**Association for Humanist Sociology, Inc.**

**Opening Meeting**

**2017 Annual Conference – Havana, Cuba \* November 1, 2017**

**Meeting Begins @ 4 PM** *(Minutes were taken by Dawn Tawwater, AHS Secretary)*

**Board Members Present:** Dawn Tawwater, Woody Doane, Rebecca Hensley, David Embrick, Marc Settembrino,

**Other Members Present:** Michael Roscino, Jim Pennell, Joti Sekon, Matthew Hughey, Stephen Adair

**President’s Report (**Rebecca Hensley**):**

The meeting is called to order; members are asked if there is any old business that needs to be addressed. Rebecca directs the group to her full report published online. She notes last year that a budget was approved for 125 people at $150 per person, which would have been covered by registration. After registration blossomed to about 300 people, the expenditures went down to about $96.00 per person. However people’s early attendance at the conference did create small issues with lunch numbers, etc.. only because it far exceeded the norm for attendance at a conference opening. The president thanks the board and all of those at FLASCO and on the Cuban side, for helping in organizing and making the conference a success. She proposes an ongoing scholarship for a young FLASCO scholar to attend our conferences in the future, and she would like to call the scholarship the “Ricardo Dello Buono Scholarship.” She notes and describes the plaque that she had produced for the FLASCO group and will be presenting to Ricardo. Her hope is that the scholarship will maintain our relationship and continue to promote our commitment to international scholarship. Discussion occurs about the scholarship idea, including raising funds, since the general fund can’t be used unless we have 501C3 status – which the organization doesn’t have. Others discuss a commitment to contribute to a fund for the scholarship and limiting the number of years for the scholarship. It is clarified that FLASCO would choose the scholar. Board members suggest the scholarship may want to ear-marked for oppressed groups, like the Afro-Cuban demographic in Cuba. It is suggested that we approve the scholarship for one year and then work to look at a future commitment but Rebecca feels strongly that the scholarship should have ongoing availability for Cuban scholars.

**Incoming President’s Report (**Dave Embrick**):**

The location for the 2018 conference will hopefully be Detroit MI. He discusses possible conference locations and costs. Transportation, and other factors were also discussed – included priorities like his commitment not to hold the conference in a casino, and would like to hold it on campus. The current location at the University he hopes for will not be able to confirm space until May due to policy restrictions; he discusses the ins and outs of that dilemma. He describes some possible options for the event, but given the long time line he suggests that alternatives at this time are difficult to define. Discussion about the history and process of conference planning occurs; Rebecca discusses the early steps in the Cuban conference.

**Treasurer’s Report (**Woody Doane**):**

Treasurer’s report was handed out. Woody discusses his transition into the position at the end of the year. Woody wanted to acknowledge Greta P. for all her hard work and help. The two together decided the group should stay with PNB for our banking needs. 2017 he reports, has been an excellent year financially for AHS. We’ve had an increase in membership; we have 188 members, with 177 paid, as of October 30. We had 299 paid registrations for the Conference in Cuba, making the income over 56,000.00 for conference fees, memberships, tour registrations, etc. Again these numbers are as of October 30th. Woody attributes the increase to Rebecca’s confidence in putting the Cuba conference together. Woody pointed out that he has had to be creative in getting around some of the limitation of the Square program we use to take in card payments. He will be looking at a more efficient system for those payments for the future. He also noted that the requirement to pay for early registration before arriving in Cuba (so that passport information could be conveyed) helped with the bottom line. He suggests we try to do that in future conference for participants – this helps us to avoid “ghost” session when some don’t attend. By requiring early registration from participants in the program, it helps to avoid that – walk up registration can be used for attendees; this is only being applied to participants. This year several requests for refunds occurred, the treasurer discussed the problems and issues with these requests which don’t commonly occur. He handled the requests in various ways depending on the issue and the request relative to the need. Woody discusses the month to month income/expenses of the course of the year. He also noted he has created four expense areas for accounting, administrative, organizational, humanity and society and annual meeting. Overall he noted the organizational finances are in good shape.

**Nominations Committee (**Joti Sekon**):**

Report on rotation of the nominations committee. Walda will be cycling off, but three new members will join. Some issues with getting the nominee for President, but all was resolved over time, it did cause a small delay in presenting the slate. Joti reviews the slate of new candidates. Secretary, Dawn Tawwater inserted her mistake in announcing the wrong incoming nominations committee members. Discussion on how to inform the two confused nominees occurred. See motion addressing this issue at the end of these minutes.

**VP of Publications (**Bhoomi Thakore**):**

No report made

**VP of Membership (**Marc Settembrino**):**

Reports the need for a new software platform for all aspects of membership**;** the current method is unnecessarily arduous and inefficient. When changes are made they have to be applied to various lists and spread sheets by more than one person. Marc notes that he often feels he looks unprofessional because membership gets frustrated or confused by the lack of continuous systems of membership. Issues between *Jot Form* and *Square* are problematic and may deter people from joining/participating. Marc and Woody will look at a better option for both officers and the organization to use.

**Secretary’s Report (**Dawn Tawwater**):**

Secretary acknowledged her mistake in announcing nomination committee results again and committed to writing the nominees an email to apologize and clarify the situation when the conference ends. She also announced the regrets of 2018-19 President Elect, Jeff Torlina who was unable to attend the conference due to issues around his re-location to the East coast and new position at Sienna College.

**Motions:**

Motion: to accept the minutes from October 12, 2017, board meeting. 2nd (Woody Doane). Motion passes.

Motion: the secretary will write a letter and to the nominations members acknowledging her mistake in announcing the new members, prior to sending the letter she will send to nomination committee co-chairs for approval. 2nd (Jim Pennell). Motion passes.

Motion: to accept the treasurer’s report as given. 2nd (Marc Settembrino). Motion passes.

Motion: to accept the VP of membership’s report. 2nd (David Embrick). Motion passes.

Motion: to accept Hephzibah as program chair for the 2017-18 conference. 2nd (Marc Settembrino). Motion passes.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 PM.**