

**ALA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS
AT THE AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE,
SAN FRANCISCO, CA, NOVEMBER 16-19, 2006**

Thursday, November 16

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 a.m.

Present: Niyi Afolabi, Folabo Ajayi, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, Nana Becky Ayebia Clarke, Amy Elder, Wangui wa Goro (for Keiko Kusunose Myamoto), Tony Hurley, Anthonia Kalu, Mark Lilleleht, Eustace Palmer (President), Abioseh Porter, Emmanuel Yewah.

1. Ratification of the Agenda

The Agenda was ratified.

2. President's Opening Remarks

- Eustace welcomed the EC, especially the new members.
- At Eustace's request, Abioseh reported on Thelma's health; he said that George said she is continuing to improve and has been moved to a rehabilitation facility, but that the prognosis is that her recovery will be long-term.
- Eustace has written to the Committee Chairs to inform them of their responsibilities. He reported that Anthonia agreed to co-chair the Publications Committee with Janice Mayes; Chiwengo will chair the Teaching and Research Committee, replacing Sonia Lee.
- JoAnne Cornwell, ALA Headquarters Director, has been informed about the changes in the organization's publications and the institution of *JALA*.
- As instructed by the EC in Ghana, Eustace wrote to the NY Board of Regents, protesting the racist nature of their statewide examination. The Regents replied courteously and offered to change the exam question about colonialism to include an African perspective. Also, as requested by the EC, he wrote to the U.S. State Department to explain the deleterious effect on African scholars of the stringent current methods of attempting to detect terrorists entering the United States; he is awaiting their reply.

3. Ratification of the Minutes of the Executive Council meetings in Accra, May, 2006

The ratification was postponed, since not all EC members had received them. Abioseh sent the Minutes to all EC Members at this point.

4. Matters Arising From the Minutes

Postponed.

5. Treasurer's Report

- Tony distributed a "Combined Financial Statement" of ALA finances for March 15, 2006 to November 9, 2006.
Summary: Income: \$7,855.59
Balance fwd. from March 15, 2006: \$22,572.59
Expenditures: \$11,469.67
Assets in Wachovia checking and Money Market accounts.
\$18,958.51
PAX World Funds Balance: \$86,477.97
Total Assets: \$105,436.48
- He explained that many new members joined in Accra, and he had to change their cedis into dollars, which accounts for a \$207 differential listed in the report.

Discussion ensued:

- Mark Lilleth asked about the status of changing the rates of membership dues and any plans for the ensuring the ALA's solvency; Tony replied that he would refer the questions to the Finance Committee.
- Chiwengo asked about the cost of the *Bulletin* and *Newsletter*. Abioseh replied that rather than considering changes with the publications, we should attempt to gain new North American and European members because, unlike those from Africa, they are self-sustaining.
- Eustace suggested the possibility of a membership drive. The EC decided that the Finance Committee should consider increasing the membership dues.
- It was also suggested that the EC find a way of retaining membership abroad.
- Eustace raised the possibility of the organization helping out Kofi for unexpected expenses of the Ghanaian conference
- Tony brought up the cost of the EC breakfasts, which are an additional cost to the organization. He asked members of the EC to convey their breakfast preference to him, so he may order an amount of food closer to that we actually consume; he further reported that as long as the ALA's income is less than \$25,000, the organization can remain non-profit.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted, and Tony was thanked for his detailed explanation of ALA finances.

6. Appointment of Auditors

Several names were suggested for Eustace to contact: Robert Cancel, Joseph McClaren and Adlai Murdoch.

7. Caucus Reports

A. WOCALA: Anthonia Kalu

- Anthonia reported that the Caucus hosted a highly successful and well-attended luncheon at the Ghana ALA Conference.
- We are waiting to hear from Janet Spleth about the success of obtaining Nancy Morejon as WOCALA luncheon speaker at the 2007 ALA Conference in West Virginia.
- Ada Azodo, the WOCALA Vice-Chair is working on the caucus panels for the West Virginia Conference.

B. Graduate Student Caucus: Mark Lilleleht

- Mark reported that, for a variety of reasons, this caucus is almost moribund.
- He suggested as possible ways to gain more members:
 1. to work with conveners so that all caucuses will have a presence at the registration table at future conferences;
 2. to publicize student papers on conference panels;
 3. to open the caucus to undergraduate students as well as graduate and to change its name to reflect this new membership.

