

Schutz American Schools of Alexandria Foundation

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

Conference Call

November 9, 2014

Board members present:

Paul Clark	Dayna Bahig	Caroline Kurtz
Ed Nicholas	Susan Knight	Nathan Walker
Ed Pollock	Tina Sharif	Steve Jamison

Paul Clark, President, called the meeting to order at 1:40 PM EST.

A quorum was determined by Paul, who referred to the meeting agenda and which were then adopted.

The minutes of the last meeting (July 2014) were considered.

** A **motion** was made by Bill Pollock and seconded by Susan Knight to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed without changes or dissent.*

President's Opening Remarks

Paul invited Dayna Bahig and Caroline Kurtz to introduce themselves.

Dayna graduated from Schutz in 2004, went to Boston College, then attended the London School of Economics. She holds degrees in economics and political science. Dayna now lives in Alexandria, Egypt. She works in petroleum services and is Treasurer of the Schutz School Board of Directors.

Caroline attended Schutz as a freshman in 1964-65. She graduated high school from Good Shepherd School in Ethiopia. Upon completing her schooling, she taught at a girls' school, then worked in Kenya for the Presbyterian Church as a project manager. Since losing her husband to illness last year, she has been traveling.

Communications and Community-Building Activities

a. July 2015 Grand Reunion in Washington

Paul reported that at the annual meeting in July, the membership approved new dates for next year's Grand Reunion. The meeting will be held July 10-12 at the National 4-H

Youth Conference Center in Washington, D.C., a week earlier than originally planned to accommodate those going to the Mission meeting in Pennsylvania the week following. For some attendees, it might also be attractive to extend their stay into the Fourth of July holiday.

Paul is in the process of securing the 4-H Center for the meeting. He expects the Grand Reunion ad hoc group, created at the 2013 annual meeting, to be active in planning activities for the July 2014 meeting with help from Jean Stultz and Jane Meloy.

Paul emphasized we need to communicate now the dates of this meeting, as well as some details, such as how to register for the meeting and accommodations at the 4-H Center, including how to share a room. Registration fees will be collected from attendees in advance. Amanda will be in charge of finalizing and conveying the announcement electronically. We will also do a surface mailing.

Paul has received a contract from the Center, which requires a 25% deposit. In consultation with Treasurer Steve Jamison and other Board members, a conservative allotment of 15 double-bed rooms and 5 bunk-bed rooms will be secured, based on the assumption of 60 attendees. The 100 rooms at the Center are primarily bunk style, hence securing the nice double rooms in advance was deemed advisable. Paul noted that 70-some people attended the Schutz meeting held at the same venue in 2012. Paul has told the Center that we will request additional rooms beyond the 20 as registration justifies more.

Caroline asked if Amanda is willing to accept incoming meeting registrations. Paul is confident she is willing, as well as knowledgeable in how registrations need to be handled. She, Amanda and Paul have discussed putting PayPal on the website to accommodate online registrations and payment. Ed Nicholas said that would be no problem to effect; he just needs the registration details to do so. Paul recognized that registration checks mailed, say, to Amanda, need to be forwarded to Steve. Steve said that payments via PayPal would go directly to the bank.

Related to members of the Schutz community who would be uncomfortable using PayPal, Paul asked Susan to report on the Schutz community database updating project. Susan related that two major U.S. Postal Service mailings went out in August (to U.S. domestic addresses) and October (international addresses). Enclosures included a letter encouraging registration on the SASAF website, information about the Grand Reunion, and a dues payment form. We are updating the database with new information from responding Schutzites and returned mail.

Dayna asked if the Development Officer for Schutz School, who manages their database, could be contacted so the school's mailing list could be used for our mailings. Susan mentioned that Amanda had been in touch with and exchanged databases with someone at Schutz already.

Paul said a discussion is needed with Nathan regarding how to coordinate communications. It's SASAF's goal to do more with Schutz School. When we communicate information about the Grand Reunion by snail-mail in future, the updated database of addresses will be used.

