



Minutes
2012 OAH BUSINESS MEETING
Frontier Airlines Center, Milwaukee, WI
April 21, 2012

The 2012 OAH Business Meeting was called to order at 3:43 p.m. by President Alice Kessler- Harris.

A motion to approve the minutes of the 2011 OAH Business Meeting (as published in the awards booklet) was presented, duly seconded, and passed.

President's Report. OAH President Kessler-Harris noted that the organization is moving forward at quite an impressive pace on several fronts. Kathy Finley is in her second year as executive director, and the national office is in good working order. The financial health of the organization is good; the budget is balanced. Two areas on which the board is focused are increasing membership and being more inclusive so the OAH can reach a broader audience.

Kessler-Harris reported that the OAH has a number of exciting initiatives, including a program with the American History Research Association of China. This program will allow American scholars to have a short-term residency in China and Chinese scholars to have a short-term residency in the United States.

The organization is also rethinking the *OAH Magazine of History* and how it can better serve the new face of the profession. The OAH wants a magazine that is usable and attractive. Carl Weinberg has resigned as *MOH* editor. Kessler-Harris thanked Weinberg for all the good work he has done for the *OAH Magazine*.

Treasurer's Report. OAH Treasurer Jay Goodgold noted that the OAH is in good financial shape. The organization has a balanced budget, owing to the diligence of the OAH staff and President Alice Kessler-Harris. The organization has established a new cash flow projection in Fiscal Year 2011-2012, and it has helped the OAH manage its finances more effectively. As he had pointed out last year, the OAH's revenues are "lumpy" and don't come in evenly over the year. Indiana University is an important relationship for the OAH, and we continue to have a good working relationship with them. This is also the first full year with Oxford University Press, and both Oxford and the OAH are pleased with their work. One area that has benefited the OAH from the Oxford partnership is an increase in international subscriptions to the *Journal of American History*. Goodgold thanked everyone who has worked on the National Park Service Collaborative Program and the OAH Distinguished Lectureship Series and noted that these programs are working well and are important elements of the OAH's mission. The OAH's investments are managed by the IU Foundation, and the foundation has done a good job for the organization. The OAH is looking to diversify its revenue sources and develop new sources of revenue that are in line with the organization's mission. He noted that donations have gone up, and he thanked the Leadership Advisory Council's cochairs, Bill Chafe and Paul Sperry, for their diligent fundraising efforts. Goodgold remarked that the staff is excellent.

Executive Director Report. Executive Director Katherine Finley thanked everyone including the staff, conference attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, and members who made this a good year. She noted that over the past year, there have been a number of successes and a few challenges at the organization. During the past year, the OAH has converted its database to an online one to improve membership service. Financially, the organization is in good shape. The OAH finished the year with a \$134,767 surplus. The auditors issued a “clean” audit opinion and were pleased with the OAH’s reporting procedures. For the third year in a row, the OAH is expecting a surplus for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Finley reported that the OAH’s election in the winter resulted in the following slate of candidates (to take their seats on the OAH Executive Board after the Annual Meeting):

OAH President, Albert M. Camarillo, Stanford University
OAH President-Elect, Alan M. Kraut, American University
OAH Vice President, Patricia Nelson Limerick, University of Colorado

OAH Executive Board Members:

David W. Blight, Yale University
Lori D. Ginzberg, Penn State University
Amy J. Kinsel, Shoreline Community College

OAH Nominating Board:

Billie Jean Clemens, Swain County (NC) High School
Kevin Gaines, University of Michigan
Stephanie McCurry, University of Pennsylvania

The total ballots cast this year was 1,755 (23.6 percent of current members), which is the highest level of OAH member election participation during the ten years we have kept records.

The areas of focus for this past year have been membership, communications, jobs and careers, advocacy, and developing other revenue sources. In terms of membership, the OAH has streamlined the dues billing process to concentrate on marketing to members and improving membership services. The OAH has developed a number of joint memberships with other organizations and is developing marketing plans to target prospective members. Finley noted that the organization is working hard to develop plans to attract young and emerging scholars to the changing history profession. The current membership is at 7,500.

Communications is another area of focus for the OAH. The OAH is concentrating its efforts on getting the word out about all the good work that it does for the history profession. The OAH has done this by developing a monthly e-newsletter, resuming a quarterly print newsletter (which won an award from the Indiana Society of Association Executives for the best newsletter), regularly posting on the Web site; improving the OAH’s visibility in various forms of social media; and publishing the OAH’s first annual report (online).

Recognizing the changing landscape of the history profession, the OAH also is focusing on jobs and careers. The OAH has a career center on the Web site and is developing a career tool kit that should debut this fall. It also advocates for the profession through the National Humanities Alliance and the National History Coalition.

The OAH also is working hard to develop other revenue sources. Efforts have included ramping up the annual fund and establishing a planned giving program. Recently, the OAH received a \$50,000 bequest from the estate of Horace Samuel and Marion Merrill. The bequest will be used to establish five, \$500 travel stipends for graduate students to the annual meeting. The OAH also continues to enhance and bolster the National Park Service program and the Distinguished Lectureship Series. The latter also won

an award for best non-dues revenue program among associations in the state of Indiana. Finley reported that this year's joint annual meeting with the NCPH had 2,200 attendees and hotel room blocks were completely filled.

Despite progress, Finley noted that the OAH still faces challenges such as the loss of the Teaching American History grants, and many of its members face serious economic challenges both as a part of the recession and as universities save money by hiring part-time and adjunct faculty.

Finley concluded that overall the OAH is in a much better position than it was a few years ago to meet its challenges. She concluded that the OAH's finances are strong, and its desire to serve its members and the field is even stronger.

Nominating Board Report. Lynn Dumenil, Chair of the OAH Nominating Board, reported that the Nominating Board had met and chose Jon Butler, Yale University, as Vice President of the OAH (term to begin after the 2013 OAH Annual Meeting) The nominating board is completing the slate for the open Executive Board and Nominating Board seats and will submit their completed report soon.

Executive Editor Report. Executive Editor Ed Linenthal noted that this has been the seventh report he delivered at the annual meeting. During the past year, there have been five issues of the *OAH Magazine of History* published. Issues published include the Civil War at 150: Origins, September 11, environmental history, civil rights, and the Civil War at 150: Mobilizing for War. The July issue of the *Magazine* will focus on History Day. Linenthal added that the *OAH Magazine* has sponsored a round table at the conference on teaching the Civil War, has a Facebook page, and has adopted a modified peer review policy. Editorial assistant Ángel Flores-Rodríguez will be returning home to Puerto Rico to finish research on his dissertation and Carl Weinberg will be leaving the *OAH Magazine* at the end of July to take a teaching position at Indiana University. The June issue of the *Journal of American History* focuses on the history of oil in America. Future state-of-the-field essays will focus on women's history, environmental history, and sports history. He thanked Alice Kessler-Harris for her help on the women's history state-of-the-field essay. Finally, Ed noted that since he has been at the *Journal*, there have only been two conditional acceptances of articles after receiving initial reader reports. One of those occurred a few months ago and was from a graduate student.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 with Alice Kessler-Harris turning the meeting over to the incoming president Al Camarillo.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine M. Finley