**American Forensics Association Business Meeting**

**Wednesday, November 9, 2016, 4:00 – 7:00 pm**

**Lambada B,**

**Philadelphia, PA**

Meeting called to order at 4:01 PM p.m. by Gordon Stables.

Gordon Stables: Thanks for your patience. They updated the rooms but not our documents. It is my fault and I apologize. There are some relatively important items. Some of the items that we will go through, and how best to continue the work in future years. If you have a report, please make sure we get to it.

Wade Hescht: Educational Development and Practices Committee: Kenneth and I have nothing to report; something will come our way. There may be a proposal from the NIET.

GS: We will skip the Finance Report for a second. Professional Development and Support Committee

David Gaer: We met this morning; about meeting times. We can also do it virtually. Me and Randy are the only ones. We are going to rewrite the criteria, for example, there is a distinguished service award that we might have a vita included –we are not changing rules, just a clarification. We will be giving our distinction to someone who has served the AFA; the person we are recognizing has been active in the organization over 30 years, NIET district chair, Southern representative, a director, has hosted three NIETS 10 years apart. She is invaluable to the NIET committee, but the most important thing, she ranks a 5 on Rate My Professor.com – I present the distinction to Dr. Kelly Roberts from the University of Florida.

GS: Excellent –well deserved. Let’s switch over to the next report.

Publication Committee.

Randy Cox: We met with T&F and there is lots of exciting work happening.

Catherine Langford: Nice to meet you all. I have taken over for Harry in March. We are trying to keep things going as we are switching over. There are two submissions as the new system has started. We are completely in the new system. We have report there are aa few kinks. *Argumentation & Advocacy* is not on the communication journal list; our editorial board is not showing up. A button has not been clicked. We do have an estimate [of submissions] – it is harder with older system to track – about 51 manuscripts; 44 without determination, 3 accepted, 10 rejected. From the old system, we are not going to keep continuing it. We are holding off until Jan 1st, the first issue is full, second issue from Penn State folks, we have three articles for a third journal. We are ready to go on T&F side, but not ready until Dec. 1st. It takes some time to get my feet under me. T&F has been helpful, and it has been helpful to be an editor. There is an overwhelmingly supportive group and they have been helpful with getting back to me. That is the state of the journal.

GS: You modestly described the transition – old and new cycles are different – we had to finish one and begin another. As the year turns 2017, the T&F will not only have it, they will tell libraries how to procure it and create DOIs numbers. I will also reinforce and be willing to serve if asked but also we will need ad hoc reviewers. We will likely see more submissions. If you know the thought process, especially junior faculty, there is a need to not rely on the same faculty. There is room to learn the process as we spread the work and T&F is critical, and it is good for visibility. We are working on the back order of the digital archive. We may still need to find a few – we’ll poke and pry. I might contact you looking for missing journals. Thank you for the help. This has been a multi-year process. Let’s talk about the financial committee.

Ben Voth: I have a handout, and it includes the financial statement for the past year and the proposal for next year. Thank you to the committee for the meetings – Dale Herbock is the new chair. You’ll also notice that I am not Jim Pratt. I will try to explain these great documents. He [Jim] had some health issues and could not be here.

AFA financial statement [See the details of financial track for past year]

This is a great skill [to go by line-by-line]. A difficult financial year for the AFA, primarily because of transition to T&F. Setup is expensive on lines 142-151 = you will see some zeroed out balances. As a body, we need to think about it. We are stable on membership but we need to boost membership and lifetime membership funds. [The journal] is now in with T&F. We need to reach out to lifetime membership; we need more fees to raise funds. Sarah Partlow Lefeve is working on this. Students are only $20 – we need to ask what are we doing as coaches to build the institutional memberships so the organization can improve. This is the most difficult year to look at. Expenses we weren’t anticipating for NCA. We do face issues.

Do we need to vote on it?

We should talk through some things first. Financial committee will meet for a second session by mid-February to revisit pending the full transition and the resolution of this conference. Let’s have a discussion. Dale, do want to talk about the lifetime membership and messaging?

DH: We had to dip into the lifetime reserve. So now it is zero and we still have 180 lifetime members. One benefit to T&F, we will no longer need to pay for journals, but we need to still fund the organization. I will write a letter to explain and rebuild the reserves. We got an incredible deal. Back then, we got 7% interest, now we got 1%. Consider making a gift to build up a reserve and generate some income for lifetime members.

GS: The only other item is the journal transition, basically we made a $8,000 spending difference and this year we spent $4,000 more. Over a long-term we will not have the expense, but we are bleeding $4,000 but next year there won’t be this cost. This year we needed to spend $8,000 to get there. I want to clarify that this includes the proposed budget. This is a multiyear thing.

LS: Do we have a sense of the [expected] lifetime memberships or has it all evaded?