Paul reported that Jane Meloy has suggested the 2015 Grand Reunion as discussed in July was shaping up to be a 24-hour event. That relatively short timeframe might discourage attendance. Paul outlined a proposed Friday-to-Sunday schedule:

Thursday:

- Arrivals

Friday:

- Outings, possibly a day on the National Mall or a picnic in a park
- Middle Eastern dinner hosted at Paul's house

Saturday:

- Morning Board meeting
- A morning run for people not attending the Board meeting
- Fun and Games in the afternoon
- Reception at the Center in the late afternoon
- Group activities and breakouts
- Dinner at the Center
- After-dinner dancing, starting with square dancing, progressing to swing or other dancing, all intended to provide a lively and social Saturday night experience for attendees

Sunday:

- Church service at the Center
- Annual General Meeting, traditionally a relatively short meeting
- Newly elected Board meets to elect officers

Paul asked the Board if we want to start the meeting earlier in the week, as the 4-H Center is booked starting the following Monday.

Before excusing himself from the meeting, Bill Pollock confirmed that it would be no problem to electronically transmit (Web X or video) the reunion meeting(s), as long as there is power in the room(s).

Susan asked if we would need to expand the Center contract to secure rooms for Thursday. Paul said we would not need to book in advance, unless we needed to book something specific.

Caroline reported that the 3-day Good Shepherd School reunion in Colorado last summer did not seem too long and gave attendees lots of time for socialization -- "amoeba-like clumping" mixed people across graduation generations via activities such as hikes. Group

activities were planned for only part of each day, with time for small meetings for sharing commonalities, like expat re-entry experiences.

Ed Nicholas agreed that most grand reunions were three full days, Thursday to Sunday, allowing sufficient time to relax and meet others for informal chats. As a representative of those coming longer distances, Susan felt the extra day would make the trip more worthwhile. Ed agreed, as did Nathan, noting that it would make more work for the organizers, however.

Paul suggested the following activities be considered in a longer agenda: Hiking, picnicking, visits to museums and events on the Mall, softball games and special prearranged trips, such as guided visits to the State Department or the Capitol. Our communications should list activities we're considering for Thursday and Friday, and survey the membership on which they would prefer. This would give us some numbers to work with for planning purposes.

Caroline agreed that a survey would be good, but communications should be clear that the reunion will be a three-full-day event, rather than refer to more optional sounding "come early" messaging. Messaging for the Good Shepherd reunion encouraged people to stay beyond the reunion to make it into a family vacation. She suggested arrivals on Wednesday and to plan activities around town for Thursday as well as Friday.

Paul will check on rooms for the expanded schedule.

*A **motion** was made by Caroline to expand the Grand Reunion from Thursday through Sunday, if Paul can confirm the 4-H Center can accommodate us.*

The motion was adopted.

Caroline suggested that the Middle Eastern dinner be moved to Thursday night, but Steve thought Friday would capture a bigger group, as some may be unable to attend until the end of the workweek.

Steve, Paul and Amanda will work on verbiage for the Grand Reunion announcement and communications.

Susan asked Nathan and Dayna what specific information they, as international travelers to the meeting, would like to see in our communications about the reunion. Dayna said word of mouth would be the most powerful means of getting people to the meeting. Paul suggested SASAF might need to send letters to consular officials, because visas might be an issue for some.

Nathan and Paul will discuss having things on hand from Egypt for prizes and such, which were well received at the last reunion.

b. SASAF Website

Paul reported that work on the website was following two tracks:

- The website format and mechanics need to be completed; Amanda, Ed and Paul are working together on this.
- Getting people involved in creating and posting content will be more difficult to implement. Once formatting and mechanics are complete, we will be looking for multiple volunteers to help generate content.

Ed said Paul's outline of the website format and function looks good and is readily amenable to facilitation. Ed is happy to manage the implementation of the website features but agrees content creation is a much larger job. Paul said the latter will be a gradual process that must go beyond the Board to be successful. On the question of putting the alumni database on the website, Ed also noted the ever-present problem of internet security and the need to protect personal contact data.

Dayna said the Schutz journalism class can help with the content. Schutz also produces newsletters from which content can be pulled to the website.

