociology instruction at the community college level. The Task Force has agreed to submit three articles for review for possible inclusion in the special issue. Writing teams have been

established among members of the Task Force for each article. This effort is especially important for this Task Force because many community college faculty do not have the time or opportunity to do research and publish peer-reviewed articles.

D. Task Force on Engaging Sociology (formerly Social Media)

The Website Redesign group of the Task Force on Engaging Sociology submitted a report to Council, asking that capital funds be allocated to support a full service website redesign project. For more details, see the Information Technology Report (item 10-D-1).

Council took a short break at 2:40 – 2:54pm.

Prior to the break, President England raised an Annual Meeting question about the scheduling of plenary sessions. By tradition, no other sessions or meetings are held during plenary sessions in order to showcase these important events. However, she noted, the program could accommodate many more sessions if some could be run concurrently with the daytime plenaries.

When Council reconvened, there was a brief discussion about this Annual Meeting program scheduling. Council policy is that this is the responsibility of the Program Committee. Some concerns were expressed about low attendance at sessions held in conflict with a major plenary session, and there was support for retaining the current plenary scheduling. Discussion ended with consensus to maintain the policy that program scheduling decisions are the domain of the Program Committee.

10. Executive Office

A. Overview of the Staff and Year

Hillsman reported that the total number of staff remains fairly constant. Two positions are currently vacant.

B. Reply from Cora Marrett

Appreciation and thanks from Dr. Cora Marrett were relayed to Council for the resolution passed at its last meeting. The resolution was made into an impressive plaque with a gold ASA seal and presented to Marrett at a meeting of the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) where she receiving many accolades from the larger scientific community.

C. Research on the Discipline and Profession Grants

There were no externally-funded projects completed during this reporting period.

(1). Update on NSF proposal "Creating a Digital Archive for Research on the Production of Scientific Knowledge" (ASA Editorial Office Files 1991-2010)

Hillsman announced that NSF had decided to fund this proposal, also familiarly known as "the boxes" grant, although the award announcement was not yet received. Noting that this has been a big issue for the past two years, President England expressed gratitude to everyone involved in preparing and funding the proposal.

There was a recommendation that the Executive Office create an advisory board of scholars with archiving expertise to assist on this project. Hillsman confirmed that there is room for input and that she has already talked to a number of the key figures. There is a distinction, however, between scholars who want data from the archive for analysis and those who have expertise in how to move 10 tons of paper into a digital archive.

In response to a question about how much money had been contributed by ASA members toward saving the editorial office materials, Hillsman indicated that \$26,000 had been received to date.

(2). Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline (FAD) Renewal

The grant proposal submitted to the National Science Foundation (NSF) was for level funding of FAD awards for three years at \$184,800. As part of the renewal, ASA proposed increasing the amount of each award from a maximum of \$7,000 to \$8,000, the first time in many years that the award amount has been increased. On January 22, ASA received notice from NSF that the 2015-2018 cycle of FAD funding will be recommended for approval by the Sociology Program, with no requested modifications.

D. Information Technology Report

(1). Overhaul and Redesign of the ASA Website

At its meeting in January, the EOB Committee reviewed the report from the Website Redesign Group of the Task Force on Engaging Sociology and heard from ASA Governance and Information Systems Director Michael Murphy. The updating of the ASA homepage and meeting pages will be in place shortly, but those are temporary fixes pending a decision about the entire website. After considerable discussion, EOB voted to support a complete overhaul of the ASA website in the capital budget plan for 2015.

The website is still a major avenue of communication with members, but it is becoming clear that the Association should expect to do significant update every few years to keep pace with technology changes and member expectations. The current content management system does not permit embedding a taxonomy to govern searches, and it is not mobile-friendly, both of which are now necessary elements for presenting information in a useful way.

The projected timeframe is to have the new website up and running within a year. Murphy confirmed that parameters for a Request for Proposals (RFP) were developed with the assistance of the website redesign group. After EOB's decision in late January to allocate capital

funding for this project in 2015, the final RFP was sent out to 19 companies. The next step will be to winnow responses down to the top five or six companies and ask for full proposals and face-to-face interviews.

E. Update on 2015 SCOTUS amicus brief on Gay Marriage

Parties to the cases on appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States asked ASA to refile its original *amicus curiae* brief appropriately recrafted for the issues upon which the court will be ruling in 2015. After approval from ASA Secretary Romero with the agreement of President England and President-elect Milkman, Executive Officer Hillsman moved forward with Wendy Diane Manning and the lawyers at Cleary Gottlieb to prepare a second ASA amicus brief to SCOTUS.

There is no intent to change any of the substantive content of the brief with regard to the social science on the matter of harm to children or to include research to address any other issue. Council will have the opportunity to review the penultimate draft of the amicus brief before it is submitted to the Supreme Court on March 6, 2015.

