Friday, March 3

Present: Doug Boyd, Todd Moye, Natalie Fousekis, Anne Valk, Jennifer Cramer, Amy Starecheski, Allison Tracy, Kristine Navarro-McElhaney, Gayle Knight

The meeting was called to order by Doug Boyd at 8:11 a.m.

Minutes from the October 2016 Council meeting were discussed. Due to some confusion over two sections, Knight will revise the minutes and present them for approval on Saturday.

**OHA Institutional Search** (Dan Kerr via conference call)

Dan Kerr, chair of the Institutional Search Committee, reported on progress in finding a new home for OHA. Two organizations remain interested at this time, Middle Tennessee State University and Rutgers University. Dan and Doug Boyd have scheduled a site visit at MTSU for March 14-15. MTSU has staff available and will propose a team of Kristine McCusker and Louis Kyriakoudes. MTSU would not require an Executive Director search.

Rutgers would search for a tenured professor in the History Department who would serve as Executive Director. The Rutgers History Department approved this plan on March 2, but it will have to be approved by the Dean and Provost. The committee is giving Rutgers additional time, and full proposals are due by mid-April. Council was directed to send any questions to Kerr or Boyd.

**OHR Editor Search** (Susan McCormick via conference call)

Susan McCormick, chair of the Oral History Review editor search committee, reported on the activities of the committee via conference call. The committee is seeking approval to work toward a three-year contract for the editorial team of David Caruso, Editor, Abigail Perkiss, Manager Editor, and Janneken Smucker, Digital Editor. The committee feels that the experience of this group will make for a smooth transition from the excellent editorial team of Nasstrom and Reeves, and they will bring new ideas as well. The committee is thrilled with their proposal.

If approved, the group will search for a Book Review Editor and Pedagogy Editor. Navarro-McElhaney asked about funding for a transitional period. This has not been requested by the new team but does need to be discussed. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the recommendation of the search committee for the new editorial team.
Transition (Boyd)

- Legal: Boyd brought up the need for an attorney that we can work with long term. John Neuenschwander has been very helpful, but he is retired and is phasing out his oral history work. OHA does not want to take advantage of his connection to the Association. Council felt it would be wise to begin looking for an attorney that we can call upon to review contracts and help when we need legal advice.

- Role of Program Associate: Knight and Council talked about the lack of attention to this position in the transition proposals. This is the core administrative position in the organization, the continuation of Madelyn Campbell’s role. The Executive Director role is a new position within OHA, yet this position is all that is being discussed with potential new institutional hosts. Council discussed the possibility of hiring Gayle Knight to provide training and transitional help to a new institutional home. Knight would be willing to help with the transition but not for extended amount of time.

President’s Report/OHA Governance Discussion (Boyd)

Boyd discussed committee liaisons and charges. He will send information on committees to the appropriate Council members. Council discussed the issue that our standing committees are not spelled out in our Constitution or Bylaws, and they may need to be stated.

Boyd stated that our Standing Resolutions document is more a record of Council action rather than policy. Boyd would like to see this revised to be a working guide.

OHA Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Resolutions (Boyd)

Knight gave a brief overview of how OHA is governed and how documents can be amended. Right now, constitutional changes can only be voted on by membership at a meeting. Boyd would like to propose that changes to the Constitutional could be made online as well. Other items that need to be updated in the Constitution are our membership types and how we vote. OHA will also need a constitutional change if Council wants to add Council seats.

Council discussed online voting for amendments to the Constitution. Council did not see a downside to that and would like to investigate more. We may need an attorney to assist. Starecheski suggested we ask other ACLS members how they vote on amendment changes.

Council discussed the role of past president. It has been the custom that the past president attends the mid-winter meeting to provide guidance, but that has not been required. It is the sense of Council that it would be helpful to have the past president at both meetings and involved as an advisor. If past president is a voting member of Council, that would require a constitutional amendment.

The potential benefits of a fifth Council member were discussed. The need is seen for more people to undertake special initiatives and work with committees. The only downside appears to be financial as OHA would need to pay for their travel to meetings.