Discussion ensued:

- In response to a suggestion that Mark, as Chair of the Caucus, write to departments of African Studies at appropriate universities to publicize the organization and solicit student papers, he explained that this action had already been taken with no results.
- Tony suggested that the EC members take upon themselves the role of mentoring appropriate students to become Africanists and, at future conferences, have panels of students and their mentors.

C. TRACLA: Wangui wa Goro

Report deferred.

The Caucus Chairs were thanked for their reports.

8. Standing Committee Reports

A. Finance: Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka

- Folabo reported that the Committee has four recommendations to report to the EC for discussion concerning the continuing problems with the ALA Annuals:
 1. the price of the Annuals be added to conference registration fees;
 2. individuals purchase Annuals at conferences;
 3. there be an overall increase in ALA dues to help subsidize the Annuals;
 4. dues be increased on a sliding scale based on salary, which would guarantee the Annuals to every member

Discussion ensued:

- Mark urged the EC to ask Kassahoun for detailed figures of his costs for producing the Annuals and a projection of future costs.
- Tony suggested that the Finance Committee examine the overall financial situation of the ALA, so we will be better able to determine how the different suggestions about the Annuals would affect the organization.
- Abioseh suggested the formation of a standing committee, the Revenue Enhancement Committee that would consider fund raising and grant proposals.

B. Issues: Mark Lilleleht

- Mark reported that the Committee is working to set up a panel for the West Virginia Conference to focus on activism and other appropriate topics. In this regard, he raised the question of how the EC defines “issues” and wondered if a more activist role was appropriate for the Issues Committee.
- Dr. Mildred Hill Lubin’s proposal that her library be moved to Africa will be discussed during the next report of the Finance Committee.

Discussion ensued:

- Fahamisha provided the information that, historically, the Issues Committee has acted in whatever manner and on whichever issues the Chair of the Committee wished.
- Folabo and Abioseh agreed that the Issues Committee deals with non-academic concerns as they affect ALA members, for example, political issues, shipping books, etc.

C. Publications Committee: Anthonia Kalu

1. JALA: Abioseh Porter

- Abioseh reported that 40 reviewers of manuscripts submitted for *JALA* are in place and have been sent guidelines for their reviews.
- He has made three calls for papers and has received 20 to 25 submissions so far; the Francophone area has not been as responsive as the Anglophone.

The Standing Committee Chairs were thanked for their reports.

Eustace adjourned the meeting at 8:54 a.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Eustace opened the meeting at 7:14 a.m.

Present: Niyi Afolabi, Folabo Ajayi, Debra Boyd, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, Becky Ayebia Clarke, JoAnne Cornwell, Amy Elder, Wangui wa Goro (for Keiko Kusunose), Tony Hurley, Anthonia Kalu, George Lang, Mark Lilleleht, Soraya Mekerta, Eustace Palmer (President), Abioseh Porter, Emmanuel Yewah

9. Left-over business from the previous meeting (For the sake of clarity, I am changing the numbering of the items listed on the Agenda).

The Minutes from the Ghana Conference were ratified.

C. Publications Committee: Anthonia Kalu (cont.)

- Anthonia reported that the charge of the Committee is guarantee that ALA publications come out in a timely fashion, and the Committee welcomes recommendations from the EC to help it fulfill its charge.
- The outstanding Annuals are: Kansas (ready), San Diego (almost ready), Madison (?????), Boulder (low response), Egypt (no report), Accra (call under way).
- The Committee has the following suggestions for the EC to consider:
 1. A special issue of *JALA* could publish the conference Annuals each year.
 2. There is still a need for a Series Editor.
 3. This Committee should have Co-Chairs.
 4. Since the conference conveners are usually too busy at the end of hosting an ALA conference to perform editorial work, Abioseh, as *JALA* Editor, should do the actual manuscript selection.
 5. We should combine the submissions from the Boulder, Egypt, and Madison conferences and publish them in one Annual.

Discussion ensued:

- Abioseh proposed that we issue a second call for the issues from Egypt and Boulder; we need to speak frankly with Kassahun about whether he wishes to continue to publish the Annuals.
- Fahamisha suggested that, in the past, papers were submitted to the conference conveners, there should be guidelines given to them to ask that panelists send their papers in after the conferences and realized that the papers will be considered for publication in the Annuals.
- Mark suggested that the Series Editor could receive the submitted papers from the conferences and aid the conveners to select the essays to be published in the Annuals.
- JoAnne said that Headquarters easily could compile all the papers given at the conference into yearly Proceedings.