F. 2014 Business Meeting Resolution on Public Policy

(1). Perlstadt Resolution

The resolution proposed by ASA member Harry Perlstadt was considered at the Council meeting on August 20, 2014. (Please see the minutes for that meeting for a complete text of the resolution.) Council asked the Executive Office to reach out to Perlstadt to clarify the primary purpose(s) behind the resolution and determine the feasibility of folding that into the work of the current Task Force on Engaging Sociology (TFES).

Hillsman reported that the proposed merger of the Perlstadt resolution and TFES charge was not viewed as a compatible endeavor. The Perlstadt resolution would like to have *greater member input* in what policy issues the Association addresses and *more member engagement* in the Association activities to advance sociologists' interests in those policy issues, including the development of policy statements.

Under the ASA Bylaws, only Council may speak on behalf of the Association, that is, make a public policy statement on behalf of the membership. Council has adopted guidelines for this that has been followed by all Councils since the early 2000s.

Also pertinent is the fact that, as a 501 (c) 3 organization under the U.S. Tax Code, ASA must severely restrict its lobbying activity; it may never take a position in support of a political candidate, and it must only rarely take a position with regard to a specific piece of legislation. ASA is a currently a member of three organizations that mostly undertake to "educate" policy makers in the federal government (legislative, executive and, on occasion, judicial). These three organizations, however, have registered lobbyists on staff and undertake direct lobbying with regard to specific bills before Congress that are relevant to ASA.

What the ASA does not have are mechanisms for soliciting the broad membership's input in a regularized way on what policy issues the association might/should take a position; debating policy issues within the broad membership; and assisting the broad membership develop methods for getting their research into local, state and federal policy discussions.

Council members pointed out that the kinds of public policy work that sociologists do is very wide, making it difficult to see what the function of a "public policy committee" would be. A different angle might be to compile lists of members who have expertise in various areas for reference by a friendly administration. It could also be useful to think about how to be more present in policy conversations. It is sometimes the case that sociologists get labelled wrongly by the media. For example, Ruth Milkman was on the PBS NewsHour once and was labelled an economist, even though she had given them a card that identified her as a sociologist.

President England closed discussion by summarizing that there were a number of different ideas about what ASA should be doing regarding how the association could expand the availability of relevant sociological scholarship to those making or influencing public policy . Council members were invited to approach the President or Executive Officer about things to put on future agenda.

(2). Council Policy-making Guidelines (2001)

Available for reference.

11. Executive Office Programs

A. Academic and Professional Affairs Program (APAP)

Two new benefits offered by the ASA Department Affiliates (DA) Program are helping halt the decline in numbers of Affiliate departments and bringing the ASA into direct contact with more than 1,800 new graduate and undergraduate students.

The first benefit provides a free one-year ASA membership to 1st-year graduate students. As of January 2, 2015, DA departments had submitted the names and email addresses of 256 graduate students to receive this benefit. Ninety four of these students have taken the necessary follow up step of activating the free membership.

The second benefit sends a new quarterly newsletter, *The Independent Variable: The ASA Undergraduate Student Newsletter*, to undergraduate students in DA departments

B. Minority Affairs Program (MAP)

MAP Director Jean Shin noted that the MFP stipend for 2014-2015 remained at \$18,000 to match the benchmark of departmental support levels. The annual total cost per Fellow is approximately \$20,000, including travel and other professional development.

C. Student Programs

No discussion.

D. High School Sociology Planning Program (HSSPP)

Since April 2014, one major activity for ASA's HSSPP and its Advisory Panel has been to conceptualize, and begin to draft, a set of standards for high school sociology courses. The impetus behind this is that states are developing their own sociology standards because the discipline of sociology has set no standards for high school sociology. This means that non-sociologists are determining what should be included in high school sociology courses.

The work done by ASA in developing the C3 Framework's appendix for the social sciences in 2013 provides a base of content on which to organize and frame potential high school standards. The group of Advisory Panel members and Planning Program staff has created four subgroups of three members each to work on different sections of the standards document and topic areas. These items will be tested in several high school sociology courses this year, with the goal being to bring the standards to Council for approval in August.

E. Research on the Discipline and Profession

Research Director John Curtis affirmed the willingness of the ASA Research Department to provide support for Council decision-making by doing research on the ASA membership.

F. Public Affairs and Public Information (PAPI)

Hillsman referred Council members to the report in the agenda book and highlighted the fact that PAPI staff get over 500 requests for assistance from the media. The number of Twitter followers is close to 15,000.

(1). COSSA Analysis of Final FY 2015 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and Its Implications for Social and Behavioral Science

No report was given.

Adjournment

As the Council meeting concluded, Executive Officer Hillsman invited members to a reception at 6:00pm to join several guests and past officers in extending congratulations to Janet Astner who has been with association for 40 years.

President England led a round of applause for ASA staff and adjourned the second meeting of the 2014-2015 ASA Council at 4:25pm on Saturday, February 7, 2015.