

Beta Phi Mu Executive Board
Summer Online Board Meeting Minutes -- FINAL
Saturday, June 27, 2020
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM CDT

Present: Gordon Baker, Cecelia Brown (President), Michelle Demeter, Vicki Gregory (Interim Treasurer), Emily Knox (Vice President/President Elect), Alison Lewis (Executive Director), Camille McCutcheon, Heather Moulaison-Sandy, Sheri Ross, Laura Saunders, and Elaine Yontz (Past President).

The meeting was called to order slightly after 10:30am. There were no changes to the agenda.

April 2020 Online Board Minutes review and approval: Because there was not a quorum present for most of this meeting, and there was limited response to the draft minutes when they were presented earlier, it was decided to simply log these minutes as "Unofficial."

Budget Update and Finances: The 2020 Budget and year-to-date figures were provided in the board packet. We currently have a budget overage of more than \$14,000; we have close to \$53,000 in reserve. Gregory reported that we should be eligible to apply for the federal government Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Lewis reported having already applied for PPP through Citizens Bank, where the BPM accounts are held. Unfortunately, she believes she may have made a mistake in filling out the application form as she received an automated message requesting IRS 940 - payroll filing, which we do not have. It was not possible to supply the form or revise/correct the application, so she assumes that our application will be denied.

Saunders suggested contacting Elsevier for possible financial support for scholarships. We will explore if there is anyone with possible contacts to reach out.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee: Elaine Yontz, Chair of the Nominating Committee reported. The full election results were provided in the board packet. Tom Rink was elected Vice President/President Elect. Vicki Gregory was elected Treasurer. Camille McCutcheon was elected to a second term as Director-at-Large. Mirah Dow and Jack Fisher were both newly elected as Directors. Both by-laws changes passed.

Lewis suggested that write-in candidates from the ballot be considered as nominations for the next election. Yontz suggested starting the work of the Nominating Committee sooner. To this end, she will encourage nominations beginning at the Membership meeting in the afternoon, with people being directed to contact Brown as the incoming Chair of the Nominating Committee with their nominations and suggestions, ccing HQ.

Scholarship Committee: Camille McCutcheon, Chair of the Scholarship Committee reported. The following are the 2020 scholarship and award winners: Reed Scholarship: Tobias Paul - University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Woolls Scholarship: Nicole Pereversoff - University of Western Ontario; Lancour Fellowship: Erin Eldermire, Head, Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library, Cornell University Library; Garfield Fellowships: Houda El mimouni - Drexel University, Jiangen He - Drexel University, Wenqing Lu - Simmons University, Lassana Magassa - University of Washington, Martin Nord - University of Western

Ontario, and Bonnie Tulloch - University of British Columbia. McCutcheon expressed her appreciation for everyone who served on the committee this year and reported that all went smoothly.

Lewis reported that HQ had received an email from Lancour winner Erin Eldermire, reporting that her planned research trip to Costa Rica has been put on “hold” and her research sabbatical from Cornell has been deferred, due to travel restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Eldermire wished to know how this would affect the Fellowship and was told that her question would be referred to the board. The board decided to proceed with dispersing the funds as usual with the understanding that the winner will use them when she is able to and will acknowledge Beta Phi Mu in published accounts of her research, as expected. HQ will inform her of the decision and proceed accordingly.

It was suggested that we might require that scholarship winners apply for Professional Membership in Beta Phi Mu. Lewis stated that Reed and Woolls winners would not be eligible and that, at least in the past, some of the other scholarship winners have already been members. We can encourage Lancour and Garfield winners to apply when they are contacted regarding their scholarship paperwork.

Election controversy and response: There was some discussion about concerns that were raised in comments on the election ballot, in emails to HQ, and on social media. Discussion centered on both what we need to do for the up-coming membership meeting and what we need to do as an organization moving forward. Regarding questions about the candidates, it is assumed that everyone nominated will adhere to the Article XIV Non-discrimination clause in our by-laws. Concerns about persons’ current states of residence seem unfounded. Concern about Tom Rink’s self-identification as a former police officer will be something he needs to address himself; the board cannot do this for him. Tom should not be “put on the spot” to address this at the afternoon membership meeting, but should be given some time to consider how and where he would like to respond. Possibilities for venues include posting something on our website and/or an article in an upcoming edition of our newsletter.

Moving forward, we need to consider what steps we can take as an organization to address issues of racial justice. In previous email discussion, Saunders presented a useful list of ideas for things that BPM can actively do in this area, from encouraging Scholars Series book submissions that focus on relevant topics, reaching out to diversity scholarship winners with more personalized invitations to join BPM, asking chapters to recognize members active in anti-racist work, and more. Another idea that came up was to include an equity and diversity/anti-racism statement in our mission statement. [We do not have a formal mission statement, but could amend our by-laws to include this. – AML] It was also expressed that it would be useful to hear ideas and feedback on these matters from the membership as well. Whether or not we need a committee to work on these ideas will be considered at our next meeting.

For the upcoming membership meeting, Knox will address the present and future of our organization, and issues under consideration. She will encourage members to reach out to her with ideas and/or put suggestions in the “chat” area of our Zoom meeting.

BPM HQ Disposition/Restructuring: Lewis reminded the board that her company’s contract to provide association management services for BPM ends on August 31, 2020. They are no longer willing to take on an additional contract for services, but can provide services on a month-to-month basis until other arrangements have been made, up to one year from the end of the present contract. Brown reported that the committee to consider HQ disposition had met to further discuss the working board idea but had no new information to bring forward at this time. Lewis expressed concern that the working board idea may not “work” given the difficulties in finding people to serve on the board even under

expectations of a lower work load. She brought forth another possibility, which would be to see if ALA would be willing to take over management of the organization. As the umbrella professional organization for LIS, ALA has a vested interest in having an honor society as part of the profession's standing. BPM also generates some income that could help support a staff member doing the work, and if arrangements could be made soon enough, the organization would also come with a small nest egg of funds. Knox opined that it would probably be necessary to create a working board anyway, even if the organization moved to ALA. We will further explore who to potentially reach out to at ALA to discuss this. Knox moved, and Yontz seconded, a proposal to formally start transitioning to a working board starting in September. The motion carried.

Scholars Series Update: Scholars Series editor Andrea Falcone provided a written report which was included in the board packet. Lewis conveyed Falcone's reminder that board members should continue to seek out authors for the series, and her encouragement that board members consider writing a book for the series themselves. The idea of actively encouraging titles addressing anti-racism and other social justice issues was reiterated.

Future Meetings: It is our normal practice to meet online in the fall, usually in October. We will plan to do so again this year, with the possibility of meeting earlier, possibly in September. ALA is currently taking the position that their Midwinter meeting will take place in Indianapolis in 2021, as planned. We will hold off on making a decision regarding a winter meeting until more information is known.

Online Membership Meeting: The BPM membership meeting will be held online via Zoom later in the afternoon. The draft agenda for that meeting was considered and adjustments made. Cecy will encourage attendees to participate in the online raffle as part of her opening remarks. Lewis will announce the raffle results toward the end of the meeting. Knox will cover Beta Phi Mu updates, issues, and future plans. Lewis will update the agenda and provide it to the board in advance of the membership meeting.

The meeting concluded close to 12 noon, with the intention to regroup at the online membership meeting on Zoom, which Knox will open 15 minutes in advance of the 2:30pm start time.