

Minutes 2020
Executive Committee Agenda
Southern Sociological Society
Virtual Jacksonville, FL Meeting

Wednesday, April 1
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Present: Beth Rushing, Toni Calasanti, Kylie Parrotta, David Brunisma, Marni Brown (exited call at 5:30) Brown, Denise Bissler, Kirsten Dellinger, Lisette Garcia, Barbara Combs, Will Tyson, Katie Acosta, Kendra Jason (non-voting), Stephanie Bohon (non-voting), Cameron Lippard (non-voting), Margaret Hagerman (non-voting)

Not present: Eduardo Bonilla Silva and Chris Ellison

Welcome, Approval of Inter-Meeting Minutes, President Rushing's Report

President Beth Rushing called meeting to order at 2:05. She began by welcoming us all to the call, going over some Zoom tech issues, and recapping our recent decision to cancel the Jacksonville meeting.

We reviewed the annual committee reports in order of submission, except for those that would be covered later on the agenda (Finance, Nominations, DEI). Toni Calasanti expressed concern that the publications committee was missing information and statistics about *Social Currents*, such as publications received and accepted. Lisette Garcia brought up missing info from CREM report regarding the happy hour and that she was incorrectly identified as the liaison for the previous year when she wasn't yet on the EC.

Beth Rushing said we needed to address Membership Committee concerns. Of their suggestions, we cannot give free membership to graduate students as it isn't budget neutral and the fees are reasonable for students.

Tanetta Anderson received information from Amanda Koontz (2019 Program Chair). Kylie Parrotta is compiling this information to update the handbook and to create a chair's manual.

Toni Calasanti inquired about the logistics of canceling the meeting, like not having Beth's presidential address. Beth said the 2020 awards could be announced and celebrated in 2021. Toni said that we should celebrate those who we lost this year as well. Denise Bissler will work with Katie Acosta to work on the awards ceremony and

Beth Rushing will work with Adia Harvey Wingfield in going forward with the program and how to incorporate key parts of the Jacksonville program into the NOLA program. Dave Brunsma looked back to see what happened the year they cancelled due to the war, but he couldn't easily access that information at Virginia Tech because his books are in his office.

We discussed the need for social media presence for the journal to get readers more engaged. Toni Calasanti said that they tried to outsource the efforts to graduate students, but that it was unsuccessful.

Will Tyson stressed that we should bring in applied work and community response to the COVID-19 at the NOLA meeting.

There is information being lost in the transition between committee chairs (Lisette Garcia and Kirsten Dellinger shared their experiences transitioning onto EC and serving as liaisons). Kylie Parrotta is working to compile information to disseminate between chairs, to clarify the liaison role, and to smooth the transition process. Beth Rushing and Adia Wingfield will work with her to get information from the chairs and to compile the documents to smooth the transition. The EC discussed the role of the liaison and facilitating the transition of the chairs into their positions and the new EC onto the EC. Cameron brought up that the President-elect and VP-elect are supposed to be doing that with the committees. Dave Brunsma and Stephanie Bohon brought up that we used to have a transition meeting on the program where this type of information would be passed on and new President's could give their charges, but it was a scheduling nightmare and not everyone always attended. Dave Brunsma suggested making a video or power point and Adia Wingfield seconded the suggestion for doing it electronically. Adia said it would have been helpful to have that information available for people to be willing to be appointed if they had a better idea of what the job would entail. Kirsten Dellinger said that this transition needs to be better for new people coming on to the EC too.

Site visit in the fall will need to address Committee on Gender and Sexualities concerns regarding gender neutral bathrooms and safe spaces. Dave Brunsma brought up mixed feedback from the members regarding the spaces in the past regarding the naming of the spaces. Katie Acosta reminded us that it was the Trans Justice Caucus who asked for the space and she said some members didn't understand the context of why were having it. Some saw it as exclusionary and marginalizing, not as a place for coming together. She encourages us to be transparent in our motivation for creating the space and for collaborating with the Trans Justice Caucus to let them claim the space from the start for a welcoming space. Marni Brown recommended that SWS-South and maybe Committee on Gender and Sexualities collaborate as well. She discussed the downtime, self-care types of ways to connect and bond with members. Marni will work with Baker Rogers on this. Toni Calasanti brought up the space concerns, especially with NOLA, and how these collaborations will be essential. Marni Brown, Katie Acosta, Adia

Wingfield, and Baker Rogers will move forward with this for NOLA. Dave Brunnsma said hotel space is contracted five or six years in advance. We had so much space available to us in Jacksonville that we weren't sure how we were actually going to use it all. We are starting to pull back some in the contracts to find our balance on spaces. We need to determine which ones are important for our members to make sure we are getting the spaces in our hotel contracts. If we put a requirement for a lactation space in the hotel contract they may give us access to a guest room versus having to rent an additional space – we should revise our Request for Proposals accordingly.

Will Tyson brought up changes that are going to happen in college budgets and how they could impact conference travel. Toni Calasanti echoed this caution and asked about cancellation insurance in case we need to do this again in the future. Dave Brunnsma has been working with Marisa, Barret Katuna (SWS), and Nancy Kidd (ASA), but quotes are backed up due to current circumstances. The question will ultimately be can we afford it. Beth Rushing said that insurance does not usually cover public health issues without an additional rider, which may be very costly in the future.

