

Association for Political Theory  
Minutes for the Annual Business Meeting of 11 October 2008

*Reporting by Howard Lubert, Secretary  
Edited and reformatted by Dennis McEnerney, Webmaster, with additional review by the  
Governance Committee.*

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:40.
  - A. Agenda announced.
    1. Maurice Meilleur raised the question: should we talk about expanding the size of the Governance Committee before holding elections?
    2. Simona Goi: that would require amending the Constitution.
  - B. Discussion delayed while search for Mark Rigstad continued.
    1. Liz Markovits makes announcements concerning bowling and airport rides.
    2. General delaying tactics continue for a few minutes.
- II. Assessment of the conference.
  - A. Clarissa Hayward began a review and explanation of the selection process used for reviewing paper proposals for the 2008 conference.
    1. More than 300 proposals were received for the 2008 conference, of which 134 were accepted.
    2. The Program Committee had 12 members.
    3. Proposals were divided among the committee based on members' expertise and interest.
      - a. Each member rated proposals on a scale 1-4 (4 = "must include" to 1 = "should not include").
      - b. All threes and fours were accepted; some twos were accepted as well.
      - c. All ones were rejected.
      - d. In the case of a few twos, the Committee delayed contacting the authors of proposals in the event that the Committee might find room for their papers after all.
        - (I) It was noted that the status of these proposals eventually "leaked out," since other authors were in the meantime contacted by APT, and either rejected or accepted.
        - (II) The question then arose: should the Committee in the future simply inform authors that their proposals are still being considered (even as notices go out to those accepted or rejected)?
        - (III) Cary Nederman: Perhaps next year in the call for papers we should state that in some cases announcement of one's status will be delayed in the case of wait-listing.
      - e. A blog exclusive to the Committee was used to discuss proposals, panel make-up, etc.

- f. Turn around time and notification were quick.
  - (I) Simona: three and fours were notified quickly.
  - (II) Twos in some cases were notified less quickly, as some were waitlisted (see above).
  - (III) Dennis McEnerney: deadline for proposals was Feb. 15 and the committee was sending out notices by early April, which was good turn around time by comparison with past conferences.
- 4. Clarissa Hayward: it helpful to have two people coordinating the program selection.
- 5. Rob Martin: how many full panel proposals were received?
  - a. Clarissa Hayward: six were received.
    - (I) One was accepted.
    - (II) The other panel proposals were broken up and the papers considered as individual submissions.
  - b. Alisa Rosenthal: the Program Committee looked for a range of ranks and institutions when creating panels.
  - c. Clarissa Hayward: the Committee also thought about gender diversity on panels.
- B. Discussion of the size of program.
  - 1. The 2008 conference had two more panels than the 2007 conference.
  - 2. Dennis McEnerney commented that APT wants to remain small (i.e., not too many panels) so that attendees will still see each other at panels, run into each other during breaks, etc.
  - 3. General agreement with this APT ethos; also general agreement that the two additional panels were good (i.e., having five panels meeting simultaneously was successful and still retained the small feel of APT).
    - a. Alisa Rosenthal: General sense we don't want to grow any larger.
    - b. Cary Nederman commented that late Saturday afternoon panels were not as well attended, perhaps reflecting the fact that APT should not grow much larger because our brains can only handle so much in so little time.
  - 4. Dennis McEnerney: also if we grow much larger, we'll have to move to a hotel for the conference.
- C. Discussion of plenary sessions.
  - 1. Clarissa Hayward noted that it is important to keep in touch with plenary speakers.
    - a. The program schedule was originally to include two plenary sessions.
    - b. However, one speaker backed out, perhaps due in part to too infrequent communication between the speaker and the Program Committee Co-Chairs.
    - c. As a result, the business meeting moved to Saturday plenary session slot.

