ATHE Governing Council Meeting
Wednesday, July 23, 2014
1:00-3:00 PM – Sonoran Room
Fairmont Scottsdale Princess Hotel, Scottsdale, AZ

Agenda

I. Welcome and Call to Order
Henry Bial brought the meeting to order at 1:15 PM MST.
Attendance: Henry Bial, President; Patricia Ybarra, President-Elect; Bill Doan, Immediate Past President; Nina LeNoir, Treasurer; Scott Shattuck, Treasurer-Elect; Terry Brino-Dean, Secretary; Patricia Herrera, Secretary-Elect; Sonja Kuftinec, VP for 2014 Conference; Lionel Walsh, VP for 2015 Conference; Kelly Howe, VP-Elect for 2016 Conference; David Kaye, VP for Membership & Marketing; Chase Bringardner, VP-Elect for Membership & Marketing; Jim Peck, VP for Professional Development; Dani Snyder-Young, VP for Awards; Bob Schanke, VP for Research and Publications; Soyica Colbert, VP-Elect for Research and Publications; Kathryn Ervin, VP for Advocacy; Members-at-Large: Barbara Parisi, Operations; Trish Gibson Ralph, Finance; Alicia Tafoya, FGRs; Chase Waites, Outreach; Nancy Erickson, Executive Director; Shaun Franklin-Sewell, Communications Manager; D.J. Hopkins, Editor, Theatre Topics; Joanne Tompkins, Co-Editor, Theatre Journal.

II. Introductions
Individual introductions. Henry clarified that only current/outgoing GC members can vote. Incoming members can participate fully in all discussions.

III. Consent Agenda
A. Approval of the minutes of the Governing Council Go-To-Meeting, June 16, 2014.
B. Approval of the minutes of Governing Council actions from January through July 2014.
Hearing no objections, the Consent Agenda was accepted.

IV. Action Items
A. Motion to revise the description of the Oscar Brockett Outstanding Teacher of Theatre in Higher Education Award to read as follows (new/changed text in bold):
The Oscar Brockett Outstanding Teacher of Theatre in Higher Education award honors a college-level faculty member whose superiority as a teacher of theatre is recognized by students and colleagues, who has provided inspiration through instruction in theatre to students and teachers of theatre, who has promulgated and practiced high standards of teaching and theatre, and who has created strong and effective interpersonal communication in studios, shops, rehearsal halls, and/or classrooms through advising, mentoring and all aspects of the student/teacher relationship. The awardee need not be a current faculty member.
Moved by Bill Doan. Seconded by Dani Snyder-Young.
Rationale: The GC recently revised this description in an attempt to clarify the question of whether retired or emeritus faculty are eligible for the award. In so clarifying, the GC indicated that retired or emeritus faculty are NOT eligible, which contradicts our actual past practice. This further revision would clarify that retired or emeritus faculty ARE eligible for the Brockett Award.

Dani spoke to the motion: This changes the language back to what it used to be because when we voted to change it, the committee had not yet had consensus on final language. It will go back to the committee and then they will finalize the changes and it will come back to the GC for a vote.

No discussion.

Approved unanimously.

B. Motion to make the policy below on conference site selection available to the membership not more than 30 days after the adoption of this resolution for a period of public comment of at least 30 days.

Moved by Bob Schanke. Seconded by Lionel Walsh.

Rationale: In response to member concerns about recent choices of conference site, the GC charged an ad hoc Committee on Conferences with developing a policy to guide the Association in selecting future conference sites. The GC considered and rejected an earlier draft at our previous meeting. This draft represents an attempt by the Committee on Conferences to address the GC's concerns. It is expected that following the public comment period, the Committee on Conferences may be asked to make additional revisions to the policy prior to submitting it for GC approval.

Draft Policy:

Conference Site Policy

Recognizing that choosing the site of the ATHE (Association for Theatre in Higher Education) Annual Conference is a potentially contentious issue and a frequently misunderstood process, ATHE has decided to set out a selection policy that outlines the necessities and considerations the organization's leadership attends to when making this important decision on behalf of the membership.

ATHE typically holds its Annual Conference from Thursday to Sunday in late July or early August. The meeting currently attracts approximately 800-1200 attendees who travel from across the United States and the world; a significant portion are graduate students. Pre- and Post- Conferences hosted by ATHE's committees and focus groups regularly occur on the Wednesday before or final Sunday after the general conference meeting days.