GS: Dale can answer better. My expectations are that there were larger clusters of that, we want 3 new lifetime members. Some of us go back 30 or 40 years . . . we need to get the lifetime membership list and weed through it and prune down. Lifetime members are still active, but we need to approach it differently We need to replenish the fund and ask them to replenish the fund.

GS: Jim expresses his regret. He is in a great place with support and care and will be here in the future.

BV: Do we need a vote or do we move to the proposal vote?

Move to discussion.

The proposed budget – we are at a zero budget. Jim prepared a cautious budget. We should accept the stipulation to revisit. He proposes a bare-boned budget with just essentials. This committee is $2500 indebted to each organization for respective tournaments. On lines 34-35, we would assert $2,500 – it will reduce our unbudgeted reserve of $5,000. It is what we would strategically allocate. Gordon offered not to spend the Presidential stipend. We can do small things creatively to make it work, but because of the difficulty, we recommend this budget with some online changes and understand that, at the February 15th meeting, we will revisit T&F and determine if things are working out. We want to wait and see before we commit to a budget. Accept and understand that we will meet again. We are open to questions, concerns, or other suggestions.

Heidi Hamilton: Question about the conference, nothing is being put toward it in the proceedings, because it has not come out yet . . . but there was also nothing in Jim’s email about it.

DH: The [portion of the] budget happens every other year.

Mike Janas: We don't publish it; NCA does it.

GS: There was aa question about prior publication costs -

HH: Didn’t know why royalties at 50%?

DH: Our year is June – June, but the budget is Jan – Dec. so we only get half of the revenue the first year.

Question: So for the income line – we won’t see $15,000 this year? Because of the transition?

DH: Right, because they sell subscriptions; if they hit the magic number [of subscriptions], we get the extra money. We get less EBSCO revenue. We are spending between 4 and 5,000 each year. They give us a stipend and make a profit up until the cap. It has to do with the transition.

Question: Does the stipend never kick in this year?

DH: It goes to the editor; so they collect the money and the journal editor can spend it as they see fit. If we lost the money, in the past, we lost the money. Going forward, T&F publish and have the cost. Subscribers now have a relationship with T&F. The good news for us is that because we were losing membership, it WAS digging us deeper into the hole. Going forward, the journal doesn’t bring us down; T&F takes the risk, not us.

BV: A motion to accept the budget from before

All in favor?

I.

All opposed? [None - unanimous vote]

BV: As we transition, there was a journal discussion of what is good about being an AFA member. Each board needs to think about it. To treat it as an honorary. We need to think about our brand and value. We need to talk creatively and Dale is working on that. To think about moving forward and improve the brand collectively. Are there any other questions? Back to Gordon.

Peter Pober [NIET Committee Report]: Under Kellie Roberts, it is noteworthy and masochistic [that she would host so many times]. We are happy she got distinguished service award. We had 1,445 entries. The University of Texas, Austin won the Team Sweepstakes Award for the second consecutive year.

2018 –

2019 –

2020 Nebraska carney – booked through 2020 and I know there is a 2021 bid in the pipeline; to announce to students that won’t be here that we are booked beyond as your tenure a s competieve student.

Kelly Jo Rippen – new coach Award – Univ. Nebraska, excited, etc. deeply appreciative for the 2500 back.

GS: Adrienne, any updates?

Adrienne Bovero: This year’s host is Kansas and [the NDT is in Wichita next year; we have two years but we not *that* ambitious [as the NIET].

GS: I think we skipped over the Research Committee.

HH: Jim [Dimock] is chair but he is at a pre-conference. The Rohrer Award for this year was award to an article from Argument & Adovocay’s journal – this year’s award goes to individuals from

[ask Heidi] McGaugh, Catherine Palchewzski and Randy Lake – 3 case studies and used them to unpack the spaces

The Larry Schnoor Award goes to Katie Marie Brunor – she is at Jim’s institution so he exited out of the decision process.

She looked at credibility and how it is perceived in Public speaking classes – how students form perceptions of what it means to be credible. (perceptions at AFA nationals)

For this year’s Top Dissertation or Thesis Award – we received 1 submission so we declined to give the award. We wanted to assure the integrity of the award. We encourage your nominations.

GS: Is anyone here from the NPDA business meeting?

I met with Dave and Justin Eckstein, we talked about making sure that the [AFA] organization will have a diverse contingency. We want to start making potential nominations beyond traditional speech and debate folks. There are a number of active groups, but with new/different formats [of debate] that are not comprised within this organization – specifically on the debate side. We need more intercollegiate groups in different formats. NEIT allows for some diversity, but we need to look at diversity on the debate community at large.

A second pathway [to diverse development and added practical/value assistance of the organization] is to look for senior folks that operate at your institution [and are willing to help]. The organization provides a member directory and institutional support for people. But often, at institutions, there is a politicization around certain people/events and the organization should be preconfigured to provide support. For example, I can think of an example involving a former graduate student who was working to plan a public, political debate. The President of the University asked why an incumbent Republican was slighted when he had actually been asked multiple times and declined. We might ask people to lend gravity and provide documents to [develop] ethical and professional guidelines. As a heads up, you may be asked to serve.

