

American Folklore Society, Executive Board Minutes
New Series, no. 62
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President Bill Ivey called the annual meeting of the Executive Board to order on April 20, 2007, at 9:30 am in the third floor seminar room of the Mershon Center on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio. Members present: Bill Ellis, Diane Goldstein, Bill Ivey, Elaine Lawless, Lucy Long, Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Sandy Rikoon, Guha Shankar, Dan Sheehy, Elaine Thatcher, Kay Turner, and Patricia Turner. 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.

Ivey welcomed the members of the Board, especially the new members, and called for review of the minutes of the October 2006 meeting. **Diane Goldstein moved that the minutes of the October 2006 meeting be accepted as presented. Sandy Rikoon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Ivey then made his President's report, an overview of his goals for and ideas about advancing the role of folklore in the academy.

Executive Director Tim Lloyd then gave a fiscal and operational report on the Society. Thus far in the year, AFS is doing well financially; both membership and subscription revenue are higher than we had projected. Royalties from online use of *Journal of American Folklore* materials through JSTOR and Project MUSE are up from last year. Thus far this year, our investment income exceeds our goals. Lloyd then gave an overview of three fiscal areas: online royalties, investment income, and management fees for special projects. Lloyd also presented the current planned giving and endowment plan and an overview of planning for the Québec annual meeting, the theme for which will be "The Politics and Practices of Intangible Cultural Heritage."

Lloyd then presented the plan for the H-Folk international listserv for folklore scholarship. Our colleagues at the University of Tartu in Estonia will coordinate and manage the H-Folk site. We hope to have this site up and running by the meeting in Québec. Lloyd added that *Western Folklore*, the *Journal for Folklore Research* and *Folklore* (UK) are now part of the JSTOR on-line journal service available to members of AFS for an additional \$15 per year.

Lloyd then announced that he had hired Maria Teresa Agozzino, now of the University of California at Berkeley, to replace AFS associate director Brent Björkman when he leaves for the directorship of the Vermont Folklife Center. Agozzino and Björkman will spend June working together in the AFS office.

The meeting paused from 11:15 am until 11:30 am.

Bill Ivey then presented the recommendation of the review committee (which consisted of himself and Patricia Turner) that Elaine Lawless of the University of Missouri receive the 2007 AFS Kenneth Goldstein Award for Lifetime Academic Leadership. His motion that this recommendation be approved was seconded by Patricia Turner, and passed unanimously, with one member (Elaine Lawless) abstaining.

Elaine Thatcher then reported on the Nominating Committee's work to assemble a slate for the 2007 election. Ivey commented that the committee worked hard last year to fill its slate with underrepresented members of the Society. Board members commented on that The Gerald Davis Travel Stipend has helped, but that we need to work on making this a process of continued involvement. Board members also suggested that linking stipend recipients with a board member in some form of mentorship might foster more and better involvement.

The meeting broke for lunch at 12:05 pm, and resumed at 1:05 pm, when the Board met in executive session to discuss the performance of the Executive Director. This session was not recorded on audiotape.

At 1:30 Lloyd and Björkman returned to the meeting and Lloyd began his summarization of work undertaken so far toward the accomplishment of the long-range plan and goals the Board developed in 2006. He gave an overview of the May 2006 joint meeting of folklore, ethnomusicology, and oral history at Vanderbilt University and the plans that came out of it. AFS will use these findings as a platform for a future approach to the Mellon Foundation. At a preliminary meeting with Mellon Foundation program officers in January 2007, the Foundation's program staff suggested that they might fund a meeting or series of meetings to discuss the core scholarly problems in folklore and what forms of scholarly communication or resources would be most beneficial to deal with those problems.

Ivey stated that NEA chairman Dana Gioia, during a recent meeting in Washington, said he would cooperate and would give some money to the field. NEH chairman Bruce Cole invited us to come back and visit with program directors in NEH. Cole also thought that AFS should consider a challenge grant to the NEH. Ivey commented that we are we need to be as strategic as possible as we move work ahead. We often assume the others in the room understand folklore. We should define a number of things folklorists have already done, both inside and outside the field that have influenced society. We need to be able to articulate a compelling case for our field before we move on the specific activities.