After the selection of a conference site, ATHE's membership elects a Vice President of Conference to organize the Annual Conference and serve on the Governing Council. The VP assembles a conference committee reflective of the diversity of ATHE's membership; the following year's VP joins the committee to gain experience and create continuity. Following the Governing Council's approval of the committee selection, the VP and her/his committee generate a conference theme and subsequent
programming that engages the conference location and addresses the needs and desires of the organization's membership. While ATHE cannot predict the political realities of any given conference location two years in advance, it intentionally gives the VP and their committee freedom to engage the membership in programming that intervenes in various political dialogues.

ATHE will consider the following **logistical needs** when selecting a conference location:

The Conference requires...

- A large hotel that can accommodate the meeting and bid competitively.
- Affordability of hotel guest room rates and contractual terms and fees.
- Availability/Affordability of air service and transportation infrastructure.

ATHE will consider the following **membership needs** when selecting a conference location:

In light of the needs of our membership, we strive to select locations...

- That demonstrate geographic diversity of meeting sites over time, in both the short and long term.
- That offer a variety of extra-conference opportunities including nearby performance venues, restaurants, and sites of interest to our members.
- That are economically feasible for a broad cross-section of ATHE members, with particular sensitivity to the financial constraints of graduate students, independent scholars/artists, and non-tenure track professors.

ATHE will consider the following **advocacy concerns** when selecting a conference location:

ATHE gives strong preference to:

- Hotels whose staff is represented by a union.
- Hotels with active sustainability policies and programs.
- Locales that have demonstrated a commitment to providing service to all people equally.
- Locales that engage with the issues outlined above through local activist performance/theatre initiatives.
- Locales that offer the conference a chance to support local theatrical communities or companies.

In selecting dates for an Annual Conference, ATHE attempts to avoid conflicts with organizations of similar interests and audiences such as The American Society of Theatre Research (ASTR), International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR/FIRT), Performance Studies international (PSi), The Hemispheric Institute, American Studies Association (ASA), Congress on Research in Dance (CORD), and National Communications Association (NCA).

Discussion: Chase walked the GC through some of the changes from the previous draft based on feedback to make the policy more "active" and give it more teeth.
Approved unanimously.

C. Motion for the GC authorize Barbara Korner and Mark Heckler, the current co-directors of the Leadership Institute, to begin the process of searching for new co-directors. This search process shall be conducted in consultation with the VP for Professional Development with the advice and counsel of the Professional Development Committee and the Operations Committee as needed. Moved by Jim Peck. Seconded by Patricia Ybarra.
Rationale: The current co-directors of the LI have announced their intention to step down following the 2015 conference. The hope is that new co-directors can be identified by Spring 2015, so the incoming team can “shadow” Bobbi and Mark at LI 2015, prior to taking over the Institute in 2016.
Jim explained that Bobbi has expressed a desire for this to happen. There have been a couple conference calls to draft a resolution. Henry explained that Bobbi and Mark asked us to keep this private. They will announce it soon.
Bill wondered if this process will involve assessing the institute and deciding whether or not there should be some changes. It is understood that this will likely happen after there is new leadership in place.
Friendly amendment was proposed by Nina LeNoir: Final appointment of new directors is subject to approval by the GC. Accepted by Jim Peck. Approved unanimously.

V. Reports/Updates

A. VP for Research and Publications

Bob Schanke
Journal Editors Reports
Joanne Tompkins, Theatre Journal Co-Editor, filling in for Editor Ric Knowles
Covered highlights for the year from annual report and answered questions.

D.J. Hopkins, Theatre Topics Editor
Covered highlights from annual report and answered questions.
This is the first year we moved to 3 issues. Problems in that JHUP placed the third edition right between the two we have instead of spreading them out evenly through the year. We need to continue to pursue this.

Discussion that leadership needs to do follow up with JHUP because they have been fairly unresponsive to concerns. Production schedule is an issue with both journals. Henry thanked the editors for both journals.

B. Treasurer’s Updates

Nina LeNoir
Nina distributed budget documents and did an overview. We are in good shape.
These documents only go through mid-year. A lot of things haven’t hit the bank yet. We have over $365,000 in checking and over $500,000 in investments. Some line items for next year’s budget will receive adjustments.

