

Schutz American Schools of Alexandria Foundation

Board of Directors Meeting
September 29, 2012 ~ Electronic Meeting

Board members present:

Steve Jamison

Mary Beth Neely

Bill Pollock

Paul Clark

Jean Stultz

Carmen Rosser

John Meloy

Amanda Johnson

Nathan Walker

Marina Moraitis

Paul Clark called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

A determination of quorum was made by Amanda L. Johnson.

Welcome and opening remarks were heard from the president, Paul Clark

Paul Clark welcomed the board and thanked everyone for taking time from their weekend to join the meeting. Seeing that this was an electronic meeting that included both video and audio, Paul asked that everyone state their name prior to speaking for better record keeping.

He apologized for the long agenda, but felt there were several important items that needed addressing. He noted that the major items on the agenda are: the communications plan, SASAF's strategic priorities and the 2013 annual meeting plan.

Paul stated he felt a renewed commitment from the board and wants SASAF's goals to be clearly stated to better explain to current and potential new members who we are, what we consider to be our priorities as an organization, and what our longer-range vision is for SASAF. He feels the communication plan that had been drawn up is an excellent start in the right direction. Currently we need to include focusing on how we broaden our defined audience, address financial issues, including the organizations 501(c)3 status, and look into plans for the future.

Paul expressed a desire for the board to conduct business in an orderly and organized fashion. We would like to see an annual budget adopted and dues collected regularly. There should be discussions on funding to better accomplish our mission and job. He stated that the SASAF membership expects and deserves this. Paul suggested that the board might want to look into external funding to enable new activities. He wants our group to be revitalized and reenergized by signaling to the membership that the board is working hard on their behalf and thinking broadly about what SASAF can do to enrich our experience together and draw more interest from Schutzites everywhere.

Paul expressed that he was a "big picture" kind of guy and he prefers to think aggressively. He asked the board to be tolerant of this.

To assist in the board's new-found drive, he requested that we should strive to reach decisions and do business on a basis of consensus. Paul asked that we try to find solutions we can all live with. If necessary we can always turn to a vote, but would prefer a consensus in all business matters.

Finally Paul stated that he is very excited to join the board and to be working with everyone.

A **motion was made by Steve Jamison and seconded by Carmen Rosser to accept the proposed agenda. The motion passed unanimously.*

Minutes from the last meeting (July 14, 2012) were reviewed. A couple spelling corrections were noted.

A **motion was made by Mary Beth Neely and seconded by Mariana Moraitis to approve the minutes with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.*

SASAF Strategic Priorities

Paul Clark expressed the need for the board to define the scope and purpose of SASAF going forward and laid out some questions that should be kept in mind.

- Who are we as a Schutz organization?
- What do we want out of the organization?
- Who is our audience? Older alumni, new alumni, or both? The public at large?
- Is broadening our membership a priority?
- Do we want to connect with other groups, such as informal groupings of Schutz alumni?
- What is our relationship with the school?
- How can we generate more interest in SASAF?
- Do we continue with annual meetings and if so, where?
How do we make reunions more accessible?
- What should SASAF's relationship be with the school's alumni group, if any?
- Is our scholarship funding enough and in what other ways do we want to engage with the school's contemporary students?
- How do we share our information, documents of history, outreach to potential new members?

SASAF Communication Plan

Marina Moraitis reviewed the draft drawn up by the communication committee (attachment 1).

Marina explained that the committee felt there needed to be a re-evaluation of SASAF's existence and sat down during the July 2012 grand reunion to strategize on who we were and what we wanted as a group. A mission statement was proposed and accepted and the plan was drawn up. Marina reiterated that the plan was not set in stone and that it should be thought of as a working document. She then reviewed the main points of the plan, discussing the committee's mission, goals and objectives.

Some of the committee's strategic considerations were:

- The members are busy but still want to find a way to connect with each other through reunions and other methods.
- There is a lack of volunteers due to time challenges.
- It is good that there is "new blood" on the board and we need to be more active to engage more people.
- The 2015 grand reunion site and committee already established.
- They asked themselves, "What can we practically do?"

