



Minutes of the Popular Culture Association Virtual (Zoom) Governing Board Meeting, February 3, 2023, 4:00-6:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada).

Chair Colleen Karn and President Sue Matheson called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm; Secretary Beth Downey called the roll and confirmed the existence of a quorum.

Voting members present: Sue Matheson (President), Sherry Ginn (VP/President-Elect), Nicole Freim (VP Area Chairs), Brenda Boudreau (VP Awards), Debbie Phillips, Robin Reid, Jen Atkins, Peter Cullen Bryan, Colin Helb, David Moody, Beth Downey (Secretary), Colleen Karn (Chair), Tiffany Weaver (Treasurer)

Voting members absent: Elwood Watson (VP Diversity)

Non-voting members present: Phil Simpson, Gary Burns, Melissa Vosen Callens

Non-voting members absent: Kathy Merlock Jackson, Carl Sederholm, Novotny Lawrence, Lily Kunda

Meeting Expectations: Kristen Morgan - Update:

Membership: 1582. Breakdown:

- 442 subscribed to *Journal of American Culture* (421 digital, 21 print)
- 943 subscribed to *Journal of Popular Culture* (825 digital, 118 print/digital)
- 163 subscribed to both *JAC/JPC* (97 digital, 66 print/digital)
- 34 Life Memberships

Paper Submissions: 1385

- 1105 before deadline, 181 after
- Presentations: 1360 approved, 18 rejected, 7 pending, 2 withdrawn
- Speakers: 1408 approved, 1441 total

Registration Total: 1311. Freim mentions some presenters dropping out, numbers may change.

Grants: Simpson says there are 260 submissions for travel grants; registrations waiting for travel grants are being handled on a case-by-case basis.

Form will be sent out once the conference schedule is complete, to create registration and room schedule. Travel has been booked for the board and the hotel should be sending out confirmation numbers next week. Meeting Expectations will schedule us to work the registration tables and book rooms and be sure to not conflict with our panels.

Attrition report: we don't have to pay attrition if we hit 80%. We need 3462, we need to hit 2770. We're at 57% now. New reports each Sunday, so it may improve. Deadline to book rooms and avoid attrition is March 10; Marriott is not sympathetic to travel issues (Covid, lack of funding for Texas travel, etc). As of this morning hotel will not release sleeping rooms, but willing to release "space" (probably meeting). We need 1185 more room nights to avoid attrition.

JPC/JAC access issues: cannot access either through the PCA website. Karn asked Morgan to get in touch with Paul at Wiley to fix.

Approval of Minutes from December 2, 2022: Downey moved to approve the minutes of the December 2 Meeting; Karn seconded. After a short discussion for corrections, a vote was called. The vote count was 9 yes, 3 abstained; motion passed.



Downey brought forward minutes from August 12 and September 14 meetings that had not been approved previously. September 14 minutes were approved with a vote count of 11 yes and 1 abstained; August 12 minutes went back for revisions and will be moved for approval at the April board meeting.

President's Report: Matheson provided several conference updates:

Book Room: Publishers and others confirmed: University Press of Mississippi, University of New Mexico Press, Lexington Books, Intellect, Scholar's Choice, the University of Texas Press, Rutgers University Press, McFarland, Indiana University Press, University of Iowa Press and the BGSU Dept of Popular Culture. Waiting to hear from Bloomsbury and Palgrave. Populating logos on the website as sponsorships increase. Book room, webspace, and program ads will generate \$10K and lay foundation for future sponsorships.

Registration/submission updates: addressed with Morgan's report.

Zoom: Two presenters requested that they be allowed to Zoom their papers but the extra bandwidth would be cost-prohibitive; suggested having a member of the panel read the paper and supply email for questions.

Conference Speakers and Webpages: all speaker webpages are posted and will be updated. Hotel/travel page also updated regularly.

Conference Marketing: sent flyers and invitation for faculty to bring classes to the Diversity Series and Dr. Coleman's address to San Antonio area colleges. Will send similar (plus tour info) to mailing list of Texas and neighboring states.

