

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL AND GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF THE GILDED AGE AND PROGRESSIVE ERA

Friday, April 20, 2012

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

President Maureen Flanagan, Illinois Institute of Technology, called the council Meeting of the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era to order. In addition to President Flanagan, the following SHGAPE Council, other members, and guests attended the meeting:

Robert Barrows, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis
Laura Etheredge, Cambridge University Press
Wendy Gamber, Indiana University, Bloomington
Julie Greene, University of Maryland, College Park
Nathan Hallam, Arizona State University
Julia Irwin, University of South Florida
Benjamin Johnson, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
Jennifer Koslow, Florida State University
Kriste Lindenmeyer, Rutgers University, Camden
Alan Lessoff, Illinois State University
Jacqueline Moore, Austin College
Christopher Nichols, Oregon State University
Elaine Parsons, Duquesne University
Nicole Phelps, University of Vermont
Phil VanderMeer, Arizona State University
Nancy Unger, Santa Clara University

Maureen Flanagan reviewed minutes from the previous Annual Meeting (March 18, 2011) which had previously been distributed to committee members. Minutes were adopted.

President's Report (Maureen Flanagan).

Maureen announced that SHGAPE is doing well in terms of membership and finances. She noted that SHGAPE's relationship with Cambridge University Press has put us on a solid foundation.

Maureen thanked the members of the Nominating Committee (Kristin Hoganson, James Connolly, Kate Masur, and Nicole Phelps), Fishel-Calhoun Prize Committee (David MacLeod,

John David Smith, and Ann Marie Wilson), and JGAPE Best Article Prize Committee (Julia Irwin, Rebecca Edwards, and Christopher McKnight Nichols) for their hard work and successful efforts.

Maureen thanked previous Membership Secretary Skip Hyser for his many years of service to SHGAPE and announced the appointment of Julia Irwin as Membership Secretary.

Maureen then initiated a discussion to determine the best means of managing the presidential succession. President Elect Christopher Waldrep would have officially become President at the 2012 OAH meeting but has been incapacitated by illness. All present expressed their concern for Chris and their wishes for his recovery. It was decided that SHGAPE needed, first, to determine whether or not Chris will be able to assume the presidency within the next few months. The Council then passed the following motion: if Chris is unable to serve, Maureen will stay on as President until the 2013 OAH meeting, at which point Vice President/President Elect Julie Greene will assume the presidency, and serve a regular two-year term. This will require some adjustments to the election and luncheon speaker schedules, but is otherwise a workable plan. The proposed solution is in accordance with Section 7 of SHGAPE's Bylaws. [Note: As of this writing, it has now been determined that, sadly, Chris will be unable to serve as President.]

Maureen noted that she will need to appoint one new member to the Nominating Committee (at least one Nominating Committee member must also currently serve on the Council) to solicit nominees for Vice President/President Elect and three new Council members for the November 2012 ballot. She will also need to appoint the members of the De Santis Prize Committee.

Finally, Maureen thanked Julie Greene for taking on the responsibilities of the Vice President/President Elect much sooner than anticipated and for doing an excellent job.

The council then reviewed and acknowledged the written reports from committee chairs and editors that had been pre-circulated.

Executive Secretary's Report. (Wendy Gamber).

Wendy reported that Cambridge University Press continues to do an excellent job of serving the needs of SHGAPE members. She thanked CUP staff members, including Laura Etheredge, Susan Soule, Alex Engel, Sam Murphy, Jonathan Geffner, James Conroy, and Helen Sunakawa for their prompt and efficient assistance.

Wendy reported that SHGAPE has recovered from the decline in individual memberships that accompanied the unanticipated withdrawal of the Hayes Center from subscription management in the summer of 2009. SHGAPE owes thanks to former Membership Secretary Skip Hyser and CUP; their combined efforts were critical to reversing the previous downward trend.

Wendy hopes to improve election turnout by trying a different online voting system. She will work with Laura Etheredge of CUP and Membership Secretary Julia Irwin to obtain the email addresses of as many SHGAPE members as possible. While all Society members will have the option of requesting a paper ballot, electronic ballots generally yield greater participation.

Finally, Wendy thanked Julia Irwin, who became a Lifetime Member in 2011, and JoAnn and Peter Argersinger, who once again made a generous donation to SHGAPE's Endowment Account, for their support SHGAPE.

Treasurer's Report. (Phil VanderMeer).

