

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE POPULAR CULTURE ASSOCIATION, Friday, June 5, 2020.

Sue Matheson, Vice President and Acting Board Chair for this meeting, called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM Eastern. Secretary Carl Sederholm did a roll call of members and verified that a quorum had been attained.

Voting Members Present: Brenda Boudreau, Gary Burns, Amie Doughty, Beth Downey, Gary Edgerton, Gary Hoppenstand, Kathy Merlock Jackson, Novotny Lawrence, Helen Lewis, Sue Matheson, Camille McCutcheon, David Moody, Debbie Phillips, David Silverman

Voting Members Absent: Ashley Donnelly, Gary Edgerton, Cynthia Miller

Non-Voting Members Present: Lynn Bartholome, Colleen Karn, Ann Larabee, Mike Marsden, Carl Sederholm, Philip Simpson

Non-Voting Members Absent: None

Acting Board Chair Sue Matheson welcomed everyone to the meeting and then proceeded to the business outlined in the agenda.

I. Approval of Agenda: It was duly moved and seconded that the agenda for today's meeting be approved.

Vote: 16 Yes; 0 No

II. Approval of Minutes: It was duly moved and seconded that the minutes for March 12, 2020 be approved.

Vote: 16 Yes; 0 No

III. President Kathy Merlock Jackson addressed the board. She began by thanking everyone for their kindness following her accident. She also noted that even though we had to cancel the 2020 conference, there has been positive support from the membership. Planning for the 2021 conference in Boston is going well and there are good reasons to be hopeful about the future. President Merlock Jackson also charged the board to press forward in the coming year and to show as much kindness to everyone as they showed her.

IV. Kathy Merlock Jackson then asked each of the three newly elected board members to introduce themselves. These new board members are: Peter Cullen Bryan, Colin Helb, David Moody. We are looking forward to working with these new board members!

V. Wiley representative Paul Dingman (Assistant Editor, General Social Sciences and Humanities) next provided a report about publisher reports for *JPC* and *JAC*. He reported that both of the journals are doing well. When asked whether print volumes will return, he said that they should return soon. Print editions

were temporarily suspended during the pandemic. Discussion next turned to download rates for JPC and about whether special issues raise more interest in the journals.

#### Journal Editor Reports:

Ann Larabee, editor of *The Journal of Popular Culture* next provided a report about the status of the journal. She thanked her staff and the editorial board and then announced several upcoming special issues, including one on Afrofuturism that may contain some original illustrations / images. She also announced that she would have a special issue on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PCA.

Carl Sederholm, editor, *The Journal of American Culture* next presented on the status of the journal. He highlighted several special issues and thanked everyone for their support. He announced that Harmony Donnelly Gailey will now be working as the Managing Editor for the journal.

VI: Sue Matheson next reported that a meeting to address the Bylaws is being planned and will likely take place later in June or in early July. Details about this meeting, including its timing and agenda, are forthcoming.

VII: Lynn Bartholome next gave the Executive Director's Report. Refunds for people registered for the 2020 conference are underway. Lynn and her staff are working hard to make sure this process is up to date. Bartholome next followed up on several financial-related items from the 2020 conference. We were fortunate to receive our deposit back from Marriott for the 2020 conference. She next paid special tribute to Sheila Yarnell for her efforts to help us with this problem and asked that the board consider some kind of formal recognition for her efforts. It was generally agreed that this suggestion would be considered by the board shortly. Bartholome next mentioned that even though the Summer Scholars Program had to be canceled, it was supposed to be a very strong year. We are looking forward to the 2021 program. She then provided an update on the PPP Loan and Forgiveness and on the current financial status of the organization. Things are going very well. We are grateful to Lynn for her hard work.

VIII: Mike Marsden then provided a report on the PCA Endowment. The status of the endowment is strong even after the economic downturn earlier this year. Marsden mentioned that Phil Simpson will serve as the chair of the Endowment board going forward. Other members will include Diane Calhoun-French and Bruce Drushel who are renewing their term on the board. He also welcomed new member Sherri Guinn to the Endowment Committee.

Phil Simpson then provided an update on the Endowment Account Process. He thanked Mike Marsden for his mentorship and for everything he's done for the association. He then commented on current goals for managing the endowment, including a proposal to open a new investment account. Details about this proposal are included in section XI of these minutes, as are the results of the vote on the proposal.

#### IX. Area Reports:

- a. Treasurer: Gary Burns thanked Lynn Bartholome for superb financial work during the COVID crisis.
- b. Historian: Burns then provided an overview of his report as historian. He is keeping an up-to-date report on the leadership of the organization from its beginning. All memorials and interviews planned for the 2020 conference will be rolled over to the 2021 conference. The interviews are recorded on video and archived at BGSU. They are also transcribed and kept as primary research materials for people who want to use them.