C. VP for Conference 2014

Sonja Kufitinec
Sonja gave update. Discussion on the large number of pre-conferences and how it spreads out the organization instead of bringing us together. Perhaps we should reconsider if FGs should be the primary drivers of conference programming. Asked that we be ambassadors for the conference – listen to people and complaints to redirect and talk positively about advantages that we have at this conference.
Suggestions: Distribute FAQ sheets about the conference, share meal options, including buffet special, share pie chart about how resources are expended. Discussion about formalizing the post-conference debriefing process.

D. VP for Conference 2015
Lionel Walsh
Lionel discussed the conference theme for next year and progress that is being made. They are hoping to connect with the local and regional political issues in Montreal in terms of conference programming, highlighting that we are actually meeting in Quebec. He reminded all members that we need to have passports to attend the conference.

E. Executive Director Search Update
Patricia Ybarra
Patricia shared how the search committee has interviewed management firm candidates. They hope to have everything wrapped up at the end of August and that the new firm will start on October 1st with transition time with Nancy until January 1st. The search is progressing very well and we have strong final candidates. David Kaye asked if the candidates have a sense of our budget and if the new firm could result in an increase in costs. Patricia answered that yes, they know our budget, and that we don’t expect a major increase in costs.

F. President’s Update
Henry Bial
Henry gave an overview of his work for the year and expressed appreciation for the way the GC has responded in a timely manner to a number of issues that have arisen. We are continuing with our job market study. Henry noted that there are more jobs open this year than last year. Other data collection continues as well.

VI. Discussion Items
A. Organizational Membership
David Kaye
Issue: How to “captivate” folks who attend the conference on an organizational membership but don’t themselves become individual members.
Possible fix: Switch to a tiered system for organizations memberships; alternately, clarify/modify existing systems.
David discussed the major issues with the org memberships that we have discussed several times. Like problem with “phantom members” who only go to the conference on org membership without being individual members. David presented a handout with a proposal of new multi-tiered proposal for org memberships.
This proposal pretty reflects the USITT org membership structure, but it is a matter for discussion, not yet an action item, since financial implications require further evaluation. General positive feelings about this new structure. It will go to Chase Bringardner and the next Membership & Marketing Committee.
B. Communications

Shaun Franklin-Sewell

Shaun discussed website trainings and their level of success. There have been 6 hour-long trainings with 2-3 people in each training. Feedback demonstrates that they like the new capabilities of the new website. Shaun has extended the deadline for the discontinuation of listservs to August 15th. The hope is that more FGRs will realize that their listservs are going away and they will participate in trainings. More trainings will be done between the end of the conference and 8/15.

About 50% of members are logging on to the website. Henry noted that more information will be publically available on the website and will not necessarily require logins.

General positive reactions to the status of communications through the website.

C. ATHE and the relationship to Focus Groups

Henry Bial and Alicia Tafoya

Henry explained that the issue is not that the relationship is broken. But what has been happening is that so many of our focus groups have been so robust and so active that we haven’t been considering as a GC how the organization relates to these things.

Everything from insurance issues to logo issues, etc.

Discussion of the issues:
1. How far does “ATHUmbrella” extend?
   E.g. can FGs use ATHE’s name logo, tax exempt status, insurance, etc. in FG-specific publications, pre-conferences, and other activities.
2. How the GC is thinking about the Focus Group structure of ATHE? Some FGs are concerned that small FGs may be at risk for marginalization or consolidation.
   A lot of concerns are financial – there may be additional things that small FGs want to do, but they can’t afford to do them without “umbrella” support of ATHE.
   Henry: This is a good problem to have. But we need to figure out how to make it work well for the organization as a whole as well as focus groups.

D. Conference Improvements

Nancy Erickson

Question is how to address overall costs of attendance/participation, esp. for Adjuncts, seniors, and 2 year college faculty.

It’s too expensive so we lose them and they can’t participate in the conference.

There is also a question of who we need to provide a guest pass to. These are overall issues that need to be addressed that start with the question of who we want the conference to serve and what can we provide and what will the costs be.

VII. New Business

Motion to authorize the VP for Awards to begin preliminary conversations with ASTR and TLA about a joint award for online publications.

Moved by Dani Snyder-Young. Seconded by Alicia Tafoya.

Dani explained this was simply for preliminary steps to work cooperatively on such an award.

Approved unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.
Moved by Chase Waites. Seconded by Nina LeNoir. Approved unanimously.

Adjourned at 3:07 PM.