2. Ed Wingenbach: Were other types of plenary sessions considered?
  - a. Clarissa Hayward: No, people were excited about the two invited speakers.
  - b. Mark Rigstad: one idea for a plenary session next year (2009) is the engagement of political theory and political philosophy.
  - c. Simona Goi: suggestions are welcome from APT members with ideas for plenary sessions for 2009 conference.
  
- D. Dennis McEnnerney tells attendees to sign the sign-up sheet if they're interested in being on the program committee for the 2009 conference; he notes (a bit later) that serving can be an educational experience as one gets to see all the proposals, how panels are created, etc.
  1. Mark Rigstad adds that we need a more interdisciplinary program committee.
  2. Alisa Rosenthal notes that program chairs have more responsibilities than other members, but that the task is not overwhelming.
  
- E. Lisa Ellis: the 2009 meeting has been the best conference yet.
  1. Simona Goi: any other questions or comments regarding evaluation of the conference?
  2. Clarissa Hayward adds that she likes the opening reception and thinks it is a good way to start the conference, one that gives everyone a chance to meet people.

### III. Elections.

#### A. Executive Co-Director

1. Simona Goi: motion from the floor to elect said officer?
  - a. Moved, and seconded.
  - b. Two nominees: Howard Lubert and Andrew Murphy.
2. Rehfeld: Motion from floor to elect Murphy Executive Co-Director, and Lubert Secretary-Treasurer.
  - a. Motion seconded, and approved on voice vote.
  - b. Johnny Goldfinger unceremoniously and ungraciously jumps out of his seat and tells Howard to "come up" and take over as meeting secretary; general laughter at Howard's self-inflicted pain...

#### B. Governance Committee Member

1. Simona Goi presented five candidates for office:
  - a. Ruth Groff, Political Science, Saint Louis University.
  - b. Clarissa Hayward, Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis.
  - c. Maurice Meullier, Political Science, University of Illinois.

- d. Andrew Rehfeld, Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis.
  - e. Mark Rigstad, Philosophy, Oakland University.
  - f. William Simmons, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arizona State University.
2. Each presented a brief biography and explained his or her interest in serving, his or her agenda for APT, etc.
  3. Vote by ballot, counted by Clarissa Hayward and Howard Lubert, each counting separately; Andrew Rehfeld elected (vote tally available if needed).

#### IV. Other officers and committees.

- A. Discussion of whether to enlarge the number of officers.
  1. First, noted that Co-Directors and the Secretary-Treasurer are in fact regular voting members of the Governance Committee, not non-voting.
  2. Stated that Dennis is irreplaceable by one person alone in that he performs many functions, and that the Executive Co-Directors in general have many organizing duties.
  3. Cary Nederman: moved that Governance Committee propose for next year expansion of offices and new committees in the form of a constitutional amendment to be decided next year. Motion seconded and unanimously approved.
  4. Dennis: moved to create three new ad hoc officers for this coming year, all to be named by Governance Committee: Webmaster, Membership Secretary, and Newsletter Editor. Cary Nederman seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous voice vote.
  5. New motion from the floor: authorize the Governance Committee to create more ad hoc positions for next year as needed. Motion seconded, and unanimously approved.
- B. Replacement of Randy LeBlanc, the Program Committee's representative on the Governance Committee raised as question – explained by other officers that his replacement will be voted on by members of this year's Program Committee; no voted needed at the business meeting.
- C. Discussion of other possible committees.
  1. Andy Murphy: responding to the suggestion that a committee be formed to recruit philosophers, suggested that APT should develop an outreach committee with an interdisciplinary membership aimed at attracting members in a variety of fields.
  2. Question raises about how to attract new members?
    - a. Mark Rigstad suggested posting on listservs.
    - b. Blogs also mentioned.
    - c. Agreed that the Governance Committee will discuss how to develop an outreach committee and will make recommendations to the full membership next year.

#### V. Publishing: question raised as to whether APT should consider publishing a journal or a proceedings?

- A. Publishers have approached APT and suggested we start a new journal.

