



**MID-SOUTH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**  
**Minutes of the Executive Council Fall Meetings**  
**Wednesday, November 5, 2014**  
**Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel, Mobile, AL**

**Wednesday, November 5, 2014, 2-4pm**

Present:	Anita Bledsoe-Gardner	President-Elect
	Tim Gongaware	President
	Ruth Chanie	Secretary-Treasurer
	Rodger Bates	Vice President
	Shelly McGrath	Vice President-Elect
	Brian Hinote	Editor, Sociological Spectrum
	Marc Matre	MSSA Archivist
	Meredith Dye	Chair, Committee on Nominations
	Theresa Davidson	Chair, Committee on Membership
	David LoConto	Chair, Stanford Lyman Book Award
	Dennis Peck	Hotel Negotiator
	Thomas Calhoun	Guest, Former President

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order by President Tim Gongaware at 2:05pm.

**MOTION** to accept Minutes from the Midwinter Meetings 2-15-14 at the Renaissance hotel in Mobile, and the separate Minutes from the Midwinter Meetings in March 2014 via Email vote. (There was no quorum at the midwinter meetings, so another set of meeting minutes from the email voting was recorded.)

- **M/S/P**

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORTS**

**President's Report:** (President Tim Gongaware presented)

- Online registration is set up and running.
- In the course of implementing our online registration system, we discovered that MSSA is unincorporated in any state. This is something we need to discuss and deal with, probably with a vote later on.
- There were a number of council resignations over the course of the year. Those are on there.
- The Webmaster/Forum editor position has been split, at least for now.
- We are awarding the Distinguished Career Award to Tom Calhoun at the banquet.

- Also the bylaw changes we talked about this spring – we will need to make sure they are included on the ballot this year, since they were not on there last year.
  - o *The report was accepted*

**Secretary-Treasurer’s Report:** (Sec-Treas. Ruth Chananie presented)

- The new online registration system is going very well so far. There were a few bugs, but our tech person, Brad Smith from MeetingSavvy has been very helpful.
- The numbers on the report are as of Oct. 29. She will present updated numbers at the Saturday EC meeting. For 2015, we have 137 members thus far, and 129 registrants.
- Savings account has a balance of \$31,222.89 for the Stanford Lyman Fund.
- Checking account has a balance of \$41055.10. Total assets are \$72047.99.
- Current concern is that although we are recovering from the last few years, and the numbers for Mobile are better than they were from the last time we were in Mobile, but we are still facing a probable attrition cost. The latest numbers from the event manager are an estimate of between \$2-3k attrition.
- Out of 129 registrants, 92 used the online system.
- Concern was raised about how to effectively communicate with people who submit papers to the conference but are not members or have registered for the conference yet. After discussion and suggestions, it was concluded that the President-Elect should send a template out to the session organizers reminding them to communicate with their participants. Some other ideas were put forth but the issue remains a concern to the success of the organization.
- Discussion about the demographic data included in the written report (gender, race, state location, membership category). Efforts to improve the forms to include the option of checking more than one racial category, and/or to fill in their own designation, seem well received thus far.
- Ruth to send committee chairs database information relevant to their interest area for use in organizational promotion.
- Budget is updated as much as possible, will be updated again for the Saturday meetings.
  - o *The report was accepted*

**President-Elect/Program Chair’s Report:** (President-Elect Anita Bledsoe-Gardner presented)

- o Meeting program printing costs were covered by a sponsorship. The only printing cost was for the banquet programs was \$113.58.
- o We totaled advertisement revenue, we have \$1200 paid, with another \$150 coming in for sure. \$1650 total commitments.
- o Since she missed the winter meeting, she made a trip down to the hotel and met with Marc Matre, who was a huge help. The local arrangements committee is doing a wonderful job. Marc also supplied a list of local interests to include in the packet.
- o Food & beverage – we had to spend a minimum per contract of \$10,600 (pre-tax). I spent approximately \$10,602. Plus \$200 for cash bars at the reception and the banquet. Total of \$10,802.
- o She also provided two floor banners advertising the MSSA to be put on display near the registration table. There was no cost for these.
- o Three people resigned from the EC: Jackie Eller, Jon Epstein, and Claire Norris. Discussion of how those positions will be filled. (Tim pointed out that this will be discussed under new business).