Phil reported that the Society is in good financial shape. He noted that SHGAPE's relationship with Cambridge University Press has brought the Society financial stability and reduced its expenses. SHGAPE can therefore comfortably meet its obligations, including prizes, the OAH reception, memberships in professional associations, and occasional office expenses. However, Phil emphasized that the dramatic decline in interest rates has reduced our interest income. Therefore SHGAPE must continue to manage its resources prudently.

Vice President/President-Elect, Program Committee. (Julie Greene).

Julie Greene, Vice President/President-Elect and Program Committee Chair, presented the report of the Program Committee, Julie Greene and Kidada Williams. The Committee organized sessions, including two roundtables that take on important questions about the Gilded Age and Progressive Era to propose to the AHA and OAH. The Committee also solicited additional sessions and reviewed unsolicited proposals. It proposed eight sessions to the AHA, two of which have been accepted, and six sessions to the OAH. The OAH has not yet made its decisions about regarding next year's program.

The Program Committee will submit additional panel proposals solely sponsored by SHGAPE to for both conferences in May. Julie plans to add one or two additional members to the Program Committee. The Committee will consider sponsoring sessions that were proposed for but rejected by the OAH or AHA, and will accept other submissions as well.

Membership Secretary (Julia Irwin).

Julia discussed plans for retaining current members and recruiting new ones. She has created a letter to send to lapsed members in both electronic and paper format. Julia emphasized the importance of reaching out to two, non-mutually exclusive groups: scholars working on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century topics who might not identify themselves as historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era; and younger scholars, including graduate students. She proposed several possible strategies to accomplish this goal. These include:

- offering graduate students luncheon tickets at a reduced rate
- creating a paper prize for graduate students who present SHGAPE-related papers at the OAH or AHA
- modest research fellowships for graduate students investigating SHGAPE-related topics
- modest travel fellowships to assist graduate student members in attending the OAH
- asking seniors colleagues to encourage their graduate students to join SHGAPE
- emailing SHGAPE members in advance of the OAH and AHA to remind them of SHGAPE-sponsored sessions
- conference reports about SHGAPE-sponsored and SHGAPE-related sessions on H-SHGAPE
- H-SHGAPE reviews of articles published by SHGAPE members
- H-SHGAPE round tables on topics of interests to members
- sending email announcements about SHGAPE to related H-NET lists.

It was agreed that Julia should appoint a Membership Committee to assist her with these efforts.

Annual Report, *JGAPE* (Alan Lessoff).

Alan announced that Cambridge University Press has speedily resolved several issues, including revamping its online interface to make it easier for members to join and renew and printing the *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* in more readable font. He emphasized that SHGAPE's agreement with CUP has moved *JGAPE* toward greater visibility and financial stability. He thanks the members of the CUP staff, especially editor Laura Etheredge, for their continuing commitment to SHGAPE and *JGAPE*.

The impending search for a new *JGAPE* Editor and Book Review Editor was the major topic of discussion. The new editor will need to begin in September 2014 at the latest and the new book review editor must be in place by January 2014. Alan reported on his discussion with the Editorial Board, which agreed that a search committee composed of SHGAPE officers should both advertise for applicants and solicit applications from promising candidates. It was agreed that the Editor should select the Book Review Editor. Alan reiterated the necessary

qualifications for the Editor's position. S/he must be a tenured faculty member who will make a five-year commitment to the position. In addition, s/he must have the necessary institutional support. This includes a course release, a fund to support travel and web design, support for an intern or Editorial Assistant, and an explicit statement from her/his institution that it values editing as an important contribution to research and service. It was agreed that the incoming Editor must obtain a letter from her/his dean or department chair agreeing to these conditions.

H-SHGAPE (Christopher McKnight Nichols, Julia Irwin, and Jacqueline Moore).

Christopher Nichols, H-SHGAPE Webmaster and Web Content Editor, discussed the importance of SHGAPE officers providing updates on a more regular basis, so that the information displayed on the H-SHGAPE website is current. Jacqueline Moore (H-SHGAPE Editorial Board) reported that H-SHGAPE has been much more active recently, due in large part to the efforts of Julia Irwin and K. Stephen Prince, H-SHGAPE's Book Review Editors.

Other Business:

Those in attendance once again raised the question of whether SHGAPE needs a newsletter. It was generally agreed that SHGAPE needs a forum for news and announcements. Suggestions included using H-SHGAPE for these purposes and considering the various models offered by the Urban History Association's newsletter and the Labor and Working-Class History Association's website.

Maureen Flanagan declared the meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Wendy Gamber (Executive Secretary)