2. Annuals and Series Editor: Kassahun Checole (invited)

- He mentioned the following problems:
 1. The timeliness of when the Annuals materials have been submitted to him has been a problem. Consequently, library orders are minimal because the Annuals are considered outdated.
 2. In terms of producing the Annuals, dealing with the Series Editors has taken an inordinate amount of time; he suggested that the Series Editors be responsible for layout and indexing. The actual production of the volume should be left to the publisher.
 3. It costs approximately \$2,000 per Annual to complete all the production work.
 4. Regarding distribution, the best way to sell the Annuals is to make it part of the conference registration packet at a discounted additional cost. Currently, he is warehousing many copies of our Annuals that have not sold.
 5. He reminded the EC of the ALA's promise to send the Annuals to African libraries. This commitment has not been honored recently.

Eustace expressed the EC's gratitude to Kassahun for his work with the organization in publishing the Annuals thus far and for his report.

Discussion ensued:

- Mark suggested that Kassahun give the EC the unit cost so that we can determine how much to add to the conference registration.
- Anthonia recommended sending the warehoused Annuals to African universities, a plan that Kassahun accepted; in the meantime, he plans to bring all the back copies to the West Virginia Conference and see them at a discount.
- Debra asked him to place an inventory of the back copies on the Africa World Press website, so interested people can order directly from him; Kassahun agreed.
- JoAnne asked Kassahun if he would produce a brochure listing past Annuals and purchasing information to go out on the Headquarter's website or in the *Newsletter*.
- Other suggestions were those of making the Annuals required reading in our classes and asking our libraries to have complete holdings of them.

Kassahun assured the EC that he is willing to continue publishing the ALA Annuals, thanked us for considering his report, and was excused.

- Eustace emphasized the need for the selection of a new Series Editor; Abioseh suggested Mark Lilleleht, who replied that he was willing to consider the appointment. Eustace suggested that the conference conveners serve as Associate Editors.
- Amy asked Abioseh to send out on the web for EC and membership consideration:

1. which Annual the conference registrants would be required to buy; her recommendation was it be the one produced for the conference they are attending;
2. Alternatively, whether the additional charge for the Annual be added to the general membership fee.

3. Newsletter: JoAnne Cornwell

- JoAnne provided the final draft of the fall *Newsletter* to the EC.
- A new version of the *Handbook* will be ready by spring.

Eustace suggested that JoAnne and Abioseh work together on revising the *Handbook*.

D. Awards (Fonlon-Nichols): George Lang

- George reported that he polled the members of the F-N Committee, and Nawal el-Saadawi received a unanimous vote to be the 2007 recipient of the award.

Eustace will write to ask her to formally accept.

E. Travel Grant: Anthonia Kalu

- Anthonia reported that, unfortunately, the nominees to this Committee have not accepted to serve; therefore, she suggested that there be no applications this year for travel funding.

Discussion ensued:

It was decided that Chiwengo, Debra, as Past President, and Wangui would meet here in San Francisco to decide on a visitor from Africa for the 2007 ALA Conference in West Virginia to whom the Committee should give the \$2,5000 award.

F. Teaching and Research Committee: Chiwengo Nwarsunga

- Chiwengo said that at the 2007 conference, the Committee will be directing a teaching workshop for both academics and non-specialists. She will explore grant proposals for an expanded teaching workshop for the 2008 conference. The Committee will also field a panel on Postcolonial theory and the teaching of African literature and asked for a fourth member to join the panel. Another panel will be on the subject of teaching African literature with graphic novels and animated friends. She requested funding to bring in a speaker for this panel.
- She contacted Greenwood Press to ask if it would be interested in publishing a series on teaching African literature; Greenwood reported that African literature is too specific to publish such a series, but she will continue to pursue publishing possibilities.
- She suggested that a special issue of *JALA* be devoted to this subject.

- Chiwengo also contacted Becky about the possibility of Ayebia Press publishing works of African literature no longer available.

Discussion ensued:

- Fahamisha suggested the Teaching and Research Committee forge a liaison with the African Literature and Postcolonial Divisions of the MLA to develop multiple constituencies and publicize our works. The MLA already has a series on teaching different works of literature.
- Regarding the question of financing an animator or graphic novelist, it was decided that this expense would be one the organization shouldn't pursue at this time. The Finance Committee has emergency funds to support special grant applications, so Chiwengo should write a proposal and apply to this Committee for consideration.