- We have two intuitional memberships at \$300 each, but would have gone a whole lot better with more marketing. She thinks we should continue to pursue this in the future.
- Anita suggested we consider purchasing our own laptops and projectors to have for presenters every year.
  - *The report was accepted*

**Vice President's Report:** (Vice-President Rodger Bates presented)

- 11 papers were submitted for the graduate student paper award. One turned out to be an undergraduate paper so he directed them to the appropriate committee. We had 10 papers, and two have withdrawn. So 8 papers total.
- Can the organization increase the award to \$100 in the future? Something to consider.
- Tim thanked Rodger for stepping in as Vice President for us this year.
  - *The report was accepted*

**Vice President-Elect's Report:** (Vice President-Elect Shelly McGrath presented)

- We had 6 submissions. The committee consisted of three judges plus Shelly.
- 7 undergrads submitted papers for non-competitive paper sessions.
  - *The report was accepted*

**Past President's and Budget Committee Report:** (Past President Earl Wright II not present, but written report was submitted)

- *The report was accepted*

**Committee on Nominations:** (Meredith Dye presented)

- Meredith assembled the nominations committee. We recruited nominations at the banquet last time, and she recommends that we do that again this year.
- The committee put together the ballot, with the help of Kim Davies, which was sent out. The online election went well. 83 people voted.
- The final slate was announced after the election. That was approved.
- Jackie Eller stepped down, but she didn't know about Claire Norris.
- The two people who were nominated and ran for Chair of Professions and Chair of Nominations – are not here. So we need replacements.
  - *The report was accepted*

**Committee on Membership:** (Theresa Davidson presented)

- Still building a committee from member states. She's been working mostly on building membership, especially in Alabama.
- She's also been concentrating on small and community and non-traditional colleges.
- She would like to work on creating some type of guidelines for the position for the next person. She would like to draft one if she can.
  - *The report was accepted*

**Spectrum Editors' Report** (Brian Hinote presented)

- Same editorial staff will carry over for next year.
- He met with representatives from the Taylor & Francis editorial team at the ASA meetings in San Francisco. They had positive reports about the overall health of the journal.
- Specific indicators are available in the written report. Overall we are holding steady, doing well.

- The number of submissions has skyrocketed since they went to the online submission system.
- Outstanding paper award was chosen, and it was a strong favorite among the committee members, although all of the selections this year were strong entrants.
- Spectrum processed 113 manuscript submissions for the year thus far, with about a 13% acceptance rate.
- The journal impact factor .690 (five year). .379 for 2013 (one year). A slight dip but overall an increasing trend over the past few years.
- Overall turn-around time is approx. 2-4 weeks. This is because the editorial staff stays on top of the process to speed it along as much as possible.
  - o *The report was accepted*

**Webmaster and Forum Editor's report** (Tina Deshotels not present)

- o *The report was accepted*

**Stanford Lyman Distinguished Book Award Report** (David LoConto presented)

- Three books were submitted, and read by the committee. Committee was in agreement that Dr. Frank Elwell's book was clearly the winner.
- It was a great experience to be on the committee this year. The winning book is outstanding.
- Dr. Erin Rider is taking over the Chair position as of Saturday.
  - o *The report was accepted*

**Stanford Lyman Scholarship Committee Report** (David Knottnerus not present, submitted written report)

- o *The report was accepted*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Replacing EC members**

- Tim discussed the EC members who resigned this year.
  - o Jackie Eller, Committee on Professions (remaining)
  - o Claire Norris, Committee Small & Community College (outgoing)
  - o Jon Epstein, Vice-President (Rodger Bates appointed as replacement, outgoing)
  - o Claire Norris, Committee on Nominations (incoming)
- Committee on Nominations Chair and Chair of Committee on Professions need to be replaced. There is nothing in the bylaws on how to handle this situation, so some options we have are:
  - o Go to the person running against them in the elections, and see if they are willing to step into those positions.
  - o Take nominations from members, then though council vote on Saturday, appoint a replacement.
- **MOTION** by Anita Bledsoe-Gardner to go with the second option, which means gathering more nominations and voting at the EC council on Saturday. Discussion ensued on the pros and cons of each option.
  - M/S/P

**Recommendation for forming ad hoc committee to promote MSSA**

- Dennis Peck recommends that we form an ad hoc committee to promote MSSA comprised of the previous three past presidents, working in conjunction with the membership chair, the current president, and the current president-elect (5 presidents).
  - o The purpose would be to utilize the presidents' collective experience to work to promote the organization.
- **MOTION** by Tim to create a current and past presidents' ad hoc promotional committee for the purpose of promoting the MSSA. The committee would be composed of the three most recent past presidents, headed by the current past-president, and including the current president, and the president-elect.
  - o Dennis added that the committee can appoint a replacement member if one of the regular members does not want to or cannot serve.
    - **M/S/P**

#### **Incorporation of MSSA**

- Tim recommends that we incorporate in a member state, because it provides legal protection for members of the EC. Theoretically, if someone were to sue the organization, they could sue the individual members of the EC for their property or assets. This is especially likely to happen to the president, or the top officers.
- **MOTION** by Tim to look into state incorporation (in one of our member states) and bring it back to the council for a vote.
  - **M/S/P**

#### **Site Selection for 2018**

- Dennis Peck discussed the proposals. Discussion ensued, but we ran short of time. Vote was tabled until Saturday's meeting. However, Dennis recommended that we choose both the 2018 and 2019 site selections for that Saturday vote. The proposals have been disseminated among the EC members.
- **MOTION** by David LoConto to table the vote until the Saturday meeting.
  - **M/S/P**

There was no further old or new business. Meeting adjourned at 4:45pm.