Room Block: not filling as we hoped, but maybe there will be a last-minute rush. We need to aggressively promote staying at the Marriott River Center. Will get Kristen and Gloria via Constant Contact to push. Expect more once the travel grants go out. Room sharing possible.

Conference Tours: List being finalized, will go up on the website next week.

Working the Conference: Will send a schedule out for board members to work registration and book room. Kristen will compile the schedule.

Mentoring: Ed Janak and Ludovic Sourdout are taking care of the mentoring program at the conference. Please help them out by mentoring one or more mentees in San Antonio.

Conference Videos: Matheson and Burns working on memorials and PCA history highlights.

Post-Conference Survey: need to survey members to help redesign the conference post-Covid.

Wiley: Providing branded face masks, funding support, Paul Dingman hopefully will attend.

Committee Updates: Certification Committee for the 2023 election (Kathy Merlock Jackson, chair, Gary Burns, and Deb Phillips) was struck and has completed its work. The Endowment Travel Fund Grants Committee has been struck (Phil Simpson, Brenda Boudreau, Elwood Watson, Sue Matheson).

Summer Institute: Finalizing details of the Summer Institute with the Ray Browne Popular Culture Library and BGSU before advertising the event. Gloria will be working with the Library to help host the Workshop.

Endowment Fund Firewall: Requested that the Endowment Committee start looking into the PCA establishing a Trust to house, protect, and administer the Endowment Fund. Bricker and Eckler are investigating any legal issues that need to be considered.

Action Items: for the Board's consideration:

- Possible assistance to membership re: room sharing
- Hotel rooms for past board members who couldn't conference IRL for three years. Karn made a motion, Downey seconded. Vote was called, 8 yes, 2 abstained, motion passed.
- Volunteers to design post-conference survey (Bryan and Downey)



- Future board conversation re: Area composition, responsibilities and terms of Area Chairs and conference scheduling. Need to decide whether this will be part of the Spring meeting or a conference post-mortem?

Financial Report: Treasurer Weaver reported PCA's balances and Matheson reported that an increase in room registrations will get the PCA in good shape. Bryan and Boudreau brainstormed ideas to encourage presenters to stay in the conference hotel.

Website Development, Integration, and Launch: This was moved up in the agenda because Helb needed to leave the meeting early. Helb reported that RebelMouse was in a holding pattern until the launch, which was initially to be in November 2022. Launch was to be moved to January in order to not cause issues with conference registration, but that would push RebelMouse to have to do it all over again in May. Kristen estimated \$150K to move the website to the new Drupal. Helb encouraged using Member Clicks for the AMS (association management software) as a safety net; if PCA ends the RebelMouse contract and the organization is still financially precarious, Member Clicks would be nice. Kristen could start working with Member Clicks to migrate and we would launch after the conference. Helb's term on the board is ending so he needs someone to shadow him, and he presented a timeline with migration phases illustrated. Sherry moved to get Meeting Expectations to negotiate with Member Clicks and move from Drupal; Moody seconded. Vote was called, motion passed unanimously 12-0. Colleen proposed we get a part-time tech person.

Endowment Report: Simpson gave an update on the grant applicants, including total number of applicants for each grant and the amount of money total for grants. Endowment figures overall are in good shape. Thanked board members who are working on the grant selections. Many grantees are waiting on travel grant funds to register. Simpson moved that the Board consider granting off-line registration to all travel grant applicants regardless of selection status; Phillips seconded. Vote was called and passed 11-0. Ginn mentioned it is a small committee that has to read ALL of these papers, and they can use some help; Simpson asked for volunteers to contact him. Simpson's term as Endowment Chair is ending, someone will need to strike a committee to elect a new chair, someone who will protect the endowment fund and trust. Simpson can run again, but he understands the optics of "long-haulers" on the board.

