President Bill Ivey called the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society Executive Board to order on October 22, 2006, at 8:30 am in the Crystal Room on the 2nd floor of the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee. Members present: Bill Ellis, Diane Goldstein, Bill Ivey, Alan Jabbour, Michael Owen Jones, Dorry Noyes, Sandy Rikoon, Dan Sheehy, Elaine Thatcher, Kay Turner, and Steve Zeitlin. Executive Director Timothy Lloyd and Associate Director Brent Björkman were also present. As per the Executive Board directive of October 17, 1991, this meeting was recorded on audiotape.

Bill Ivey opened the meeting by bidding farewell to the four departing members of the Board, and Tim Lloyd presented parting gifts from the Board to Michael Owen Jones, Alan Jabbour, Dorry Noyes, and Steve Zeitlin.

Tim Lloyd began by reporting on the Society’s financial performance for the fiscal year that ended on August 31, 2006, which exceeded our overall expectations and did so especially strongly in several areas, including the performance of the Society’s investments and our royalty revenue from electronic access to the contents of the Journal of American Folklore. He stressed that these two items are key to AFS’s current financial health.

Lloyd then distributed the most recent version of the Board’s long-range planning document, and the rest of the meeting was occupied with discussion of the goals and objectives in that document.

Bill Ellis stated that it is his belief that the AFS membership is political in nature, and that many members think that the board should be more involved in these matters. People are beginning to ask the Board, and candidates for AFS leadership positions, these types of questions more often.

Goldstein voiced concern about the discussion of public policy in the fact that UNESCO and WIPO have relatively elitist notions of public policy and work at the transnational or global levels, while AFS members are engaged in many dimensions of public policy and at many scales. Goldstein stated that we should undertake a survey of our members and find out how they are involved in public policy work in all areas on endeavor and at all levels, from the local to the global. A survey will help us write about folklore and public policy, and the strengths our members can bring to the discussion.

Sandy Rikoon would like to see this project move quickly, perhaps even having some type of feedback by AFS’ spring meeting in Columbus. Steve Zeitlin agreed and noted that our current committee is WIPO-slanted. Kay Turner added that this feeds into our previous idea of the creation of policy-focused white papers (rather than an overall political statement). Rikoon mentioned that we need to share responsibility for this work with the membership. Bill Ivey stated that folklore can be at the forefront of the cultural dimensions of all policy, not just with cultural policy, but that we need to become much better at “packaging” the insights of our field for the policy-making world.
Diane Goldstein suggested that we might create a field school teaching folklore and public policy work. At the Wednesday pre-conference symposium, Goldstein saw two kinds of conversations taking place. One conversation was the idea of taking what we do as folklorists and expanding it to a more general application; the second focused on the strategy of elaborates further on the strength of folklore in that the more specialized you are the more in demand you become.

Also on the subject of long range planning, Bill Ellis also mentioned, to general agreement, that the action steps in our planning document need to have fixed dates for achievement.

Kay Turner sees the “taking care of our own” goal step as one that needs to be expanded and needs to be opened up for discussion (e.g. the issue of AFS-brokered health insurance for uninsured and underinsured members). She also stated the importance of including younger members (students) in these discussions. Goldstein stressed that it is important to look at the issue of health insurance, and get back with out membership on the matter, even if we cannot offer such insurance, even if it can’t be done. Elaine Thatcher cited two organizations that are attending to this matter: the Writer’s Guild and the Association of Independent Scholars.

On this topic of greater open communication, Noyes voiced the importance of having a younger member of AFS being the individual who reports back to the youth (or younger student members). Regarding “growing” our younger members, Goldstein advocated that we increase the recognition for the various awards we give our and make these honors more visible to AFS’s younger members.

**Bill Ivey moved that the meeting be adjourned. Dorry Noyes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Lloyd
Executive Director

Approved by the American Folklore Society Executive Board

Bill Ivey
President