**MID-SOUTH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**  
**Minutes of the Executive Council Fall Meetings**  
**Saturday, November 8, 2014**  
**Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel, Mobile, AL**

**Saturday, November 8, 2014, 12-2pm**

Present:	Anita Bledsoe-Gardner	President
	Dawood Sultan	President-Elect
	Ruth Chanie	Secretary-Treasurer
	Shelly McGrath	Vice President
	Jeremy Ross	Vice President-Elect
	Brian Hinote	Editor, Sociological Spectrum
	Marc Matre	MSSA Archivist
	Theresa Davidson	Chair, Committee on Membership
	Melissa Powell-Williams	Chair, Committee on Women

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order by President Anita Bledsoe-Gardner at 12:05pm.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Council Members thoughts on meeting**

- There was discussion about what went right and wrong at the current meeting. Ideas were exchanged for next year. Much of this was for assisting the incoming president in his efforts to organize the meeting next year.
  - o Smaller sessions work better
  - o Smaller banquet room works better
  - o Tim's speech to motivate the membership and give an overall state of the organization was well-received.
  - o Dawood suggested that we develop a colored scheme for nametags (stickers maybe) to identify those who are involved with caucuses, and those who are new, to facilitate networking and information sharing.

**Going Green initiative**

- Anita suggests we look into a mobile phone app that provides the conference program to the membership during the conference. This will save on trees and printing costs. But we can still print some for those who want a hard copy.

- This idea was well received and discussion of different options ensued. Perhaps we could ask if the registrant wants a hard copy or electronic access during the registration process. Dawood will look into these options for the 2015 meetings.
- Surveying the membership would be a good idea as well. Perhaps a survey monkey (paperless) after they attend sessions would provide good feedback.
- Anita pointed out that any of these innovations we implement need to be low-cost or free.

#### **Replacement of EC Committee Members**

- We need to replace the Chair of the Committee on Professions and the Chair of Nominations.
- Ruth pointed out that our Chair of Small & Community Colleges has not renewed her membership or participated in the EC activities. After discussion, it was determined that Anita would reach out to her and give her a deadline to renew and reconfirm her interest before we take any further action.
- Vote on the other positions must take place today. Nominees were put forth and discussed.
- **MOTION** by Anita that Earl Wright II be appointed to the position of Chair of the Professions for the upcoming conference year.
  - **M/S/P**
- **MOTION** by Anita that DeMond Miller be appointed to the position of Chair of Nominations for the upcoming conference year.
  - **M/S/P**

#### **Date for the Winter Meeting**

- Anita suggests we meet on Saturday, Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>, the week after Valentine's Day.
- But, with technology, and cutting of budgets, is there a way we could meet virtually? We should investigate the options.
- Ruth pointed out we need a quorum. Anita said when people Skype in or otherwise, that could constitute a quorum.
- Discussion of options followed. Marc Matre and Anita will look into options.

#### **Digitizing MSSA Archives**

- Marc Matre suggests we try to digitize our organization archives. He volunteered to check into it.
- Anita pointed out that Marc was not officially appointed as MSSA Archivist. (5 year term, appointed by the EC)
- **MOTION:** by Shelly McGrath that Marc Matre be appointed as the MSSA official archivist.
  - **M/S/P**

#### **Webmaster**

- Tim doesn't mind doing the duties of webmaster until we find a replacement. (per Anita)

#### **Local Arrangements Chair**

- Dawood said that he thinks Thomas Durant will agree to be local arrangements chair for the 2015 Lafayette meetings. He will contact him.

#### **Alpha Morris Scholarship**

- Anita was approached by several individuals who would like to establish an Alpha Morris Scholarship award.
- One issue that the scholarship would help with could be student travel expenses.
- But there needs to be a monetary base contributed before one could be established.
- Discussion of student needs and concerns followed. Ruth proposed that we add student fees and student travel as agenda items for the midwinter meetings.

**Site Selection for 2018 & 2019**

- Anita called Dennis Peck so he could talk with the EC on speaker phone about hotel site selection. Discussion ensued.
- The general consensus is that we need to choose a city that is accessible via travel, and different than the ones we have been attending over the past decade or so.
- **MOTION** by Brian to choose Birmingham, AL for the 2018 MSSA meetings.
  - **M/S/P**
- **MOTION** by Anita to choose Jackson, MS for the 2019 MSSA meetings.
  - **M/S/P**

**MSSA Citizen Sociologist Award**

- This is different than the distinguished career award. Anita suggested tabling this discussion until the winter meetings.

**MSSA Distinguished Career Award**

- Anita suggests Ollie Christian for the 2015 award.
- **MOTION:** Anita nominates Ollie Christian for the 2015 MSSA Distinguished Career Award.
- Discussion ensued. The motion was tabled until the winter meeting. Another nominee was Thomas Durant. Anita agreed to do the vote by email.

There was no further old or new business. Meeting adjourned at 2:10pm.