

**46<sup>th</sup> Annual Byzantine Studies Conference**  
**The Virtual BSC**  
Business Lunch  
The Byzantine Studies Association of North America, Inc.  
Saturday, October 24, 2020, 1:30-3:30 PM EST

**Minutes (approved 12/11/2021)**

1. **Call to Order** (Ben Anderson as presiding officer)  
Motion: Cecily Hilsdale; seconded, Alice Sullivan. Motion passed.
2. **Selection of Parliamentarian**  
Byron MacDougall appointed as Parliamentarian.
3. **Approval of Minutes of the 2019 Business Lunch**  
Motion: Derek Krueger; seconded, Shannon Steiner. Motion passed.
4. **In Memoriam**  
  
John W. Barker  
Marilyn Heldman  
Yıldız Ötügen  
Olga Popova  
Marko Popović  
Emilian Popescu  
Philip Rousseau
5. **Thanks to Local Arrangements and Program Committees**  
Thanks to the Virtual Arrangements Committee (the BSANA board) and Program Committee, especially given reorganization required. Record-high number of attendees.  
  
Thanks also to members of the BSANA board cycling off of their service term: Dar Brooks Hedstrom, Young Kim, Stephen Rapp, and Galina Tirnanic.
6. **Election of New Members of the Governing Board for 2020-24 term**  
  
Nominees to serve 2020-24 term:  
  
Roland Betancourt, Professor, University of California, Irvine (Art History)  
Christina Christoforatos, Associate Professor, Baruch College, CUNY (Literature)  
George Demacopoulos, Professor, Fordham University (Theology/Ecclesiastical History)  
Thomas Lecaque, Assistant Professor, Grand View University (History)  
Ruma N. Salhi, Professor, Northern Virginia Community College (History)  
Shannon Steiner, Visiting Assistant Professor, Binghamton University (Art History)

Nicole Paxton Sullo, Lecturer & Graduate Alumni Postdoctoral Fellow, Yale University (Art History)  
Felege-Selam Yirga, Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville (History)

Election carried out electronically via Google Forms link at Business Lunch; managed by Galina Tirnanic.

Ben Anderson highlighted board's interest in revising the elections process; motion to be brought before the Business Lunch gathering next year.

7. **President's Report** (Ben Anderson)

DO Liaison Committee, more on that with Holger Klein's report.

In June, statement that BSANA issued in support of protesters against police violence, recognition and rejection of Byzantium's use for white supremacy. Development of initiatives, including the Byzantinists of Color fund. Board has now developed a committee to address diversity and inclusion, will cover the use of the fund. Also decolonialization of Byzantine Studies effort with the seminar, 50 attendees. Bibliography is available as a Google Doc.

Finally, board discussed creation of Communications Officer; potential ability to respond to public discussions more quickly.

There were no questions.

8. **Treasurer's Report** (Tia Kolbaba)

Full Treasurer's Report attached as Appendix A. Major conclusions available at the bottom of the report.

Also noted that the board will using some of our reserves to generate a better interest rate.

There were no questions. Ben Anderson commented on the new website; it will be coming along. Also, thanks to Amanda Wagner, our website manager for the current site.

9. **Report from the United States National Committee for Byzantine Studies** (Derek Krueger)

Pandemic situation + Turkish national committee facing politically untenable situation for the conference led to rescheduling. Rescheduled to August 22-27, 2022, relocated to Italy (Venice/Padua) using the meeting as organized by Turkish committee. Hybrid

format, due to costs and logistics. Free Communications deadline will be extended; date forthcoming.

International Committee has also been advocating on monuments and remains: Hagia Sophia, Chora monastery, Thessaloniki public works projects. See AIEB website.

Reminder about the monthly newsletter; can sign up at AIEBnet.gr; can also submit items to the newsletter.

No comments or questions raised. If people have individual questions or concerns, should reach out to Derek personally.

Ben Anderson notes that the Canadian Committee has nothing to report since last year's conference; hence no report included today.

10. **Report from the BSANA-DO Liaison Committee** (Holger Klein)

Committee continued this year: Holger Klein, Ben Anderson (ex-officio as BSANA president), Alice-Mary Talbot, Annemarie Weyl Carr, and now Alicia Walker joined as a new member. Met digitally.