Bartholome noted that perhaps a documentary could be made that draws on this material. It was generally agreed that the prospect of a documentary could be valuable. Burns and Bartholome will discuss this further and report back to the board.

c. Sue Matheson reported that the bylaws committee is making progress on their review of the bylaws and will have more materials for everyone by the next meeting. Matheson thanked Gary Hoppenstand for his hard work on this committee.

d. Brenda Boudreau then updated the board on progress with awards. Some awards were not given in 2020 and so Boudreau asked that board members consider ways to get a more robust body of nominations.

e. Novotny Lawrence next reported on his activities as VP of Diversity. Lawrence was planning some diversity training for 2020 that he is planning to roll over to 2021. He is planning to send out readings from time to time to help keep everyone up to date on the topic of diversity.

f. David Silverman reported on his work with area chairs. He and Bartholome created an undergraduate policy for area chairs and started an undergraduate area. He also worked on ways to streamline the scheduling process and to save money on AV components. A new area on the Grateful Dead was approved as a special topic area. There will also be a special topic area on Pandemics for 2021. Silverman is also looking at possible overlaps between areas and how to address that.

g. Graduate Students: Colleen Karn talked about planned outings for the 2020 conference. She anticipates rolling over or recreating many of these activities for the 2021 conference.

X. It was duly moved and seconded that the reports on goals be tabled until the next meeting in the interest of time.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

Goal #1 – Merlock Jackson (information to follow)

Goal #2 – Boudreau (information to follow)

Goal #3 – Karn (information to follow)

Goal #4 – Merlock Jackson (information to follow)

Goal #5 – Lawrence (information to follow)

Goal #6 – Doughty (information to follow)

Goal #7 – Moody (information to follow)

Goal #8 – Marsden (information to follow)

Goal #9 – Marsden (information to follow)

Goal #10 – Downey (information to follow)

XI. Discussion then turned to several action items, beginning with a return to Phil Simpson's proposal about opening a new account for the endowment:

A. Phil Simpson presented the following proposal:

The Governing Board of the Popular Culture Association hereby resolves that it authorizes the establishment of a second investment account, known as a liquid based account using a dynamic multi-asset strategy, through J. P. Morgan Chase Bank of up to \$275,000. This account will be opened by PCA Executive Director Lynn Bartholome and co-managed with Endowment Chair Phil Simpson, for the sole purpose of grant payments to approved recipients.

It was duly moved and seconded to approve the motion on establishing a second investment account.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

Following discussion, it was generally agreed that the statement should be amended as follows:

The Governing Board of the Popular Culture Association hereby resolves that it authorizes the establishment of a second investment account, known as a liquid based account using a dynamic multi-asset strategy, through J. P. Morgan Chase Bank of up to \$275,000. This account will be opened by the PCA Executive Director and co-managed by the Endowment Chair for the sole purpose of grant payments to approved recipients.

It was duly moved and seconded to approve the amended motion on establishing a second investment account.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

B. Kathy Merlock Jackson addressed Yuya Kiuchi's proposal to hold a virtual fall conference. Discussion about this proposal focused on how the virtual conference might impact the regional conferences currently being planned. Concern was also raised about how the virtual conference could impact the 2021 conference. Discussion also turned to the current status of regional conferences. It is not certain which conferences will be held in person yet.

It was duly moved and seconded that the board not approve the proposed virtual fall conference.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

C. Beth Downey provided an update on creating a Digital Marketing Board Position. The description of this position is as follows:

The Digital Media Director serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the PCA Governing Board and as a liaison between the webmaster and the Board. Additionally, the Digital Media Director will oversee the PCA's social media accounts.

It was duly moved and seconded that Digital Media Director position be created as described.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

D. Award Naming: Brenda Boudreau next proposed that the Best Electronic Research Award and the Dissertation Award be renamed as follow:

It was duly moved and seconded that the Best Electronic Research Award be named the Allen Ellis Electronic Research Award.

Discussion turned to the rationale behind choosing Allen Ellis for this award. Ellis has been a key figure in championing this area.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

It was duly moved and seconded that the Dissertation Award be named the Kathy Merlock Jackson Best Dissertation Award.

Discussion turned to the rationale behind choosing Kathy Merlock Jackson as the name for this award. It was agreed that her contributions to the organization in so many ways warrant this change. Merlock Jackson disconnected from the discussion during these deliberations and returned to the call after the vote.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

Brenda Boudreau next presented the following language as criteria for the Bartholome Award for approval.