At the end of this discussion, Council directed staff to investigate how to amend OHA documents to allow for:

1) Expanding the Presidential term to four years;
2) Adding a fifth Council member;
3) Authorizing online voting for Constitutional amendment changes; and
4) Revising the standing resolution document.

Council Roles and Responsibilities (Navarro-McElhaney)
Navarro-McElhaney drafted the proposed Roles and Responsibilities document based on that of similar associations. Council members reviewed the document and would like to include liaison responsibilities, participation in committees and/or task forces, fundraising commitment, and financial oversight. The fundraising expectation should be that Council members support all efforts to raise money rather than committing to raising or giving a specific amount of money. Council wants to add language on oversight of the Executive Director, developing priorities for the Executive Director, and performance review. Council directed Navarro-McElhaney to revise the document and bring back to Council for approval.

Webinar Discussion - (Jeff Corrigan via conference call)
Navarro-McElhaney asked Jeff Corrigan, an OHA member and experienced workshop leader, to explore the potential for hosting a one-hour webinar for OHA members. The webinar would be a member benefit and a new way of communicating information. Council discussed ways to make a webinar interactive. The topic discussed was planning a community oral history project. In Jeff’s experience, this would be by far the most useful topic in helping groups decide if they have the support needed to begin an oral history project. Council was supportive of this idea with hopes of hosting one webinar in 2017. Council directed Corrigan to move forward with planning for an OHA webinar.

Nominating Committee – (Sarah Milligan via conference call)
Sarah has written a guide to the nominating committee process, a document that will be very helpful for future committees. Much of the way the committee works has been custom or tradition rather than written policy. Council discussed terms of office for elected leaders and the role of the Executive Director in the nominating process. Council believes the Executive Director should make certain that the committee has what it needs to do its work but does not participate in meetings. The OHA office has discussed pushing back the timeline for elections to give those elected more time to plan travel to the annual meeting.

Council discussed how the committee goes about the work of creating a diverse set of leaders. This has to be deliberate, and the process may need to be described more fully in policy documents.

Milligan stated the difficulty in working efficiently when the committee meets during the Annual Meeting. Suggestions were made to equip the First Vice President with information on existing leadership – their city, type of job, areas of interest – so that information could be shared with the committee. The chair of the committee is elected at that first meeting, so another suggestion was to provide all committee chairs with an information packet on how the nominating process works prior to the annual meeting.

Navarro-McElhaney pointed out that OHA documents say it is Council’s responsibility to generate potential candidates for the nominating committee, not just the First Vice President’s role. This year, both the nominating committee and Council members have been asked to suggest candidates.
Council would like to invite newly-elected leaders to the Council meeting in Minneapolis and will help by paying one night of their stay if they can attend.

2017 Annual Update (Moye)
Moye reported that he and the Local Arrangement Committee are making good progress on 2017 plans. Submission numbers for the program were strong. Rachel Seidman and Dan Kerr are the co-chairs. Other conference highlights include:

- Jill Lepore will be the keynote speaker.
- Two plenaries are planned, one organized by Wesley Hogan at Duke on documenting activism and a second on the work of Alice and Staughton Lynd.
- Christian Lopez will coordinate workshops again this year and has ideas for a great slate.
- No Sunday sessions will be scheduled, but a workshop or some activity will be offered Sunday morning to encourage people to stay in the hotel until Sunday.
- Council discussed holding the business meeting on Saturday morning rather than Sunday and agreed to try this.
- The Labor Working Committee also has proposed a plenary, so the program committee will weigh that option.

Newsletter Discussion (Knight)
Knight reviewed the issue of staff time spent on the newsletter. At this time, we are creating two versions, one digital and one print. Knight stated that there are members who still value the paper version. Council supported the idea of hiring someone to create a template for the paper version to speed the process and discussed how to post the MailChimp version of newsletter online. Council supported the idea of more frequent and smaller MailChimp newsletters and fewer printed versions.

Conflict of Interest Policy (Boyd)
Boyd asked Council to review two proposed versions of a conflict of interest policy. Council discussed the pros and cons of each version and what conflict of interest might involve. It was moved, seconded and carried to accept “version C” with edits as needed.