The committee report included discussions regarding tools for communication (facebook and newsletter), annual reunions, grand reunions, the scholarship, and a budget report.

Some recommendations were suggested:

- If no one volunteers to work on the newsletter, that someone should be hired to manage it.
- At the end of each grand reunion, a committee should be formed for the next one.
- Evaluations should be prepared for reunion feedback from the attendees.

Marina said that she felt the communication committee's goal to draw up and present a working document for SASAF was accomplished.

Paul thanked Marina for presenting the report and the committee for their hard work in preparing it.

Paul asked if there were any comment on anything stated so far.

Marina asked for clarification on the New Wilmington/Westminster College reunion connection. Jean Stultz explained that the reunions resulted in larger membership gatherings at the college because many people were already there for the conference. The Butler farm was opened up to the board for meetings prior to the meeting/reunion at the college. Marina thanked Jean for clarification.

A discussion on communication ideas followed. Paul asked if more attention should be put on the website. Should the website be the key point for a communication tool?

Steve Jamison stated that Ed Nicholas had sent an email referring to the active websites and that he was willing to offer support in the upkeep, but didn't have much time to dedicate. He asked if anyone had interest in maintaining the website. Paul agreed that someone needed to be found for this job.

Steve asked if the website was to be our main communication tool.

Paul stated that he felt it was easier and more cost effective to maintain the website as the main communication tool, including for posting the newsletter.

Jean reminded the board that we had been on that route, but it hadn't gotten done. She suggested that the board ask Ann Meloy if she was still interested in collecting information for the website.

Marina suggested that possibly information from members could be input through Facebook by everyone and monitored by one or more people to ensure the content was relevant to SASAF.

Carmen Rosser suggested keeping the website as a secondary means of communication and use Facebook as the primary, linking the two when needed. Documents could be posted on Facebook with direction to the website. This way the alumni could post information about themselves onto Facebook. Essentially it could act as a newsletter.

Nathan Walker agreed that Facebook should be used. He stated that it has been very helpful in relaying information for the school.

Paul said that he is not familiar with Facebook and needed to understand how the website and Facebook would work interactively. He asked whether a blog function could be added to the website as an alternative approach.

Carmen stated the website should be used as an information base, but that Facebook could act as 24/7 interaction with alumni. General information about SASAF should be on the website. She explained that it was easier to do that through Facebook as it is set up for that already.

Paul expressed concern about privacy security, such as posting personal contact information.

Bill Pollock shared that Ed Pollock had set up the database website with a login to access the information on alumni. There had been a privacy policy set up, but it should be revisited.

Nathan asked how the information was used.

Paul suggested that the members should be able to access other members so they can keep in touch.

Carmen stated that email was really the only personal information that was needed. If other information was required then a personal request could be made through email.

Paul asked that there be a way to map where people are, a suggestion that Steve Jamison had made.

Schutz School Report

Nathan Walker said there were currently 315 students at the school with 22 nationalities represented. 75% of the student body consists of native Arab speaking and 25% are expat families.

Currently there is a school based alumni group with a sub-committee of recent graduates that organize events and reunions.

Nathan said that the school wants to support SASAF.

Paul asked Nathan what the school wants from SASAF.

Nathan stated that the school would like to see more sharing of information. The maintaining of 2 databases has been difficult for communication.

Paul asked the board if we want to actively attract younger generations to SASAF.

Carmen stated that she felt it was in the best interest of the group to do so.

Marina stated that it was clear from the communication committee that everyone wanted a closer relationship with the school and students, new and old.

Carmen suggested the possibility of current students writing to alumni as a school project; especially students using English as a second language. Amanda agreed.

Paul stated that he had been thinking of similar ideas as ways to connect with the school and its current student body.

Carmen then suggested the possibility of alumni opening their houses to host Schutz students that were looking at colleges, looking for job opportunities or touring the US. She said she would be willing to open her house.