The meeting paused at 4:35 pm, to be continued the next day. President Bill Ivey resumed the meeting on April 21, 2007, at 9:30 am in the third floor seminar room of the Mershon Center on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio. Members present: Bill Ellis, Diane Goldstein, Bill Ivey, Elaine Lawless, Lucy Long, Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Sandy Rikoon, Guha Shankar, Dan Sheehy, Elaine Thatcher, Kay Turner, and Patricia Turner. Director Timothy Lloyd and Associate Director Brent Björkman were also present.

Tim Lloyd and Board member Sandy Rikoon led a discussion of Rikoon's proposed procedure for AFS members to follow when proposing that the Board take a stand or issue a statement on an issue of public policy.

After this discussion, Dan Sheehy moved that the statement of procedure be approved and communicated to the membership. Bill Ellis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Rikoon explained the new survey of our members' public policy involvements that he and Diane Goldstein had designed and which was about to be distributed to the membership. This survey will give us baseline data on the ways folklorists have recently been involved in public policy work and how they would like to be involved in the future.

The Board was in agreement with the position that AFS needs to widen its own active policy involvement beyond WIPO. Our work there over the past five years has given us an entrée into thinking about folklore and intellectual property from a policy perspective, and into actual participation in a policy-making body. Now we are at a place where we must ask what our next steps should be, especially in light of our scarce resources.

The meeting paused from 11:00 am until 11:22 am.

Following the break, Lloyd, Ivey and the board asked Ohio State University folklore PhD student Sheila Bock, convener of the AFS student section, to talk to the board on the subject of students' most pressing professional development needs. AFS has created a working group of students, to be led by Bock, to discuss these needs, and she discussed her plans for this working group, which will meet in the fall of 2007 and the winter of 2008, and will issue its recommendations to the Board before its April 2008 meeting.

The meeting paused at 12:15 pm for lunch and resumed at 1:32 pm.

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Following the break, Tim Lloyd presented the highlights of his budget proposal for FY 2008, which begins on September 1, 2007. AFS is on good financial footing: royalties and subscriptions continue to increase and new dues rates will go into effect in September. Lloyd informed the Board that the *Journal of American Folklore* editors have requested an increase in their editorial office stipend from \$3,500 (where it has been for over many years) to \$5,600, which he recommends the Board approve. He is also proposing an increase in the contract fee we pay our web manager Jeff Borisch from \$150 to \$200 per month. Lloyd also noted that his budget proposal included the authority to use up to \$25,000 in FY 2008 to support the costs of the working groups discussed earlier.

After discussion, Dan Sheehy moved that the budget for FY 2008 be approved as proposed. Elaine Thatcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Under the heading of old business, Diane Goldstein raised the issue of establishing greater institutional strength and permanence in the field. Elaine Lawless added that there might be a way for the Society to identify programs that are doing well and to acknowledge to the leadership of their universities their overall academic importance to their home institution and to the field; this is an easy form of public relations that we could implement soon. Pat Turner added that the more proactive that we can be while programs are healthy, the better. Ivey suggested this effort could be incorporated into a twofold effort: first benchmark the healthy programs by creating a general a list of attributes of health, and then send out letters of accomplishment and praise to the institution. Lloyd responded that over the next year he would discuss these ideas, including a benchmarking project, with the heads of the graduate programs in folklore.

Under the heading of new business, Elaine Thatcher raised the issue that many important folklore books, including textbooks, have gone or are going out of print. AFS might pick up the reprint rights for those publications, as a possible revenue stream and as a service to the field. We might query the membership about this.

Guha Shankar presented the idea of creating a folklore-based Wiki hosted on the AFS website. He and Ann Hoog from the American Folklife Center staff are talking with Brent Björkman and Jeff Borisch from AFS about the content and logistical issues surrounding the creation and delivery of such a resource.

Following this discussion, Bill Ivey moved that the meeting be adjourned. Bill Ellis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Lloyd
Executive Director

Date

Approved by the American Folklore Society Executive Board:

Bill Ivey
President

Date