Discussed concerns about access to the facilities. Currently following Harvard and CDC guidelines, so facilities are closed. Some fellows, including junior fellows, have deferred to the next year; some are serving this year. New fellowship program has been announced, will be open through November 1. No summer fellowships for 2021.

Updates on DOP publication, also virtual format for events through at least Spring 2021, including colloquia, symposia, and lectures. Some events postponed to 2022. Clarification on proposals for colloquia, etc., will be coming soon. New issue of *Dumbarton Oaks* newsletter coming soon.

Concerns about vacant staff positions: Harvard has a hiring freeze, but new positions will be approved/advertised after the freeze is lifted. Director in Byzantine Studies position was already approved as a 5-year position; not affected by the hiring freeze.

Committee's acknowledgement and thanks to Anna Stavrakopoulou for her service.

11. **Conferral of Graduate Prizes for BSC 2019** (Christian Raffensperger)

1<sup>st</sup> prize – Elisa Galardi (University of Pennsylvania), “The David Casket: A Gift for the Byzantine Empress”

2<sup>nd</sup> prize – Luca Farina (University of Padova), “Abū Maʿṣar in Byzantium: First Remarks on the Greek Version of *al-Muḍākarāt fī asrār al-nuḡūm*”

3<sup>rd</sup> prize – Elizabeth Zhang (Sorbonne Université), “The Invisible Icon At El Nazar Kilise, a Tenth Century Church in Cappadocia”

12. **Invitation to BSC 2021, 7-10 October, Case Western University and the Cleveland Museum of Art** (Elizabeth Bolman)

Plague willing, events logistics should be excellent; potential for streaming and/or recording as options), events planned, including ones on St. Catherine at Sinai.

Ben Anderson noted that both previously arranged local arrangements chairs (2020 and 2021) each deferred by a year (2021 and 2022). Invitation to talk to the new BSANA president if you are interested in hosting the BSC at your institution.

13. **New Business:**

Preface by Ben Anderson: Committee had been tasked with addressing increased precarity in the field. In membership, new qualifications for reduced-fee memberships; that reduced fee would be \$0.

- A. Extension of reduced-fee membership category to early career contingent scholars (scholars who have earned their PhD within the past 8 years and who do not hold permanent or tenure-track appointments). Board’s motion attached as part of Appendix B.

Discussion: Cecily Hilsdale clarifies that the new reduced-membership group *would* be eligible for travel funding, but not paper prizes. Christian Raffensperger: How would this affect finances? Tia Kolbaba’s reply: Graduate student papers are capped, but not early career scholars so it’s unclear. Hope is that we would experiment with this for a couple of years, while the need to is very strong, and reassess if it is not financially viable. Cecily Hilsdale adds that we may fundraise or adjust, if there’s need; Alex Riehle endorses this conversation by board. Ben Anderson: New form for accessing our funds, asks about home-institution funding so that we can determine actual need. Betsy Williams endorses the form. Ann Marie Yasin: Question about access to the Business Lunch, endorsement of revisions to bylaws about Business Lunch. Heather Badamo: Discussion of caps to spending; concern that some universities won’t be able to afford to host in the future, need to marshal resources. Warren Woodfin: Are there any non-profit spending rules in Florida affecting our spending? Lynn Jones: No legal impediment to spending. Betsy Bolman: from experience, cautions that junior scholars shouldn’t host the BSC—too time-intensive.

Motion: Alex Riehle; seconded, Fotini Kondyli. Motion passed.

- B. Reduction of reduced-fee membership from twenty to zero dollars. Board's motion attached as part of Appendix B.

Motion: Derek Krueger; seconded, Shannon Steiner. Motion passed.

Related motion from the floor: That full members be raised to \$60, to help pay for our initiative.

Motion: Betsy Williams; seconded, Christian Raffensperger.