Nathan agreed that these were great ideas.

Paul said these were good ideas and that some new activities that SASAF could sponsor might require funding. He pointed out that the board probably has access to more resources that we expect.

Committees; Functions and Appointments

Paul suggested that the board try to keep the number of committees small. He has found that as the committee numbers increase, things tend to get more complex. He suggested the following committees:

1. Financial/Budget Committee (with Steve)
2. Communications Committee
3. Executive Committee (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer)

He also noted the mention of a Schutz School liaison in the by-laws and that for the time being he could serve this role

The board agreed that focusing on these three committees would be best for now.

Paul stated he would write out a description of each committee and would follow up with the board members to make appointments. He asked if there were any volunteers.

Carmen asked to join the communication committee. Bill asked to join the finance committee

Treasurer's report

Steve Jamison reported that the current balance was \$6439. Known upcoming expenses are a web hosting fee to Ed Pollock and the 501(c)3 fee. He stated he would plan to have a budget prepared for the board's consideration within the next couple months.

Steve expressed the need to have more information on newsletter and the annual meetings in New Wilmington expenses. He would like copies of past expense reports.

Steve asked what the current membership dues were. He was given a spreadsheet of payments but needs more information. Jean stated that the dues were raised to \$20 from \$10 at the 2011 meeting. Amanda confirmed this.

Steve stated that there needs to be more organization in dues collection and membership communication.

Paul suggested conducting membership dues collection on a fiscal year basis to coincide with the annual budget. He also asked that the board consider hiring a book keeper to support Steve.

2015 Grand Reunion Report

John Meloy reported that the 4H Conference Center in Washington DC is the planned location. Dates that have been suggested are: 1) July 17-19 or 2) July 10-12. There were concerns about having it on the later dates as it is the weekend after July 4th. John said he wasn't sure how much of a deposit was needed or when to secure the site, but he will check. Approximately \$700 was raised at the 2012 reunion that could be used towards the deposit.

Steve asked where that money was and how the reunion was usually funded. John stated that he would find out the location of the money and that the reunions were funded by the registrants.

IRS Certification and 501(c)3 Status

Bill reminded the board that the corporation was registered in Delaware and that there was a state fee and annual fee, usually due the first quarter of the year. He suggested that Steve contact George Reed or Ed Pollock for specific information.

There was discussion regarding whether SASAF should keep the tax exempt status.

Steve asked if there were donations, other than SASAF dues. Jean said that in the past there have been donations earmarked for the scholarship, but was unaware of the amount.

It was agreed that further information was needed.

Steve stated that the fiscal year will be based on the calendar year. He plans on having a budget completed by the end of the year, with a draft ready in November. While completing the budget he said he would investigate what the expenses would be, and that actions would be required to reinstate the 501(c)3 status. A decision could be made at a later date.

Paul stated as a matter of organization, he would like the SASAF board to meet twice a year; 1) in the fall to include budget planning and 2) at the annual meeting/reunion.

Annual Membership Meetings

Paul expressed concern that the west coast membership needed easier access to the meetings and reunions.

The board agreed that it was best to have the July 2013 meeting in New Wilmington, PA and discuss other possible locations at that time.

John agreed that SASAF should try meetings in other locations.

Carmen suggested finding a host for the west coast meetings and that the communications committee should reach out to people.

Other Business

Jean proposed a resolution to express thanks to recent past board members that reads as follows:

“In recognition of the dedication and volunteerism of our colleagues, Steve Brooks, Alex Exarcos, Gloria Holcomb, Ed Pollock, and George Reed, who in 2012 completed their terms on the SASAF Board of Directors, on behalf of the SASAF membership we wish to express our heartfelt thanks and admiration for their service to our alumni community, with particular recognition of the tireless work and personal commitment of Ed and George in performing their duties as president and treasurer during the past three years.”

