

Schutz American Schools of Alexandria Foundation (SASAF)
Board Meeting Minutes
Saturday, December 2, 2017

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Clark at 3:33 p.m. EST.

Board members in attendance:

Paul Clark
Stephen Jamison
Marilyn Watkins
Caroline Kurtz
Susan Knight
Jane Hall
Bill Pollock
Ed Nicholas
Mary Beth Neely
Amanda Johnson

2. Determination of Quorum

A quorum of the Board was present.

3. Adoption of the Meeting Agenda

The meeting agenda was approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the July 22, 2017, Meeting of the Board of Directors

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board were approved on a motion by Steve, seconded by Susan.

5. Opening Remarks

Paul began the meeting by reviewing the board agenda topics and by welcoming the Board's newest member, Marilyn Watkins. He then asked Sue to report on the status of the website.

6. Communications and Community-Building

Website Status

Sue reported that approximately 90 people were now registered as members for the website. She noted that many are posting comments throughout the site. New features:

- Logged-in members can find contact links to Board members on the SASAF website page, where they can also see meeting minutes. We will add in minutes from prior years as far back as we have them.
- The 2018 Grand Reunion page has been installed and updated a couple of times. In the New Year, we need to post the full schedule of events and prepare all the registration materials. We traditionally do our snail-mailing at that point.
- There is also a 2017 Reunion recap with lots of pictures posted.
- The paid-dues list was made more prominent and can be pulled up by clicking a button. When Steve has changes to the list, he should send them to Karen to update online. Steve confirmed that he is keeping the list current, including people who send checks.
- The homepage currently has a festive link to the donations page encouraging year-end donations.
- The “book club” page has started the online discussion of Cutting for Stone and the 2018 Reunion book selection is posted. Sue suggested that Board members jump in on the discussion!

Sue said that Carolyn Pollock is a new member of the Communications Committee and she is helping with the Photo Gallery and will be working on identifying and labeling all pictures there now. Sue expressed her thanks to the Pollocks for their help.

On cybersecurity, Karen researched options with our website hosting company, GoDaddy, and recommends that we purchase the Organization Validation OV SSL Certificate for \$104 the first year and \$130/year thereafter. Although it doesn't prevent all cyber attacks, it does prevent third parties from “listening” to communications between users and the website, and adds an additional layer of confidence for new initiatives, such as the proposed map of worldwide Schutzites with their email addresses.

Ed agreed that this would provide another layer of security but said that there may be cheaper SSL Certificate options and would do some research. Steve said that the budget could afford it and Paul said we should proceed with this security measure.

Sue and Karen Ezell are reviewing how the payment systems work for dues and donations, as we had received a question about paying dues without PayPal. A PayPal feature allows members to have dues paid automatically each year and Sue tested this and it works well. She asked that other Board members let her know if it works for them.

Paul said that the 2018 fundraising target matter would be brought up in the following agenda item.

Jane Hall then reported on her extensive efforts to update our primary database, especially with respect to Schutzites who have passed away, so we could avoid upsetting family members after receiving mail for their loved ones. Except for removing the deceased, she has left the complete database alone and is working with a scaled-down version that includes key contact information.

Sue said that she, Jane, Karen and Amanda have put a system in place to regularly reconcile and update the two databases. We were not able to merge them automatically, because that would require the two databases to have exactly the same fields, which has several problems. However, any updates in website member profiles automatically populate the MailChimp database and can be used to update the master database, so people need to be reminded to keep their online profiles up-dated with any changes. This can also be done by sending any changes in contact information to Jane or Sue.

Sue concluded her report by commenting that we have been receiving historical Schutz information that should be kept for posterity and asked whether this material, including documents, photos and personal information, should be loaded onto the website. Bill suggested posting documents in pdf form. Paul agreed, and said we might consider what material may be better adapted as contributions to the wiki, which would be discussed later in the agenda.