We voted on committee reports. Stephanie Bohon asked for more information regarding the interim votes, specifically sending the boycott letter. Beth Rushing explained that Alabama had been considering a restrictive abortion law in the fall, and that Executive Committee had voted to have SSS send a letter to state officials noting that our concern about meeting in a place that banned abortion.

MOTION: Adia Wingfield motioned to approve the committee reports and Cameron Lippard seconded. 12 in favor (unanimous). Adia Wingfield motioned to approved the interim votes. Dave Brunnsma seconded. 12 YES (unanimous).
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President's Report – Beth Rushing

Beth Rushing expressed gratitude for the work that Tanetta Andersson had done to develop the program for our 2020 meeting. She acknowledged that Tanetta had done a remarkable job of serving as program chair, despite the fact that she didn't have the type of institutional support that SSS program chairs in the past have had.

Beth Rushing reflected on our discussions about inclusion at the last meetings. Lisette Garcia agreed to chair the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce. She was excited about the work that the committee had done so far and said she'd like to join the Taskforce after she rotates out of her President role. Beth said it had been a privilege to serve and to learn how the society works from the backstage. Beth requested a break at 3:15.

Awards Discussion

The Committee on Honors submitted nominations for four awards to be granted in 2020. Beth Rushing and Toni Calasanti acknowledged the amount of work that the committee performs in reviewing applicants. The EC reviewed the award criteria and candidate materials via email and discussed both in more detail during the call. The committee reached consensus on the Roll of Honor and Junior Scholar Award.

MOTION: Cameron Lippard moved and Adia Wingfield seconded that we move to vote on the Junior Scholar (Shawn Bauldry, Purdue U) and Roll of Honor (Michael Hughes, Virginia Tech) awards. 12 YES (unanimous)

There was extensive discussion of the nomination for the Gomillion-Himes award, centering on two issues: criteria for the award and the procedures for nomination. We discussed the need to honor the spirit of the awards from the funders' eyes while reviewing the qualifications of candidates.

MOTION: Beth Rushing moves to send the application (Gomillion-Himes: Michael Royster, Prairie View A&M) back to the committee for consideration. Katie Acosta seconded the motion. 12 YES (unanimous).

Justin Tinkler was nominated for the Jocher-Boone Beard award.

MOTION: Katie Acosta made a motion to support Justine Tinkler and Marni Brown seconded. 10 YES, 1 NO, 1 ABSTAIN

We discussed the logistics of announcing 2020 award winners via email, and celebrating them alongside the 2021 award winners at the meeting in NOLA, along with the need to do a better job advertising the award opportunities to our membership through our networks, newsletters, Listserv, and social media. Dave Brunσμα brought up doing a video interview with past award winners to highlight their work and to roll it out on the new website. Cameron Lippard made a request that we make sure our awards are going to people who demonstrate commitment to our organization and society. Adia Wingfield will work with Kylie Parrotta and the next chairs to make sure that these issues are being addressed. Dave Brunσμα brought up integrating membership information into the nominations and recommendations process with the online database with Brad from Meeting Savvy, but said that the language of the procedures needed to be addressed before they operationalized it. DEI Taskforce will help advertise the awards. Katie Acosta brought up having the award winners have to give back to serve on the committee.

Dave Brunisma – EO Report

We are an hour and 15 minutes behind schedule. Dave lit a candle of serenity of hope and truncated the report that we received and reviewed via email. Dave stated that last year was rough due to extending the 2018-2019 fiscal year by 6 months to change our membership to calendar year (January 2020 – December 2020). We took a hit and we accidentally double-booked the meetings with more than one other academic meeting, which hurt attendance. We had been proposing budgets in moments of growth. No one bit on lifetime memberships. We got rid of programs and tote bags, but we didn't get membership feedback since we didn't hold the meeting. We moved to Stripe, cutting credit card fees nearly in half.

Social Currents takes up a lot of our budget and we aren't seeing royalties yet. Finance Committee met the other day and is taking an extremely conservative approach to the next few years. Adia Wingfield is already concerned about attendance for the NOLA meeting. We are all concerned about our bank account. About 80% of survey respondents have said that they want a refund for the 2020 meeting. Before we cancelled the meetings, we had about 49% of what we budgeted for. We will retain membership dues, but we'll still be 51% lower than expected. Before we cancelled meeting we had 59% of registrations. We will lose most of those to refunds. We will be about 60% short on that revenue, which are our two revenue streams. Thankfully we raised the dues when we did.

Will we make it? Dave Brunisma reviewed the costs for the remainder of the year and stated we'd be left with \$2,000 remaining for the year. If all goes as he thinks it will, based on early calculations, we wouldn't be digging into reserves and we will survive, but it will be hard. We will not be contributing to the MFA-ASA award for COSSA. SAGE has been forgiving to us regarding deadlines.