A **motion was made by Steve Jamison and seconded by Mariana Moraitis to adopt the resolution presented by Jean. The motion passed unanimously.*

Paul asked the board to watch email for upcoming information on things discussed at this meeting. He once again thanked everyone for taking the time to meet.

A **motion was made by Carmen Rosser and seconded by John Meloy to adjourn the meeting at 3:27. The motion passed unanimously.*

Minutes prepared by Amanda L. Johnson, secretary

Attachment 1:

Schutz American Schools of Alexandria Foundation (SASAF) Communications Plan July 2012

Communications Plan Goal

To provide a coherent approach to communications within the SASAF community and its affiliated friends.

Context

The Schutz American School alumni community is a close-knit group bringing together former Schutz students, staff and friends from around the globe. These have been meeting on an annual basis since 1963 ~~at the Stultz Farm~~ in New Wilmington ~~and in Butler~~, Pennsylvania. Grand Reunions were also organized for Schutz alumni and friends in 1999 (Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania), in 2004 (Snow Mountain Ranch, Colorado), in 2007 (Ottawa, Canada) and in 2012 (Chevy Chase, Maryland).

You may wish to add this.

In later years the SASF Board meetings were held at the Stultz farm in Butler the day before the annual reunions in New Wilmington, PA

Mission statement

SASAF's mission is to maintain relationships among Schutz alumni and friends in a way that facilitates communication and reunions so that we nurture the Schutz heritage and culture, facilitate reunions and cultivate a continuing relationship with Schutz School, Alexandria.*

Communications Objectives

- To maintain and enhance contact among Schutz alumni, staff and friends;
- To engage the SASAF community in supporting its mission and communications goals;

Target Audiences

- Schutz alumni and friends
- Former Schutz staff
- Current Schutz School staff and administration
- Graduating Schutz students

Key Messages

- Your alumni association enables you to contact other alumni when you want.
- We want to see you at the next reunion and we need your support!
- The annual Meloy scholarship to Schutz School of Alexandria symbolizes our desire to cultivate and develop the Schutz heritage and culture in future generations.

**Remark: Following is a variant suggested by a member of the committee: SASAF's mission is to maintain relationships among Schutz alumni and friends by nurturing and cultivating the Schutz heritage and culture and developing a continuing relationship with Schutz School, Alexandria, through improved means of communication and periodic reunions. (Note: This statement differs from the mission agreed to by the committee and approved by all participants. However, it is included here as food for thought by the Board).*

Strategic Considerations

Challenges

It is evident by the feedback received in various surveys over the years (pre-Chevy Chase 2012 and post Ottawa 2007) that the Schutz alumni community loves attending the reunions, wishes to receive updates and wants to keep in touch with each other. Case in point, at the July 14, 2012 Board meeting, members voted unanimously to keep SASAF alive. However, the Schutz alumni, being actively engaged in their personal activities, have limited time and resources for investment in organizational responsibilities. In the past, a number of volunteers have invested much time and effort in the work involved in producing the newsletter (in print format), overseeing the budget, planning annual and grand reunions and taking on all aspects of the administration requirements. It has required extensive energy on their part, leading some members to resign, burn out or hesitate to volunteer again. The challenge is to maintain the communication without requiring a huge amount of effort on any one person and to recruit fresh, new, energetic volunteers to “carry the baton”.

Opportunities

At the 2012 Grand Reunion in Chevy Chase, Maryland, concrete, promising and positive action was taken: 1) the mission statement (above) was presented to the community and unanimously endorsed; 2) the vacant positions on the Alumni Board were filled with “new blood”, including a recent graduate (*tbc*); 3) a new committee was struck to plan the next Grand reunion/Conference; and 4) the 2015 Conference location has already been selected, thereby saving a considerable amount of time and energy in planning. Also, Schutz Head of School Nathan Walker participated in the conference and offered the school's technical support in facilitating communications between Schutz School and its alumni- a considerable asset for SASAF to fulfill its mission.