G. Media Relations Committee: Fahamisha Brown

- Fahamisha suggested that a brochure explaining the function of this Committee should be provided to members along with the membership form; the Committee has no budget, so cannot publish a brochure itself.
- She expressed the need for an Annuals order form to be displayed at future conferences.
- The Committee created a press sheet about the Ghana meeting; this year, it sent out to professional sites publicity information about the 2007 ALA Conference.
- She expressed the need to raise the profile of the ALA.

Discussion ensued:

- The EC agreed that the name of this Committee should be changed to "Media Relations and Publicity Committee."
- It was suggested that Eustace write an official letter to Fahamisha's institution to inform it that she is Chair of the Media Relations and Publicity Committee and to say that any support for ALA projects would be greatly appreciated.
- Becky Clarke announced that Ayebia Press and the Indiana U. Press plan to collaborate; she has just published Tsitsi Dangarembga's latest novel, which soon will be available in the U.S.

H. Constitution Committee: Thelma Ravell-Pinto

- There was no report, due to Thelma's absence.

Eustace thanked all the Committee Chairs who reported and adjourned the meeting at 9:02

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Eustace began the meeting at 7:13 a.m.

Present: Niyi Afolabi, Folabo Ajayi, Debra Boyd, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, JoAnne Cornwell, Nwarsunga Chiwengo, Amy Elder, Wangui wa Goro (TRACLA and for Keiko Kusunose), Tony Hurley, Anthonia Kalu, Mark Lilleleht, Soraya Mekerta, Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah, Eustace Palmer (President), Abioseh Porter, Janice Spleth, Emmanuel Yewah.

10. Continuation of leftover business: Caucus and Standing Committee Reports

C. TRACLA: Wangui WA Gori

- Wangui reported that the Caucus has changed its acronym to TRACALA.
- Fund raising will be pursued.
- The Caucus Constitution was ratified.
- There is a need to make sure this Caucus is represented by panels at the West Virginia ALA Conference.
- TRACALA members wish to work cooperatively with other ALA caucuses.
- There will be a \$15 yearly membership fee.
- She asked about possible funding for caucuses.

Discussion:

- Tony explained that there were no funds for the caucuses.

D. Francophone: Janice Spleth (for Gerise Herndon)

- Janice announced that the Caucus is discussing a possible name change.
- The new officers of the Caucus are:
 President: Gerise Herndon
 Vice-President: Anne Carlson
 Secretary: Michele Chossat
 Treasurer: Frances Novak

Discussion:

- Eustace and Abioseh requested that the Francophone Caucus encourage its members to submit essays to *JALA*.

Eustace thanked the Caucus Chairs for their reports.

I. Employment Committee: Huma Ibrahim

Huma was not present, and there was no report.

11. Final Report from the 2006 Conference: Kofi Anyidoho

Kofi was not present, and there was no report.

12. Report from the Conveners of the 2007 Conference: Janice Spleth

- Janice reported that the general theme of the Conference is “Terrorism and Globalization”
- Confirmed speakers are Tsitsi Dangarembga, Dennis Brutus, and T. Momenembo; Janice welcomed suggestions for other speakers but cannot promise much funding for them.
- There has been no response from the WOCALA choice for luncheon speaker, Nancy Morejon; therefore, the second and third choices, Elizabeth Nuñez and Angela Muñoz will be approached.
- She requested that the ALA announce Nawal el Saadawi as the Fonlon-Nichols Award winner as soon as possible for funding purposes from her institution; she would also like to know if there would be other speaking engagements at nearby institutions while Saadawi is in the U.S.
- A Conference web site will be established by December 1st. and will contain information about how foreign scholars can secure visas. It will also contain travel information about various means of transport to Morgantown and, specifically, that Continental Airlines will be servicing the city.
- The Conveners have received a \$15,000 grant for the Conference from the state of West Virginia; this grant will help support workshops on Afro-Hispanic literature for high school teachers.
- She expects between 200 and 300 attendants and requested the EC approve a charge of \$110 for registration.
- Janice requested that all abstracts be submitted by December 1st. because of the pressure of the conference hotel for the number of projected attendees.

Discussion:

- Tony remarked that, although the *ALA Handbook* says that the registration fee for conferences should be determined by agreement between the EC and the Conveners, past practice has been that the Conveners decide on the amount, based on their projected expenses. Janice suggested that the EC consider changing the language in the Handbook.
- Eustace informed Janice of the EC decision to ask conveners for two copies of all papers accepted for the conferences to be collected for a *Proceedings* to be kept in the ALA archives.
- Mark suggested that the call for papers indicate the date of their acceptance and the deadline for hotel registration.
- Anthonia requested that Janice inquire about a special conference rate from Continental; Janice said that she would.