Discussion: Derek Krueger: All members are being squeezed; research funds are being eliminated and other organizations are raising dues. Alex Riehle: Endorsing Derek's point. Cecily: conference-hybridity options, finance cushion mean that this change isn't instant financial ruin. Lynn Jones: Goal is to grow membership, not money itself. Alicia Walker: Adding a supporting membership category for people who consider BSANA their primary organization. Galina: Keep membership at \$50, but add option to give more. Warren: ICMA allows addition of giving a subsidy beyond membership.

Vote undertaken: 11 votes in favor; 28 oppose; 2 abstain. Motion does not pass.

President: we'll encourage fundraising instead, in the interim.

- C. Agenda adjustment to move USNCBS item to this spot in the agenda.

Motion: Christian Raffensperger; seconded, Betsy Williams. Motion passed.

Extension of current USNCBS officers' terms by one year.

Motion: Holger Klein; seconded: Christian Raffensperger. Motion passes.

- D. Establishment of the position of Communications Officer

Preface by Ben Anderson: The bifurcated role of Secretary at present; official records and member roll (in bylaws) vs. the communications role currently used (not in bylaws).

For proposal and by-laws emendation motion, see Appendix C

Discussion: Christian Raffensperger: Concern that we need to revise all of the officers, this new officer doesn't fix those problems. Hannah Ewing: Agreed, though wasn't time. Cecily Hilsdale: website and new officer would let us get data for useful bylaw rewrites. Lynn Jones: Communications officer would help with outreach too.

Votes: in favor 42; 0 opposed: 2 abstentions.

14. **Announcements:** None

15. **Election Results**

Roland Betancourt, Professor, University of California, Irvine (Art History)  
George Demacopoulos, Professor, Fordham University (Theology/Ecclesiastical History)  
Ruma N. Salhi, Professor, Northern Virginia Community College (History)  
Felege-Selam Yirga, Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville (History)

16. **Adjournment**

Motion: Derek Krueger; seconded, Fotini Kondyli. Motion passed.

Minutes by Hannah Ewing.

Appendix A:

## Byzantine Studies Association of North America 2020 Treasurer's Report

Covering October 9, 2019 to September 30, 2020

Prepared by Tia Kolbaba ([kolbaba@religion.rutgers.edu](mailto:kolbaba@religion.rutgers.edu))

### Accounts as of **September 30, 2020**

Bank of America "Business Advantage" Checking:	45,989.05
Bank of America "Business Advantage" Savings (earning 0.03% interest):	54,004.76
PayPal NonProfit Business Account:	3,116.54
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Total Accounts:	103,110.35

### 2019-20 Income (Oct. 1, 2019-Sept. 30, 2020)

University of Wisconsin, return of seed money and profit, 2019 conference	7094.40
Donations (all)	9728.36
2019 1650.00	
2018: 905.00	
2017: 2,185.00	
General donations	288.56
Donations to Byzantinists of Color Fund	8439.80
Membership dues from 116 members	4737.53
An additional 22 members paid dues after 9/30/20: 138	
2019: 140 members	
2018: 183 Members	
2017: 173 members	

Interest on Savings Account	28.07
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Total Income	21,588.36
Income 2019: 10,074.97	
Income 2018: 2,060.67	
Income 2017: 12,980.66	

### 2019-20 Expenses

10/17/2019 Board meeting dinner, Madison, Wisconsin (462.00)	
11/6/2019 MJC Funding: Reimbursement, speaker at Jaharis (1546.00)	
12/31/2019 Graduate Student Travel Reimbursements, 2019 Conference 16 students funded	(5416.30)

2018: \$7,041.23, 21 students  
 2017: \$4,007.38, 14 students  
 2016: \$3,600, 12 students funded

1/18/2020 Inforest Communications, website design  
 (1040.00)  
 4/15/2020 Oertel, Fernandez, Bryant and Atkinson, annual report and tax preparation  
 (62.75)  
 9/29/2020 Zoom Video Communications (213.14)  
 Business License for 2020 Byzantine Studies Conference

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Total Expenses (8740.19)

Expenses 2019: (\$23,664.92)  
 Expenses 2018: (\$9,856.92)  
 Expenses 2017: (\$9,448.11)

2020 Income less Expenses 12,848.17

Income less Expenses 2019 (\$13,589.95)  
 Income less expenses 2018: \$2,203.75  
 Income less expenses 2017: \$3,532.55