Suggested Strategy

It is recommended that SASAF focus on **four** distinct priority areas. They are:

- **Communications to all**

Provide regular updates on the Schutz community around the globe through a newsletter that would reach all target audiences. The newsletter will be distributed electronically. A “buddy system” would be put in place whereby individuals would print out and send the newsletter to those who do not use computers.

- **Grand Reunion and New Wilmington Annual Reunion**

Plan a “Grand Reunion” every three years and continue to plan for annual reunions for smaller groups in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania.

Note: In the off-years between Grand Reunions, there continues to be a small group of Schutzites who connect at the Stultz Farm in Butler, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania for a shared potluck and reunion time which coincides with the New Wilmington Missionary Conference held nearby. The Board should ask Jean Stultz if she and her brother would still like to host a cook-out at the Stultz Farm in conjunction with the Reunion. An ad-hoc committee could plan the annual reunions in New Wilmington in the future.

- **Scholarship**

Raise awareness among the community about the annual SASAF scholarship for a graduating Schutz student.

- **Budget reporting**

Report on the SASAF budget to all members on an annual basis. Communicating financial activities will help inform the membership, raise awareness of and support for the work of the Board and attract potential volunteers

Recommended approach and activities

1) It is recommended that a member of the SASAF Board or a volunteer among the general membership be asked to publish a semi-annual newsletter to be sent electronically to the membership. This newsletter editor will be responsible for compiling information received from the general membership, SASAF Board members, reunion planners and the Head of Schutz School. It is further recommended that if no volunteer comes forward, the Board hire an individual to edit and publish the newsletter.

2) It is recommended that an ad-hoc committee headed by a SASAF Board member design and implement a plan that will use a variety of communications tools to 1) reach out to a broad audience of Schutz School alumni to obtain contact information, and 2) provide these individuals the opportunity to communicate amongst each other. This would also be an opportunity to link the Schutz School system to SASAF's data base.

3) It is recommended that the Grand Reunion Planning Committee be selected at the end of each Grand Reunion, thereby eliminating the need to call out for volunteers on an urgent basis. In addition to assuming responsibility for planning the Grand Reunion, the committee will make regular reports to the SASAF Board and information about the events will be reported to the general membership in the newsletter.

4) It is recommended that an ad-hoc committee of two or three individuals be designated to plan each annual reunion in New Wilmington.

5) A survey is recommended at the end of each Grand Reunion to gather feedback on the level of satisfaction regarding the reunions and other communications venues.

An operational plan will follow that sets out a timeline and responsibility center for each suggested activity.

Evaluation

The success of the plan will be determined by the engagement of and feedback from the community to the activities.

Annex: Operations Plan

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Priority area	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility Center	Lead	Comments
Budget reporting	Report on SASAF budget on annual basis	July 2013	Board	Treasurer Ann Akers with Steve Jamison (tbc)	
Communications to all	Newsletter	Semi-annually	Communications Operational Committee	Board member, volunteer or hired resource – <i>Alice for first and Charlotte for second?</i> To be determined	Some work has already been done to create a web site (Ed Nicholas) and a link on facebook (Amanda Johnson).
	“Reach Out” distribution plan	Report to Board in January and July- <i>tbc</i>	Ad hoc committee - To be determined	Nathan Walker or delegate - To be confirmed	Tanisa Sharif has offered to help (tbc)
Scholarship	Awareness raising	Annually	Board member - to be determined - with Head of Schutz School	Board member	
Grand Reunion	Plan Grand Reunion every 3 years	July 2015 Update Board on yearly basis as well as May and June 2015	Grand Reunion Planning Committee	To be determined	A committee was struck at the 2012 Maryland Grand Reunion. The 4-H Youth Conference Center was selected for 2015.
	Survey	July 2015	Grand Reunion Planning Committee	To be determined	
New Wilmington Annual Reunion	Plan annual reunion	July each year to coincide with New Wilmington Conference	Board member, volunteer, ad hoc committee or ? To be determined	To be determined	Jean Stultz has organized them over the years. She should be consulted.