

Officers Board Meeting of the Byzantine Studies Association of North America, Inc.

Tuesday, November 24, 2020

3:30 – 4:30 PM ET, Zoom

Minutes (approved 1/22/2021)

Present: Lynn Jones, Byron MacDougall, Alice Isabella Sullivan (minutes), Tia Kolbaba, Brad Hostetler

1. Call to Order

2. New BSANA website

Issue: The new BSANA website, commissioned from Inforest, is now much delayed and the product is not satisfactory. There are communication issues, revisions that need to be implemented, and the remainder of the payment issued. Given the nature of the site and its simple design, this should not have taken as long as it has. According to the contract, the period for submitting revisions has lapsed. We could get a lawyer to get out of the rest of the contract (~\$2000) and start from scratch or conclude the work with Inforest, host the site on a new platform, and pursue additional revisions afterwards.

The Board discussed how best to proceed on these fronts and decided that BSANA will honor the contract and will try to secure a round of final revisions on the new site before it is fully handed over. Lynn will reach out to Inforest with new communication, final list of revisions (already compiled by Brad and Alice with Board suggestions), as well as clarifications for new timeline and whether all files will be transferred from the old site to the new one. If the old files will not be transferred to the new site, Alice, Brad, and Byron have agreed to split the work and do it themselves. We will set up a Zoom call with the website liaison at Toronto to discuss the details of the transfer.

Once the work is complete, Inforest will receive the remainder of the payment as detailed in the contract. We will then set up a new hosting platform for the new site on WordPress (old site is currently with Toronto). We decided on this option in order to offer a long-term “home” for the site and alleviate any issues that could arise from transferring control of it among future Board members (esp. Communication Officers and Secretary). The domain name is through GoDaddy.com, and we can host the new site through WordPress where can set up both the domain and hosting for a single yearly payment (about \$250/yr for the Business Plan).

3. BSC 2021

Issue: Betsy Bolman has reached out to discuss two issues related to planning for the 2021 BSC – virtual/hybrid events and the block of rooms to be reserved for the conference.

The Board discussed the issues and considered also the strong support for a hybrid future event from those who completed the 2020 post-BSC survey. Byron revealed that 81% of survey participants strongly supported the planning of a hybrid 2021 BSC. The Board decided to direct the Program Committee to plan for in-person and virtual events. The two plenary events and the Business Lunch should have virtual components – we want people to *watch* the plenary talks and *participate* in the Business Lunch.

On behalf of the Board, Lynn will write to Galina (Chair of the Program Committee for BSC 2021) to *recommend* two streaming plenaries, a hybrid Business Lunch, and two virtual sessions. Two virtual sessions of about 8 speakers total is about 10% of participants.

The Board also recommends charging a fee for those participating remotely in the 2021 BSC, who would have access to the (Zoom) links. This would be in the range of \$20-\$25 and we could set up for international payment in addition to recommending donations. Graduate students and recent graduates (as detailed in our new membership structure) would not pay this fee.

The Board also discussed the Jaharis workshops directed toward graduate students and recent graduates. It would be best if these workshops could be run hybrid, and registration could be separated from the rest of the conference. Alice also brought up the issue of the current disjunction in the definition of “early career scholar” (BSANA 8yrs since the PhD) and the need to have this correspond to the Jaharis definition for participation in the sponsored workshops at BSC. Dar and Betsy have mentioned bringing this up with the Jaharis Board.

Finally, the Board discussed the room block issue for BSC 2021. Although we cannot guarantee in-person participation due to the ongoing pandemic, the Board would like to recommend a block of 100 rooms.

4. Helen Evans

Issue: Helen Evans will be retiring, and we would like to honor her career at the 2021 BSC, where she will also deliver a plenary lecture. This could be done through BSANA-sponsored panels, a reception, etc.

The Board discussed the possibilities and decided to *recommend* to the Program Committee to include in the abstract submission whether the paper, if accepted, could be included in a panel celebrating Helen (suggested wording: “Please indicate in your

abstract whether you would like your paper to be considered for a session honoring Helen Evans.”). Depending on the number of accepted proposals, the Program Committee could designate one, two, or more sessions dedicated to Helen.

Although the Board realizes that “BSANA-sponsored” panels at BSC is unprecedented, Helen’s career is as well. She is a different kind of scholar – not affiliated with a university and with no students of her own – so we could honor her in this way and as an organization.

5. BSANA-DO Liaison Committee

Issue: The DO Director reached out to the BSANA-DO Liaison Committee to ask for recommendations for potential candidates for the current Byzantine Studies Director search at DO. Holger Klein, as Chair of the BSANA-DO Liaison Committee, reached out to Lynn for direction.

Lynn clarified that certain members of the BSANA-DO Liaisons Committee can certainly make recommendations on their own, but that the Committee as a whole should not make suggestions. As an organization, BSANA and its liaison committee should not engage in such recommendations.

6. Meeting Adjourned.