It was duly moved and seconded that the board accept the proposed criteria for the Bartholome Award:

In January, the president will appoint a committee of two additional board members to work with the president and the VP of Awards to secure nominations and make a recommendation for the Bartholome Award for the following year. These nominations will be solicited from current board members, including ex-officio members. A letter of nomination and a resume from each nominee will be submitted for consideration. The committee will make a recommendation, to be forwarded to the board before the winter virtual meeting, and the full board will vote to approve the nomination at that meeting. Promotional materials for the following year's recipient will then be disseminated at the national meeting. The Bartholome Award recognizes significant contributions to the field of popular culture studies. The recipient should be a PCA member in good standing, who will make a keynote presentation at the national meeting the following year.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

F. Lynn Bartholome then presented on the topic of membership / area chair fee changes.

It was duly moved and seconded that members be active members when they submit proposals for the 2021 conference.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

*At 5:03 Eastern, it was duly moved and seconded that the meeting continue past the posted end time.*

*Vote: Yes 16; No: 0*

G. Business then turned to the topic of offering Sheila Yarnell an honorarium for her service to the organization.

It was duly moved and seconded that Sheila Yarnell be offered a \$1,000 honorarium for her service to the board as part of cancelling the 2020 conference.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

After further discussion, the proposal was amended as follows:

It was moved and seconded that Sheila Yarnell's honorarium be amended so that the total amount would be \$1,000 after taxes.

Vote: Yes 16; No: 0

## XII. Discussion then turned to board position elections:

The current board positions include Board Treasurer, Board Chair, Board Secretary. Kathy Merlock Jackson provided context for these openings. The bylaws require that each position be filled by at-large members. Lynn Bartholome agreed to set up the election electronically. Details about the nominations and the election will be sent to board members via email.

XIII. Updates: Lynn Bartholome next reported on the status of the BGSU office and on changes to the submission page on the website.

Lynn Bartholome reported that there is no definitive date when the PCA Office on the BGSU campus will reopen. Although there is a tentative reopening date for the Jerome Library, it will reopen in phases and many library employees may continue to work from home. In addition, the Browne Library (where the PCA Office is located), may be open by appointment only in the fall. Si for the foreseeable future, the PCA staff will continue to work remotely.

## XIV. Planning for Boston 2021 and Publishing Updates:

- a. It was generally agreed that further discussion on Boston 2021 can wait until a later meeting since President Merlock Jackson provided a brief update in her opening remarks. Susan Faludi is the 2021 Presidential Award honoree and will speak on Thursday evening at the dinner reception. She has already been signed. Kevin Willmott will be the recipient of the Ray and Pat Browne Award for Contributions to the Popular Arts and will speak on Saturday afternoon. A new contract has been sent to him.
- b. Lynn Bartholome updated the Board on her book on the Second Generation of Popular Culture Scholars. She hopes to finish the manuscript and submit it to McFarland by the end of 2020.
- c. Ann Larabee then provided an update on the long-term idea to develop a book series highlighting the Ray Browne School of writing about popular culture. She is planning to publish a section in the Journal of Popular Culture on this topic rather than pursue a book series at this time. A section in JPC will increase awareness of the Ray Browne School and lead to more discussion on this subject.

## XV. New Business.

- a. Ann Larabee then proposed the following statement on academic freedom for the organization to adopt:

True to the vision of its founder, Ray B. Browne, the Popular Culture Association upholds the tradition of free intellectual inquiry by the people, as represented in its journals and academic conferences. This encompasses topics, ideas, language, and scholarly discourse.

It was duly moved and seconded that the board adopt the statement on academic freedom.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

- b. Novotny Lawrence next proposed a PCA statement against Police Brutality and Social Injustices.

Statement here: The Governing Board of the Popular Culture Association denounces police brutality against Black people and other people of color, which is the product of systemic racism. We staunchly oppose the institutional forces that consistently devalue the lives of Black people and members of other historically marginalized populations. As an organization, the PCA works against racism and discrimination in all its forms, a point evidenced by our Vice President of Diversity, Outreach, and Inclusion position, and our **code of conduct**, which strictly prohibits “ Harassing or intimidating others based on gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, religion, geographic location, age, or other group identity.” Further, the PCA supports the work against social injustices in *The Journal of Popular Culture*, the *Journal of American Culture*, and at the National Conference in subject areas such as Black Popular Culture, Asian Popular Culture, Gay, Lesbian and Queer Studies, Gender and Media, Latin American Literature and Culture, and Women’s Studies, among many others. While we are very proud of the work in which we are currently engaged, we also recognize that the struggle against racism and social injustices is ongoing. The PCA leadership will remain vigilant in its efforts to make our association a welcoming and inclusive space, and to that end, we also encourage feedback from our members to help us fulfill our mission. We must all work together to exact lasting change against social inequities.

It was duly moved and seconded that the board adopt statement against Police Brutality and Social Injustices.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

- c. David Silverman proposed that areas within PCA be explored for possible overlap and merged with other areas as appropriate.

It was duly moved and seconded that David Silverman should explore possible merging of areas where there is overlap.

Vote: Yes: 16; No: 0

#### XVI. Next meetings:

- a. It was generally agreed that the bylaws meeting would be scheduled for June 19 from 2:00-5:00PM. This time may need to be changed.
- b. It was generally agreed that planning for the mid-year virtual meeting would be addressed at the bylaws meeting.

Meeting ended with a thanks for outgoing board members.

It was duly moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. 5:48 PM.