Paul will distribute his website function outline to the Board and will provide funding to hire someone to work with Ed Nicholas on the implementation of the website features and format.

Finance and Budget Issues

a. 2014 Budget Status

Steve reported the balance in the SASAF account is \$7,578.00. Due to a program glitch, he could not report on the exact amount of the George and Mary Lou Meloy Scholarship fund, but estimated it at about \$300, leaving an estimated balance of \$7,200 to \$7,300 thereafter.

Paul intends to hire an accountant to file 501(c)3 paperwork but regrets this won't happen for 2014.

Steve will prepare a budget for next year, probably by polling the Board before year's end.

Ed suggested that we need access to outside funding sources if we want things to get done. Paul agreed that we should pursue many available proposal opportunities, using our close relationship with Schutz as a lever.

b. Dues and Reunion Registration Payment

Steve said a surge of dues payments came in following the mailings, estimating 20-25 such payments. PayPal functionality on the website would facilitate dues payments, but some people will still be more comfortable mailing in checks.

Paul suggested we consider raising dues to \$25 to generate more working capital. Ed said it would help to have dues reminders. Steve agreed and is planning to post to the SASAF dues website page a list of current members. Ed said he would post it as soon as he received it. Steve also noted we can use the updated database to reach people by mail.

Dayna asked if it could be helpful to ask Schutz students to help with such things as SASAF accounting. Paul will speak with Nathan about ways to get students involved with our work and activities.

Other Business

a. Schutz School 90th Anniversary Celebration

Nathan noted that Schutz School was founded at the end of August or early September 90 years ago. The school is planning a bigger-than-usual graduation as part of the year-long commemoration. Nathan recently traveled to Beirut to meet with John Meloy and his wife. John, a Schutz alum who is a professor at American University of Beirut, has agreed to be the commencement speaker. All alums and friends of Schutz are welcome at the graduation, which will be held on Tuesday, June 16th.

Paul noted that the 100th anniversary is coming up in 2024. At the 2012 reunion, members expressed the desire to have the Grand Reunion that year in Alexandria. Paul has also suggested annual anniversary alumni trips to the school. He will work with Nathan to put together a program of interest to visiting alums and to students and staff at the school, e.g., focus groups on what it was like on campus in the early days; what kinds of careers alums have pursued and students are interested in pursuing; what's going on in Egypt, and getting to know current students and atmosphere in the country.

Ed and Caroline like the idea of visits to Schutz School. Ed wants to go himself. Caroline pointed out that there are hugely talented people in the Schutz community who can connect with current students for mutual benefit, e.g., the many Schutz graduates who became teachers. We should communicate the idea to alums widely.

Nathan asked if Schutz School would need to set up accommodations and/or an itinerary for alumni visits. Paul said we need to communicate the basics now, and let Nathan know what kind of interest there is. It would be helpful for the school to help with logistics and invite people to participate in the proposed special program. Paul mentioned that Alice and Charlotte had talked about going to Schutz as part of their Schutz School history book project.

Nathan will send Paul details of the Schutz 2015 commencement and anniversary ceremonies.

b. July Reunion Board Nominations

Paul said that there are three Board openings as of next July; Tina's and Ken Cooke's terms are up this coming year and Bill has indicated his interest in stepping down if a replacement for his seat comes forward.

Dayna asked about criteria for Board member nominees. Paul said there are few restrictions, any era Schutz alum is welcome, with the most important criteria being interest in helping and getting engaged.

Tina has found it difficult to get younger folks involved. She has reached out to alums of the '90s, but even personal emails have been fruitless. Paul hopes a fully functioning and active website will stimulate engagement and interest.

Caroline wondered if alums visiting for the 90th anniversary celebration would generate more involvement. Paul observed that hitherto SASAF has focused on the older generation, and more involvement by the younger generation is crucial to keep the organization going.

Next Meeting of the Board

Paul proposed the next meeting of the Board be called for February. Meanwhile, communications will be going out to advertise the Grand Reunion meeting.

Adjournment

Paul adjourned the meeting at 2:12 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Susan J. Knight