Within that, I want to provide the direct report of my report:

I really think we should talk about the value of the association. There has been a great deal of familiarity for the organization. The journal was one recommendation for change – it is no longer sustainable [as we currently run it]. We are at our tipping point and it is not sustainable. As you have other ideas or suggestion, now that we are better able to look at analytics, I encourage you to consider other parts of the field and community [where we can make a difference]. Ways we can use the value of the organization, more than just the journal.

The second part is finances concerning the conference. When we had it last year, we won for fighting the NCA monster. I want to thank you for staying here, and for working on creative and solutions in the schedule for programming today. This independent process is not sustainable. It is not NCA lack of support and affiliate agreement. NCA does not care; as long as we encourage you to participate, I can happily report the legal counsel was comfortable that we met and we did not exceed statutory expectations. NCA is not upset about lost hotel nights. Star Muir was elected. [We have not crossed a threshold] and have historically-grounded points for the explanation. At the same time, we are self-aware of the model for spending, etc. and have had to give up other concerted issues like inclusion in the program. The Wednesday events were not included. We need to consider: how can we plan on the same calendar that allows for inclusion and is responsible for the organization’s finances. There are ways to minimize the liability that stops the totality of clause, but I can't say that it won't be negative. My current plan is to negotiate with NCA up until when the conference planning takes place. If they are willing to do a program that allows for AFA, at minimal, it will drive our decision. I'll be candid – we might move off the Wednesday discussion. We will likely need to have a Thursday afternoon business meeting and we may need to separately negotiate the reception entirely (if we want the thing with food). We cannot pay for individual meeting room spaces. If groups want to meet, we will honor the in-person meetings and it will come from the allocation of panel submissions. There will need to be greater limits placed on the acceptance of academic work. NCA could listen to ad hoc requests. There is a perverse incentive to oversubscribe our submission to a more modest number. The goal is a similar experience. We would not be indicated by the executive council meeting. That is a fair amount of it. What is the preference for you for future conferences? You can be unreasonable on some issues, but it must allow us to be able to make some compromises.

BV: I always thought it extends the conference. It is odd that we are here for Wednesday 10:00 am meetings and some need to stay through a Saturday afternoon panel. If we tightened up the schedule, it would be better.

GS: Great observation – once you go into the matrix scheduling. Thursday afternoon is important for a sense of community. We don’t gain control after one we input it [the panel requests] but we can make requests. The NIET is very active [during their meeting], but [at NCA’s mercy], I can’t guarantee that it is scheduled prior to our business meeting. They may not be scheduled with time to meet [to report].

Comment: We could think about other formats - having it [a meeting] over Skype and just one larger meting . . .

GS: Absolutely; there are a number of folks that cannot attend the conference but they might be still best for reviewing the scholarly work [submitted for awards]. Some committees are supportive and various committees could tell us if the [individual committee] meetings are essential, or then they could also tell us if they *don’t* need time.

We will need to check on requirements of scheduling for NCA. The part regarding the committees needs, I will communicate with the committees and the membership. We will schedule a business meeting and the reception but we might want to consider looking for places to fulfill the high occupancy in our meeting attendance and to check with programs where this is an important experience and to find paths to maximize their participation.

My only other note is to remind you of the [NCA] Argumentation Conference. The Alta cycle is coming up. Submissions are due on February 24th and the conference is July 23rd of 2017. The directions are available for submission. The theme is “networking argument” and it is specifically broad. Are there any other items of new business?

I think the journal changes are awesome. The last issue is the website update: we want to update it and be proud of it, and there is a plan to do that.

GS: Style and template not all the changes. We are better about adding new content. The only step left is attaining the fiscal comfort to do an upgrade. It is not case that we need a site that is highly specialized; even a basic website can do it. You are right that it is long overdue. It will happen if I can devote the resources to it.

Question: What is the estimated cost, the amount, for the website?

GS: It is based on the web master’s cost. We do not know yet what it will cost to re-develop it. We want to receive an estimate without a commitment. The other models, the organization has a lot of history; we need to make the awkward decision to pay a company because it is more bang for the buck.

BV: I forgot to mention that last year there was a minor rehab [to the website], it wasn’t dramatic. A little more expense was paid to someone we know. It is smart to go to a third-party vendor. We should go to an email system and drop paper. But that is where the expense went.

GS: We need to get an answer on what that will be. Some of it will move off from the journal. Last thing I want to do is undermine the journal with a bad website . . .

Things are linking to a dead link and directory – we constructed an old list; we still need to know who to go to get that node fixed.

We actually decentralized the node. In the in-term, we can cut and paste and make the formatting. We will pursue it for a redesign. Any other questions or comments?

Thank you for your loyalty and support. Reception is back in here. We can adjourn.

5:06 pm.