Eustace thanked Janice for her hard work and her report.

13. Report from the Conveners of the 2008 Conference at Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL, March 18-23, 2008: Rasheed Na’Allah

- Rasheed passed around a detailed handout of progress so far and reported that no unexpected funding problems have arisen.

Eustace thanked Rasheed for his report and his work so far.

14. Report on a proposal for the 2009 Conference at North Carolina A&T: Chiwalum Nwankwo

- Chiwalum was not present, but Eustace and Debra have been in contact with him; the EC will soon receive his formal bid.

15. Report from the Vice President on elections (Finalization of Ballot and Calendar): Chiwengo Nwarsunga

- Chiwengo reported that she would like to nominate three members for ALA Vice-President: Mimi Mortimer, Fahamisha Patricia Brown, and Maureen Eke; she has contacted and received agreement from the following individuals to be recommended to the EC as candidates for the Executive Council: Villa Goavec, Losembe Lokangaka, Joseph Muantuali, and Bistingwa.

Discussion:

- Mark commented that the EC can propose a slate of candidates in additions to those Chiwengo mentioned, who do not need the traditional five letters of support from ALA members.
- Debra reminded us that, in the past, the EC came up with the names of candidates.
- EC members recommended: Ada Azodo, Anne Carlson, Pat Celerier, Wangui wa Goro, Shane Graham, Cerise Herndon, Janet Hollier, Mohamed Kamara, Greg Thomas; these members will be contacted to determine if they are willing to run.

Eustace adjourned the meeting early, at 8:30, because the room was needed for other purposes.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Eustace called the meeting to order at 7:09 a.m.

Present: Niyi Afolabi, Folabo Ajayi, Debra Boyd, Nwarsunga Chiwengo, JoAnne Cornwell, Amy Elder, Wangui wa Goro (for Keiko Kusunose), Tony Hurley, Anthonia Kalu, Mark Lilleleht, Soraya Mekerta, Eustace Palmer (President), Abioseh Porter, Emmanuel Yewah.

16. Leftover Business From Saturday, November 18

- Eustace passed out for ranking the list of VP and EC candidates generated at the meeting yesterday; the Secretary tabulated the vote. The list of candidates in decreasing order of votes is:

Wangui wa Goro
 Ada Azodo
 Mohamed Kamara
 Anne Carlson
 Losambe Lokangaka
 Greg Thomas
 Oty Agbajoh-Laoye
 Biswunga
 Gerise Herndon

Discussion:

- A motion was made and passed that all nominations for VP or EC from the membership at large be filed with the EC at least a week prior to the ALA EC meeting at ASA in the fall.
- There was a request from Abioseh that the ALA request panels at the ASA meetings from the membership; the 2007 ASA will be October 17 to 21 at the New York Sheraton.

17. Report From ALA Headquarters: JoAnne Cornwell

- JoAnne reported that she would like to leave the position of Headquarters Director in three years.
- In terms of the personal institutional support she has received at San Diego, she gets one course per year off and \$1,000 for a student assistant.
- It is necessary for a new Director to be at an institution that will support the *Newsletter*, *Handbook*, and archival space.
- Altogether, supporting the ALA Headquarters will cost an institution \$5,000 plus released time for the Director.

18. Review of Initiatives (Visual History Project)

- Tony nominated Debra Boyd as Chairman of the “Heritage Project.” Debra needs to write a proposal for funding such an archive of memorabilia visually recording ALA events and to constitute a committee to help her. This motion was seconded and passed.

19. New Business (Strategies for Dealing With the Extraordinary Circumstance of the Inability of the President or Vice-President to Fulfill His/Her Responsibilities)

- Background information: the term of the Vice-President ends at the spring ALA Conference, and the Vice-President assumes the role of the Presidency.
- Folabo moved that in light of the lack of clarity in the ALA Constitution on the matter of extraordinary succession, the Deputy Vice President,

Chiwengo, who is already Acting Vice President, should become Acting President in March, until such time as Thelma informs the EC whether she will continue as President.

Discussion:

- Also recommended was that the EC work on the constitutional language to provide agreed upon steps for dealing with such a situation in the future.
- Folabo accepted the friendly amendment that, in the meantime, the Acting Vice-President could ask for assistance in carrying out her duties from the EC.

The Motion was seconded and passed: 8 in favor; 1 against; 2 abstentions.

Eustace adjourned the meeting at 8:53.