Stephanie Bohon asked about investment losses, which were about 50k. We have money in investments, but we need to do belt tightening over the next few years. In 2021 budget we stick closely to the Food and Beverage minimum. We almost always go over on the FNB no matter how hard we try. There are so many unknowns about attendance because of unpredictable university finances, but thankfully our next meeting is NOLA which has our consistently largest draw historically. Adia Wingfield is committed to cutting costs. Cameron Lippard brought up how important room shares and cutting costs will be to our members. Katie Acosta discussed how we need to incentivize people to pay out of their pocket to come to our meeting with more professional development opportunities.

Dave Brunisma proposed a budget to the Finance Committee and they usually approve it at the meetings; however, the committee wanted EC's feedback on a few lines. Dave explained how they make the budget predictions.

Line 22 – misc = will not be done this year and finance agreed. We will not pull from the investment account. For the AV, Adia Wingfield would like to try to have this minimized. Line 29 – the cost to transport is because SSS owns the materials and our team rents a van to drive down. The presidential plenaries usually cost more for the staging and equipment, but we will consider alternatives next year. Line 32 – we might be able to zero out by working with local universities to provide equipment. Line 65 – plaques and certificates = We could go away from plaques and move to certificates.

Dave Brunsma discussed moving the executive officer assistant position to a 9-month position. Slade Lellock has streamlined so many of the processes, but finance said that maybe we need to do 10.5 months to give some hours in the summer. Stephanie Bohon said that James Maples was on a 9-month contract and that they worked out his contract by redistributing the time based on ebb and flow of organization business. We discussed the editorial stipends in comparison to those offered by other journals and whether the amounts should be adjusted.

DEI Taskforce

Lisette Garcia discussed the committee formation through a solicitation process in fall of 2019. The committee members have been meeting virtually since the beginning of 2020. We've been assessing the culture and climate of the organization. We want to create a DEI statement to the organizational mission statement. Kylie and Lisette reviewed the post-evaluation event data from several past years and it was clear that not all of our members feel welcomed. There were a few dimensions of exclusion: race, gender, sexual orientation, ability and others. We had planned to host a session at SSS in Jacksonville and follow it with a survey; however, with the cancellation of the meeting we decided to amend our timeline and process. Kecia Johnson explained our plans for doing a survey and then doing virtual focus groups with our members. We will simulate our planned workshops through virtual focus groups with the plan of having a bigger session at the NOLA meeting. Lisette Garcia and Kylie Parrotta are drafting a survey and we will review it at the committee level before sharing it with the EC. Beth Rushing volunteered to join the taskforce. Will Tyson asked about people feeling welcome and who wasn't feeling that way. Lisette and Kylie reviewed the post-satisfaction survey issues. Dave Brunsma provides a summary report of the quantitative data, but the qualitative comments get at the real climate issues.

Nominations Committee – Denise Bissler

Denise Bissler thanked Dave Brunsma and Slade Lellock for their work. The report was straight forward, but the process is a lot of work. Finding nominees takes a lot of effort. She ran into a few hiccups like one person dropping out after having agreed to be nominated, but had some additional candidates and was able to complete the slate of

candidates Denise has been compiling a to do list for the next VP (Katie Acosta) and a timeline to follow.

Beth Rushing asked what we'd do to have the membership get to know the candidates since we wouldn't be having the events at the meeting. Denise said their materials were available on the website, but we could consider doing a video or something for the website. Toni Calasanti encouraged us to craft an announcement reminding people to renew their memberships so that they can vote and to review the materials available.

Conference Insurance / Site Selection

David Brunsma informed us that we are looking for a 2026 location and that our best offer has been Jacksonville, FL. This is what we suggested for getting out of the contract for cancelling 2020. Adia Wingfield inquired about Atlanta. We left center city to go to Buckhead and now will look into options for returning to midtown.

Presidential Gavel Passing

At 5:45 Beth Rushing virtually passed a "gavel" to Adia Harvey Wingfield. She expressed being thrilled to become past president and to pass on the gavel to Adia. Beth and Adia thanked the outgoing EC members.

Adia Wingfield said she was excited to work with everyone. She is still working on the theme wording, "Will America Work?: Race, Polarization, and Economic Inequality" She wants the theme to be broad so we can talk about big structural issues but to talk about them with people in NOLA talking about the local, real issues that effect people. We can spend less time talking to each other and more time talking about how the things we think about impact people. Plenary sessions will center work and economic precarity, confederate monuments, and bringing in local people who are working on these issues. This also helps us with cost cutting and thinking about real issues in real time. Adia is connected to the town with family members to connect to "thought partners." The program committee co-chairs will be Rashawn Ray and Brandon Jackson and the local committee chair will be D'Lane Compton. Adia will work with the committees to incorporate ideas for the vision of the meeting.

Toni Calasanti requested additional information from Martha Crowley about Social Currents, which will be shared via email.

Kylie Parrotta will follow up with Adia Wingfield regarding committee appointments and the chair transition process with she and Beth Rushing.

Adia Wingfield adjourned the meeting at 5:54.

Respectfully submitted,
Kylie Parrotta, Recording Secretary, 2017-2022