Attendance Policy (Boyd)
Council reviewed a proposed attendance policy and found it too lenient regarding absences. Council talked about how doing the job a person is elected to do is as important as attending meetings. After talking about how the responsibilities of the elected position could be included in this policy, it was decided to ask Navarro-McElhaney to include attendance expectations in a Roles and Responsibilities document.

The meeting was adjourned for the day at 4:40 p.m.

Saturday, March 4
The meeting was called to order at 8:43 by Doug Boyd.

Discussion on Committees - (Allison Tracy)
Navarro-McElhaney asked Tracy to explore how OHA committees are structured and functioning.
in hopes of revitalizing their work and documenting best practices. Boyd sent questions to current committee chairs to ask how they are doing and request input. The input received included:

- Chairs need more clarity on how people get on committees and ask for a wider call for participation.
- There needs to be more promotion of committee work.
- Committees want task-oriented charges.
- Committee service should be an expectation of being a member.
- A committee chair orientation would help new leaders.
- Communication with the office and Council needs to improve.

Council discussed ways the recruitment process could begin in early fall, before the meeting. That would help the incoming President who is tasked with appointing committee members right after the annual meeting. Council also agreed that using the consent agenda to have committee reports disconnects them from the work of the committees. Ideas to foster more communication between Council and committees were discussed. Ideas such as a committee lunch to bring together committee members during the annual meeting were discussed. If Council established annual goals for the organization, those could be communicated to committees as part of their charge, giving them a sense of how they can help the organization. Council gave Tracy approval to recruit OHA members to do an assessment of the committee structure and roles in the association.

**Interest Groups/Working Groups**
Council talked about why we have interest groups and their future. With no agenda, the gathering at the annual meeting can be awkward rather than stimulating. Should the groups change based on current issues? Interest groups could morph into sections like larger organizations have. Council discussed the possibility of working groups – networking around producing something intellectual. Tying groups to the topics submitted for the program has merit. Moye will reach out to leaders for the groups that seem interested – archives, social justice, etc. to see if they will facilitate a gathering at the annual meeting, but we won’t continue all of the interest groups this year.

**Document Retention (Boyd)**
OHA has no current document retention policy. OHA documents are at the UNT archives, but OHA has not sent them material in any organized fashion. Boxes of material sent to an archive are not processed unless there are active partnerships in place. Boyd stated that the goal of document retention is to make permanent records permanent and manage those that are temporary. Boyd would like to see OHA create a policy based on that of the Society of American Archivists. Digital communication is a challenge. Council made suggestions for selecting emails to save and copying an organizational email to mark those. The first step in creating a policy would be document assessment. Knight will begin assessing paper and digital files in the Executive Office to create categories for Council review.

**Advocacy Discussion (Boyd)**
Council discussed recent statements by AHA and NCPH. Council felt both were even-toned and thought OHA should be supportive. It was moved, seconded and carried to support the NCPH
Statement of Support for Federal Public History Workers and the AHA Statement of Support for the March of Science.

2019 Annual Meeting Site Selection (Knight)
Council recently completed a survey ranking what is important regarding site selection. Staff gave our representative at Helms Briscoe a list of 12 possible cities. We received proposals from one hotel in Syracuse and two hotels in Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Marriott City Center is the most highly-recommended of these with good rates and a low food and beverage minimum. Council discussed the implications of a higher food and beverage minimum as that would help OHA get more bids.

Council directed staff to try a new list of cities: Las Vegas, New Orleans, Salt Lake City, Indianapolis, Albuquerque. Council does want to ask for draft contracts from Pittsburgh and Syracuse. Staff will schedule a conference call with Council when the results of the new search come in. Council approved raising the rates for conference registration $15 for regular members and $5 for students.

Fiscal Policies and Procedures (Navarro-McElhaney)

Endowment Investment Policy

Staff feels it is prudent to have an investment policy to direct disbursements from the endowment and balancing of OHA accounts. Navarro-McElhaney stated that endowment spending needs to be linked to something concrete, and she recommends scholarships. Knight reported that the current statement regarding endowment spending in the constitution is not being followed because we are spending more than the interest. Council asked staff to add the necessary revision of that section to the list of items to amend.