1. Dennis McEnnerney: maybe it's time to think seriously about starting one.
  - a. Question: What would it look like? Would it be electronic?
  - b. Reply from Dennis and others: digital journals are published inexpensively and efficiently by Bowling Green, Berkeley Electronic, the University of Michigan Library (which publishes journals for free), and other publishers. Some, like Michigan, also publish print on demand paper copies of peer-reviewed e-journals.
  - c. Pointed out that a journal might be a possible revenue stream for APT.
2. Andrew Murphy: concerned that if members publish in APT proceedings, then they won't be able to publish their work in other journals. If true, would we get good papers?
  - a. Again, what kind of journal? Peer reviewed? Annual proceedings?
  - b. Other questions or problems:
    - (I) Publication would greatly increase work for our officers.
    - (II) APT is diverse: what kind of publication would reflect that diversity?
    - (III) More generally: what would be the journal's mission?
3. Response to Murphy's queries: membership large enough, senior people who are committed to APT might publish with APT to get it started, establish its reputation, and thus help it along until its reputation were established.
  - a. One thing we might strive for and which might make a publication attractive is a fast turn-around on submissions.
  - b. Reference made to "International Political Theory Beacon."
  - c. David Thunder: would need to overcome initial skepticism, so any journal would have to be peer reviewed; proceedings not sufficient.
  - d. Moreover, proceedings or a journal based on conference papers might change the conference itself; alter the atmosphere and change its dynamic, as participants would be striving for a different goal (publishing) than that of an engaged, collegial conference.
  - e. Publication would probably require paid staff to help.

#### VI. Discussion of future conferences and locations.

- A. Next conference set at Texas A & M, 22-24 October 2009; the conference site (campus) is very close to an airport.
- B. 2010 might be at Notre Dame.
- C. Dennis McEnnerney: explanation of conference expenses.
  1. Typically, \$8500-\$11,000 is the share paid by the school.
    - a. The schools' shares have varied, partly because of different costs in different regions and the character of the events planned -- for example, free liquor runs up the cost.

2. How might we increase funds available to the Association? Suggestions given:
  - a. Base conference fees on faculty rank (i.e., full profs would pay more than assistants). Problem: great differences in pay among types of institutions and regions.
    - (I) Perhaps sliding scale based on income fairer.
    - (II) Dennis McEnnerney noted that the current fee scale already does this in part, separating faculty/fully-employed from graduate students/not fully employed.
  - b. Increase conference fees overall? Again problem: APT aims to serve, in part, faculty at less well-funded regional schools as well as at larger better-funded national institutions.
3. Brief discussion about incorporating as a non-profit.
  - a. Advantages? Can take tax-deductible contributions and open own accounts; also makes online payment of fees with credit cards possible.
  - b. Disadvantages? Probably need attorney to incorporate, and typically requires accountant to audit books and file tax returns. Could require lots of additional paperwork.
    - (I) Noted by Simona Goi that federal law might require specific figures on the money we've spent since our founding; but unsure of this point: federal requirement might be based on how much an organization has spent annually.
    - (II) Dennis McEnnerney added that the current arrangement, having the Philosophy Department at Colorado College hold APT's account, works out reasonably well – no expenses or paperwork, and no great problems. Will investigate whether there might ways to stay at Colorado College and accept donations and credit card payments.
  - c. Motion from the floor: the Governance Committee should be instructed to consider the matter of incorporation and to report its findings and recommendation to next year's business meeting. Seconded and unanimously approved by voice vote.

#### VII. Other business.

- A. Question: should we keep the business meeting on Saturday (rather than Sunday morning)?
  1. General support for the idea expressed.
  2. However, no vote on the question; instead, it was suggested that we wait to see how well attended the closing reception was since the time gap between the end of the last panel slot and the end of the business meeting might encourage attendees to leave.

#### VIII. Adjournment.