

## June 3, 2019 Board Meeting Notes

### Introduction/Previous Board Minutes

- Chris opened with a toast to 50 years of AJS
- Minutes of last Board meetings were approved

### President's Report (Christine Hayes)

- Comment about our financial health. It is very strong. We are now in a position to invest in our organization. We saw extraordinary membership support. Our members deserve a return of their investment in us. We have about \$1.1 million in unrestricted reserves, which is about 12 months of operating budget.
- Work on strategic plan; would like to act on it soon
- New initiatives: grants and podcasts
- Operationalizing sexual misconduct procedures through incremental approach. Team of six ombuds people with body of people on standby for panel. Will first train three ombuds people and four-five for formal committee. Identified two individuals who will train ombuds people beginning in September, 2019.

### Executive Director Report (Warren Hoffman)

- Highlights of past year and where we are going in future years
  - Podcasts (launched three episodes so far, working on fourth, have plans for a fifth on White Supremacy and Anti-Semitism)
  - Arts and Culture Community Grants
  - Social Media (Facebook and Twitter)
  - Professional Development
  - Issues facing contingent faculty and alt-academic opportunities
    - Year-round mentorship program
    - Hire "the professor is in" for free one-on-one consultation with contingent faculty.
    - Building partnership with JCAA
  - Public Humanities
    - Writing Beyond the Academy
    - Work with Op-Ed Project
    - Op-ed prize to recognize excellence in public-facing writing
  - Support Jewish Studies program directors
  - Conference Updates
    - Going to San Francisco in 2023
  - Money and Funding

### Contingent Faculty Update (Steve Weitzman)

- Tenure-track system is eroding or under duress. Many of our colleagues do not have a prospect for tenure, and they are often in vulnerable positions. Convened a working group to create a statement on contingent faculty, and would like Board to affirm that statement. Would also like to create a task force or committee to think more deeply

about how best to support contingent faculty. The Board had a lengthy conversation about the statement.

- The Board was particularly concerned about the diversity of contingent faculty
- What does a board-initiated task force do: go out to community and get data, then figure out what AJS can do to support that underserved population.
- Vote to approve Contingent Faculty Statement was approved as was the development of a task force on contingent faculty.

### **Strategic Planning Discussion** (Jeffrey Shoulson)

- Committee reviewed SWOT analysis and how to channel goals into objectives, activities, responsibilities, outcomes, time-frame, costs, and Board involvement.
- Strategic plan is a living document
- Board had an extensive discussion about the strategic plan working document

### **Break for Lunch**

### **Treasurer's Report** (Ken Koltun-Fromm)

- Presentation of budget and budget was approved with additional expense of \$20,000 in the miscellaneous category to help support new initiatives
- Presentation of Audit

### **Publications Report**

- AJS Review (Adam Shear and Carol Bakhos)
  - Discussion of editorial Board members
  - Adam and Carol will be stepping down in one year (summer 2020)
- AJS Perspectives (Chaya Halberstam and Mira Sucharov)
  - Discussion of current and upcoming issues

### **Presentation by VP of Programs** (Noam Pianko)

- Discussion of membership numbers, submissions to conference, accepted conference panels (primary and secondary proposals), possible challenges to future evaluations of proposals, and plenary session at conference

### **The Art of Gathering** (Warren Hoffman)

- Group activity about why we go to the AJS conference, and our experiences at conferences.
- Why do we come together (*The Art of Gathering*, Priya Parker)
  - Discussion of beginning, middle, and end of a meeting/gathering/conference
  - How do we become more welcoming and inclusive at the conference?

### **New Business**

- Presentation and Voting of New Bylaws

- The Board discussed changes but questioned what happens if the Board slate is not approved. The Board added a statement to respond to this possibility. The Board passed the new bylaws.
- New Conflict of Interest Statement
  - The Board discussed the import of this statement and approved the new conflict of interest statement

### **Issues to Discuss**

- Public Humanities
  - The Board discussed how can we support our members who engage in public scholarship.
    - We should think about leveraging humanities centers and labeling what we do as public humanities.
    - We also have social scientists as AJS members, so should think of a broader category than “humanities.”
    - What do we mean by the public? Who are we are trying to reach and talk to?
    - Workshops on grant writing? Perhaps personal conversations or webinars?
- Interviewing at the Conference
  - There have been conversations among a number of organizations about whether it is fair to hold interviews at conferences.
  - Do we want to model how to be fair and equitable and no longer endorse holding interviews at the AJS conference?