VP of Programming and Area Chairs: Freim will be putting together panels and working on schedule all weekend. There is an area chair award, and Nicole needs to pick someone. She would like to take nominations from the membership. Colleen and Phil support the new Vampire chairs. Also, there are some areas that only will have one panel, or even only got one or two submissions. Also a couple of cases where an area chair wants to present in another area, and yet there's only one in their area presenting by themselves. Robin believes there should be a way to evaluate chairs, dismiss chairs who don't do their job, and is also surprised there are chairs not presenting in their own areas. Colleen wants to work on this over the summer, perhaps an ad hoc committee.

Break

VP of Awards: Boudreau reported that all award committees will be giving awards this year, and that several winners are coming to the conference. The Awards Committee has been working on the Terms of Reference (TOR), which can be voted on at the next meeting.



Boudreau says some people have said board members shouldn't submit their own books for awards. Karn thinks they should be allowed but not abuse their power, pushing their nominations, etc. Don't apply for an award on your own committee of course. Karn asks if bylaws would handle; bylaws no, but ethics yes, and Ginn can handle.

Ethics Committee Report: Ginn said they were working on an ethics case that they hoped to wrap up next week and would submit a recommendation to the board. Then they would work the Policies and Procedures for the Conference, followed by a much larger document for their TOR. Members of the Ethics Committee are Ginn, Reid, and James Okapal.

Virtual Summer 2023 Conference: Reid presented her report; she has doubts about being able to do a virtual for 2023. She realized people who came to the Tolkien Studies panels in virtual conferences weren't the same people that came to face-to-face. There was also a question of whether this event would be in lieu of a Summer Research Institute or parallel to it? Matheson and Reid don't have the data to support. Bryan: We could do it cheaper than a full virtual, if it's just a short conference. Ginn will connect Reid with Heather Porter, who worked on both Popular Culture Association South and the Slayage conference and got them both virtual on a shoestring last year. Matheson thinks Meeting Expectations can help us decide. Reid would like to identify people who came to virtual that otherwise wouldn't come to an in-person conference. Freim believes PCA has to do a virtual element to be inclusive. Also nothing says we can't have a virtual chair and a face-to-face chair. Bryan: We should strike a committee and commit to do a 2024 virtual conference. Karn: Do we want Pizzano to send out an announcement? Reid can chair the ad hoc committee, write up a call for members and send via Constant Contact? Yes, and we can also announce this at the area chairs meeting in San Antonio. Be it resolved that the PCA establish an exploratory committee, chaired by Robin Reid, to gather information on the possibility of running a Virtual PCA Summer Conference in 2024. Reid moved, Downey seconded. Vote was called, motion passed 10-0 (Atkins had to leave).

Special Topics Area for 2024 Conference: Freim brought forward a proposal from Karn for a Special Topic, "Monster Studies," or alternately Monsters and Monstrosities. This would be a broader area that would factor in monsters that perhaps don't fit with areas such as Sci-Fi/Fantasy or Vampires. Can include monsters as allegory for othering and denying one's humanity, as a political label, in children's entertainment. PCAS had many papers across areas that would have fit well in a Monster area. Boudreau moved to approve, Downey seconded. Vote was called, motion passed 10-0.

2023 National Conference, Update from Committees: Freim reported there will be two full panels on the Borderlands (Special Topic). Simpson reported a couple of film screenings. Committee is coordinating Artwalk, opening night session. Boudreau and others would like to invite local/area educators to the opening session for free (with possible reduced rate for the rest of the conference). Robin pointed out issues highlighted in the opening session are issues for educators from other states as well. Brenda moved that we invite area educators to come to the opening session at no cost. Robin seconded. Discussion about logistics and refreshments followed. Vote was called; motion passed 10-0. Also discussed how to organize and facilitate a room share list, for presenters who can't afford doing a hotel alone? Matheson reported she would take care of it and talk to Morgan at Meeting Expectations.

After discussion, the next meeting was tentatively scheduled for March 3, 2023 at 4:00 pm.



Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Humbly submitted,

Beth Downey, PCA Secretary