Discretionary Funds policy

Staff would like guidance on spending funds within budget line items. The proposed policy includes rather high limits but can be adjusted. Council suggested revisions to the policy under review. Staff will amend and send the policy back to Council for approval.

Fiscal Policies and Procedures

The proposed fiscal policy was reviewed. Having a clear system of checks and balances is important but puts more responsibility on the office. However, the procedure outlined is our current practice as recommended by our accountant. Navarro-McElhaney stressed the important of Council oversight of credit card purchased and expenses. It was decided that the First Vice President would take on that responsibility. Council talked through the potential role of treasurer. Staff recommended a financial review for 2016 rather than a full audit. It was moved, seconded and carried to undertake a financial review for 2016.

2017 Elections/Nominating Committee Slate (Fousekis)
Fousekis presented the election slate for 2018:

Curtis Austin, First Vice President
Maggie Rivas-Rodrigues and Tomás Summers Sandoval, Council

It was moved, seconded and carried to accept the proposed slate. Due to staff confusion regarding how many seats were up for election, the nominating committee asked members to serve who are not going to be included on this year’s ballot. The committee would like to include those potential nominees in the 2018 election.

Council discussed potential nominees for the nominating committee. It was stated that the nominating committee should be composed of seasoned and/or active members. It should be a group that knows many people. Council reviewed the list of people suggested by each of them and members of the Nominating Committee. With many suggestions in hand, Fousekis will get in touch with the recommended members and bring a slate to Council for a vote. Council and staff want to have elections early and promote voting to get a higher percentage of members to vote.

Scholarship (Navarro McElhaney)
Donations were collected in 2015 and 2016 for a Cliff Kuhn Scholarship. Staff would like to get this organized so that we can award a Kuhn Scholarship this year. It was moved, seconded, and carried to create a permanent Kuhn scholarship as one of our student scholarships. The scholarship will be awarded to an outstanding student selected from the general scholarship applicant pool.

Knight brought up the fact that the chair of the scholarship committee is supposed to be a Council member according to the standing resolutions. Erin McCarthy has volunteered to serve as chair for a second year in 2017, but Council should go back to appointing a Council member in 2018.

Minutes
After reviewing the revised minutes of the October 2016 Council meeting, it was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Sunday, March 5

The meeting was called to order by Doug Boyd at 9:05 a.m.

OHR Report/OHR Transition - Troy Reeves, Managing Editor
Reeves reported on the upcoming year of the Oral History Review.

• Book reviews, which had been declining in past years, have increased under the leadership of David Caruso.
• Editors have been receiving more international submissions than domestic.
• OHR blog posts are scheduled for the remainder of the year with very few openings.
• OHR will again have a student as social media coordinator at OHA 2017.
• Oxford has a new platform that looks better but imbedded audio is still a problem.

Starecheski reported that Cambridge University Press is interested in publishing the OHA journal. This is worth consideration when renewal comes close. Council asked Troy and Kathy as well as staff to document their dealings with Oxford and suggestions for the future. Council discussed the value of a transition meeting, and a stipend for this is included in the 2017 budget.

**Membership Committee/Task Force Discussion** - Troy Reeves
Reeves has volunteered to work on issues regarding membership. Council discussed creating a Membership Task Force to work with the existing membership committee on a survey. A thoughtful survey could provide invaluable information for the new staff coming in next year. It was moved, seconded and carried to authorize the creation of a Membership Task Force to work until the end of 2017.

**New Business**

Council talked about necessity of regular conference calls to push forward with policies, 2019 annual meeting site, and other business. Council members interested in monthly conference calls if needed.

Starecheski suggested that it would be appropriate for OHA to take the lead on providing guidance for doing oral history with immigrant groups and on e-security for oral historians. E-security would be good webinar. Perhaps an interest group at the annual meeting on working with immigrants would be beneficial.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:41.