NOTES

- The balances in accounts are up. This should be considered in light of two sub-funds: (1) 15,439.80 in the BOC fund; (2) 2,395 balance forward from the Jharis Center. In other words, our total balance of *unrestricted* funds is 85,275.55.
- Income is up, because of (1) donations to the Byzantinists of Color fund; (2) the return of seed money and profit from the Local Arrangements Committee in Wisconsin (2019).
- Memberships are stable: 138 as of 10/19/2020, 140 in 2019.
- Dues and donations have been recorded and calculated as net amounts after PayPal fees. The total of PayPal fees for the period Oct. 9, 2019 to Sept. 30, 2020 is 339.59 (2019: 246.32), at 2.9% plus .30 per transaction. I would argue that this cost is reasonable, given the convenience to our members and the reduced workload for the Treasurer. It seems likely, as well, that this convenience increases our income.
- Expenses are down, mostly because of the online conference this year. The deficit at the time of the 2019 conference reflected subsidies and seed money for Local Arrangements Committees in 2018 and 2019. Much of that money has now been refunded to BSANA.
- We paid the money for a new website design in January 2020. We have yet to see a return on this investment.



## **Appendix B:**

### **Proposal: Expansion of “Graduate Student” Status & Benefits [Passed 10/22/2020 at Board meeting]**

Alice Sullivan, Byron MacDougall, Brad Hostetler, Cecily Hilsdale

Our subcommittee was tasked with identifying additional ways in which BSANA can support its members, especially in light of the immediate and long-term budgetary constraints resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

With job losses, hiring freezes, and myriad increasing budgetary restrictions, it is clear that many BSANA members are facing an unprecedented degree of professional and financial uncertainty. To that end, we propose amending our membership structure to allow for early career scholars without permanent positions to enjoy the same benefits as graduate students with the exception of the paper prize, which would still be reserved for students enrolled in a graduate program.

In concrete terms, we propose changing the name of the “Student” membership category to “Graduate Students and Early Career Contingent Scholars.”

“Early Career Contingent Scholars” designate scholars who have earned their PhD within the past 8 years and who do not hold permanent or tenure-track appointments. This includes scholars serving as adjuncts, post-doctoral fellows, contingent faculty, and those holding other non-tenured academic and non-academic positions.

By broadening the graduate student membership category to include such early career contingent scholars, we would allow them to qualify for the same travel funding currently available only to graduate students (and they would be bound by the same eligibility requirements) and also to free membership. However, again, they would not be eligible for the graduate student prize.

We believe that our organization currently has the resources to fund both graduate students as well as early career contingent scholars. And we believe that using our funds in this way will help maintain the long-term well-being of our organization.

## **Appendix C:**

### **Proposal: Establishment of the Position of Communications Officer [Passed 10/22/2020 at Board meeting]**

Brad Hostetler

This proposal seeks to add a standing officer position to the Governing Board. The Communications Officer would be responsible for disseminating official BSANA communications and circulating relevant announcements from its members and related organizations via e-mail and social media. These duties are presently administered by the

Secretary, but are not explicitly defined in the original BSANA Constitution or in the By-Laws (Section IV.4): “The Secretary prepares the minutes of all Business Meetings and Governing Board meetings and is responsible for the maintenance of the membership files and updating an electronic membership roster.” Over time the Secretary assumed the responsibilities of communicating BSANA news and business, first via the e-mail listserv, then Facebook (since 2011), and then Twitter (since 2015). Maintaining these avenues of communication stretches the duties of the Secretary well beyond that which is articulated in the By-Laws.

To that end, I propose that we decouple communications from the duties of the Secretary and establish a new officer who can focus on these tasks. This change will allow BSANA to bring greater attention to its communication efforts, in addition to lightening the workload from the Secretary.

I propose the following item to be added to the By-Laws:

Section IV <http://bsana.net/documents/bylaws.html>

11. The Communications Officer is elected in the same manner as the President. The Communications Officer disseminates official BSANA communications and circulates relevant announcements from its members and related organizations via e-mail and social media.