

NeMLA Executive Board Meeting, October 30, 2015
Phone Conference, 12:00pm

Executive Board Members Present:

Ben Railton, Fitchburg State University, President; Daniela Antonucci, Princeton University, Past-President; Mari DiFrancesco, Ithaca College, Second Vice President

Executive Board Members Absent:

Hilda Chacon, Nazareth College, First Vice President

Non-Board Members Present: Carine Mardorossian, University at Buffalo, Executive Director; Brandi So, Stony Brook University, Associate Director; Jesse Miller, University at Buffalo, Graduate Assistant

- I. Call to Order: The Meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by Executive Director Carine Mardorossian.
- II. Executive Director's Report, Carine Mardorossian:
 - a. Executive Board Meetings: ED Mardorossian discussed the move away from the model of in-person meetings to a new model consisting of three meetings a year. The first executive board meeting would take place by phone sometime between mid-July and mid-August, after a May site visit, with a focus on budget and vision for the coming year. The second executive board meeting would take place by phone before the convention once there is a clear sense of where convention is going and if everything is in place. The third meeting would be an in-person meeting of the full board to take place at the brunch on Sunday of convention.
 - b. Board positions: In response to unwieldy size of board, ED Mardorossian proposed reviewing all board positions to evaluate effectiveness. The Diversity position was discussed in this regard.
 - c. Staff and Fellows: Graduate Assistant Miller discussed changes to NeMLA Graduate Fellows Program and goals of making Fellows program more productive for both the organization and for graduate fellows. ED Mardorossian acknowledged and thanked hard work of staff.
 - d. Future conventions: 2017, 2018, 2019
 - i. Baltimore 2017: Currently dealing with contract - didn't provide any breakout rooms for Thursday.
 - ii. Pittsburgh 2018 : Will take place at the Omni. Breakout rooms available 24 hours a day.
 - iii. 2019: Discussed possible locations for big 50th anniversary year. ED Mardorossian solicited suggestions and proposed Boston, because NeMLA was born in Massachusetts, and Niagara Falls, because of NeMLA's connection with the University at Buffalo. President Railton suggested involving the incoming second VP to help decide.

- iv. Other Conventions: Discussion on considering Toronto for future convention because of positive relationships between NeMLA and Ryerson, Fairmont, and the Tourism Board and desire to support Canadian members.
- e. 2015 Convention-Hartford:
 - i. Site visit review: ED Mardorossian discussed site visit. President Railton described initiatives to bring convention into the community through president sponsored sessions devoted to the state of the humanities, academic labor, and the public humanities, sessions at the Mark Twain House, and tours of Hartford public schools.
 - ii. Special and local events: Italian, American/Anglophone, Cultural Studies, CAITY, Grad Caucus, German, Professional/Pedagogy, WGS areas all have planned special events. French, Comp Lit, and Creative Writing areas are still finalizing plans. Local events survey going out next week to choose which events to subsidize/obtain discounts
 - iii. Poster sessions: Summer Research Fellowship recipients will now be required to provide a digital or hard copy poster showing the results of their research as a condition for receiving their check. Posters will be displayed in the exhibitors hall at the convention.
 - iv. Meet the author-available to members: Susan Howe will be first meet the author session if she agrees to read.
 - v. Workshops: Because none of the workshop conveners asked for a Budget decision was made to open workshops to everyone without charge. Executive Board discussed which four workshops to host. AD So suggested holding workshops on NEH grant writing and CV writing for future years.
 - vi. Registration system: AD So has been working with Ballast Academic Software Solutions to design custom software for scheduling and registration. She projected that because of savings from not having to use an outside vendor within three years the software will have paid for itself.

Association Director's Report

III. Financial Review:

- a. 2015 convention pulled \$18,000 in profit, in part due to favorable exchange rate and hotel flexibility with standing fees. For Hartford looking at conservative budget. Because of working with two major vendors, hotel and convention center, and high service fee charges at convention center, a \$3,000 loss was projected for 2016 convention. \$150,000 currently in bank account. AD So counseled on the importance of keeping \$75,000 to \$100,000 in account at all times in case of emergency.

IV. Officer's Reports:

- a. Second Vice President, Maria DiFrancesco: Discussed efforts to secure a commitment from the University of Pittsburgh for 2018 convention. Proposed “The Working Class and the Humanities” as a potential theme.
 - b. Past President, Daniela Antonucci: Discussed progress on NeMLA Book Award. Deadline extended for two weeks to encourage more submissions. Discussion of who can participate as a reader for the award. ED Mardorossian said that readers could be from the NeMLA board, former board members, or even relevant specialists in the field who have a stake in NeMLA.
- V. Approval of Spring 2015 Minutes: ED Mardorossian made a motion to approve the minutes for the Spring 2015 Board minutes. Past President Antonucci approved, Second VP DiFrancesca seconded.