7. Finance and Budget

SASAF Financial Position

Steve reported a \$7,400 balance in the SASAF account, representing an increase of approximately \$3,400 from last year. Paul asked if this included the \$1,500 for the 2017 Meloy Scholarship award that has not yet be paid, which Steve confirmed, meaning that available funds are closer to \$4,900.

Steve said that expenses for the year were about \$2,600 including \$1,000 for routine legal services and tax filing costs, approximately \$1,000 for website development and maintenance costs, and \$600 for all other expenses including printing, mailing and shipping. He said that the SASAF website costs should go down in 2018. He noted that IRS rules require annual accounting of revenue and expenses and that if the annual balance increases over time there could be a problem with our tax-exempt status. Steve said that the majority of our 2017 revenue was from donations.

Ed noted that donations are tax-exempt while dues are not, and proposed that we put greater focus on soliciting donations. He asked if operating funds include the cost of reunions. Paul said that our reunion registration fees are generally set so that this should be a wash.

Paul asked what our dues income is for the current year. Steve said dues income so far is \$1,130. Paul noted that, with 90 people now registered on the website, our dues income

should be closer to \$3,000 and that we should be able to cover routine annual expenses from dues.

Paul said that he and Mary Beth would communicate with the School about transferring the Meloy Scholarship funds.

Annual Fundraising Target

At the July reunion the Board adopted a new system for SASAF fundraising that would set an annual target for the coming year at its year-end meeting, defining both the amount and the purpose for the next year's fundraising effort. Paul asked Steve to present his recommendation for the 2018 fundraising target.

Steve proposed \$5,000, including the amount we would contribute to the 2018 Meloy Scholarship.

Ed suggested that SASAF build its reserve amount to \$25,000 so that there would be sufficient cash available for such things as reunion hotel deposits. Steve said that we currently rely on individuals to pay such deposits with personal credit cards, and that the deposit amounts are covered when people reserve rooms. Paul agreed that we should aim to build our cash reserves over time, and proposed that for 2018 we adopt Steve's target of \$5,000, noting that we would have additional costs for the wiki initiative.

Ed commented that charitable organizations use a donor classification system to encourage donations – standard contributors, sustaining contributors, major contributors, etc. Marilyn said that we should also consider asking for donations that would be in honor or memory of people who have died. After some discussion, the Board agreed to adopt such a system. Sue said she would work with Karen to formulate it. Steve said that he would provide a breakdown on what next year's fundraising target would cover.

8. Other Business

2018 Grand Reunion in Portland, OR

Caroline reported that she has provided a list of hotels close to the McMenamins Edgefield venue for the reunion next July 13-15, and that she has negotiated a 12% discount with one of them to reserve a bloc of 12-15 rooms. Steve said he would contact the hotel to make the deposit. Several rooms reserved at Edgefield are still available, as well.

Caroline is working with a group of Schutzites in the Portland area on the reunion plan and schedule. Paul said he would contact the 2015 Grand Reunion planning team to obtain the "Schutz Jeopardy" game that was developed but wasn't used at the DC event. He asked that Caroline be given assistance with putting together the reunion registration packet that needs to be posted on the website and sent out early next year.

Meloy Scholarship

Paul said that, in early November this year, he and Caroline had met the recently-hired Schutz Head of School, Michael Schooler, in Addis Ababa. Mr. Schooler, who is currently at the International Community School in Addis, will take the reins of Schutz School starting with the 2018-2019 academic year and had contacted Caroline to learn more about the School from its years under the aegis of the United Presbyterian Church of North America. During their meeting with Mr. Schooler, Paul described the on-going discussion with Massimo Lazerta of the past several years to modify the George and Mary Lou Scholarship but that little progress has been made to-date. Mr. Schooler was not aware of the Scholarship but said that he looked forward to working with SASAF on the proposed scholarship “re-boot” and other ways that our alumni community could contribute to the life of the School.

In the meantime, Paul said that the Meloy Scholarship would continue as it is, and that he and Mary Beth would contact the School Administration on transferring the \$1,500 SASAF contribution for the 2017 award.

Wiki-Schutz

Paul asked Steve to report on progress with the initiative proposed by Charlotte Gelzer-Weaver at the July 2017 annual meeting in Butler, PA to develop an on-line “Wiki-Schutz” which was endorsed by the Board, subject to costs and other questions that had been raised by the group present during Charlotte’s presentation.

Steve reported that Charlotte and Alice Meloy are formulating the wiki to be presented year-by-year and have completed work on the initial year, with three additional years in the works. He said that he is impressed by the volume of material that has been assembled, primarily by Alice, including historical events, faculty, classes, boarding school life, meals, etc. He feels that the wiki will give the community a place to share what is part of all of us – bring back memories and would clearly support the central SASAF purpose. He said that Charlotte expects the wiki to be ready to go “live” in February, see how successful the response is, and then expand the wiki to other years.

He reviewed the cost estimate for the wiki’s development and annual operation; the development cost being around \$1,000 and the annual maintenance/administrative cost being less than \$1,000 – including website administrative support, annual website hosting, wiki plug-in cost, cybersecurity.

Sue noted that by creating a separate website for the wiki, SASAF would be duplicating costs. Ed suggested that we look into using our current web hosting license for the wiki website as a cost-saving measure.

Paul said that we had considered putting the wiki on the SASAF website, but that both Karen and Charlotte's web expert (Jason Keen) said that it would overload our website. Except for the website hosting cost and cybersecurity, the costs would be the same in either case.

Ed recommended that we have a more detailed proposal from Charlotte on how the wiki is to be formed and operated, including a more detailed budget for expanding the wiki in future years.

Marilyn suggested that we consult with Charlotte and Alice on the criteria for determining if the wiki will have achieved success, so that we have a basis for deciding whether and how to proceed with the wiki project and cost. She also asked about intellectual property rights and whether the wiki would be under the aegis of SASAF. Sue asked whether the Board would have the opportunity to make changes in the future. Ed said that the ownership matter could be important in the event that Charlotte and Alice decide to withdraw from the wiki project.

Paul pointed out that the out-of-pocket costs appear at this point to be manageable and that Charlotte and Alice are investing extensively in their time and effort without cost and deserve our support and gratitude. Several other Board members echoed this view.

Mary Beth proposed that we approve funding support to start the wiki and determine whether to continue and expand the wiki after a test-year.

A motion was made by Ed to approve the commitment of up to \$1,200 to proceed with Wiki-Schutz as an SASAF initiative on a trial basis for one year. Given the several concerns voiced by Board members with particular questions relating to the conditions under which the Wiki-Schutz would be implemented, including the matters of property rights/ownership, criteria for determining the continuation of SASAF's sponsorship of the initiative and other questions needing further discussion with Charlotte, the Board authorized Steve to communicate the Board's approval to proceed but to obtain additional clarification from her on the issues that were raised. Steve asked that any pending questions be sent to him in the next two weeks. Paul said that he would call a special meeting of the Board in January after Steve had obtained further information from Charlotte.

Steve seconded Ed's motion and it was approved.

Other

Paul raised the idea that was discussed during the Annual General Meeting at the 2012 reunion in Washington, D.C. to hold the 2024 Grand Reunion in Alexandria, Egypt, which coincides with the 100th anniversary of Schutz School. He noted that Michael Schooler had mentioned the 100th anniversary commemoration and that he endorsed this idea for further discussion and planning after he comes aboard at the School.

9. Next Meeting of the Board

Paul reiterated that he would call a special meeting of the Board in January 2018 to continue the discussion of the wiki-Schutz initiative, at such time that Steve is able to report on the results of his further interaction with Charlotte on the issues raised during the Board's discussion. The next regular meeting of the Board will be scheduled for late Winter/early Spring.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Prepared by Paul Clark with the assistance of Amanda Johnson and Susan Knight