

Sigma Tau Delta Board of Directors
MINUTES of the 92nd MEETING
September 20-21, 2019
Las Vegas, NV

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: President **Glen Brewster**; President Elect **Diane Steinberg**; Immediate Past President **Carrie Fitzpatrick**; Officer at Large **Terry Phelps**; Secretary/Treasurer **Shannin Schroeder**; Eastern Regent **Felicia Steele**; Far Western Regent **AmiJo Comeford**; High Plains Regent **Lexey Bartlett**; Midwestern Regent **Tim Helwig**; Southern Regent **Leigh Dillard**; Southwestern Regent **Kaine Ezell**; Student Advisor **Kaitlyn Sass**; Student Advisor **Amanda Ayers**

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Executive Director **William C. Johnson**; Director of Society Operations **Natasha McPartlin**; Director of Marketing and Technology **Elfi Gabriel**; NEHS Director **Dave Wendelin**; Director of Social Media Strategies **Katie Mudd**; Eastern Student Representative **Alex McCarron**; Far Western Student Representative **Julie Handy**; High Plains Student Representative **Jessica Trad**; Midwestern Student Representative **Apryl Moore**; Southern Student Representative **Madison Whatley**; Southwestern Student Representative **Claire Seale**; Alumni Representative **Jessica Heller**

Friday, September 20, 2019

President **Brewster** calls the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

- **Brewster** begins with introductions.
- **Brewster** announces **Phelps** as Parliamentarian and reminds us of **Steinberg**'s Roberts Rules of Order "cheat sheet." He reminds the Board of specialized rules, including those about timekeeping. **Handy** and **Steele** agree to keep time.
- **Brewster** reminds the Board members who can vote.

Public comment on Non-Agenda Items/Approval of Minutes

- **Dillard moves, Bartlett seconds, to accept the minutes.** With no revisions, **motion carries.**

Old Business

- **Brewster** mentions that the Strategic Plan will move to New Business soon.

New Business

Executive Director's Report—Johnson (written report submitted)

- **Johnson** says his report is far less about what he has done and more about the work of the organization. He references *sprezzatura* (from the Italian), the art of working so hard that your effort does not show. He compares this to the work of the Board.
- He touches on the statistics for the most recent convention, our current efforts to change marketing. **Mudd** and **Gabriel** have worked to train student leadership. We worked with NCTE to create an internship. Other internships and scholarships are increasing.
- **Johnson** wants to compliment the Central Office (CO) staff and their service to the Board and organization. He points to the significant amount of money we're giving back to students, as presented in Appendix A of his report (\$203,000 from STD, as well as money from NEHS).
- The downsides in his chart are worth mentioning. New membership has gone down. New and reactivated chapters have gone down. The SNHU online chapter balances out some of this downturn; he shows the numbers to the Board. One way to compensate for a downturn in majors and members at colleges is by considering additional online chapters.
- The one- and two-year lapses in membership demonstrate the chapters that may be deactivated.
- **Johnson** applauds the many good things that are going on. "Now what?" he asks, saying that the strategic plan will help us decide where we want to go.

Director of Society Operations Report—McPartlin

- **McPartlin** expands on what **Johnson** said about chapters at risk of being inactive and about SNHU's online chapter, particularly its use of WriteAway!.
- She was able to secure some discounts through businesses for members.
- Streamlining the application process for Student Leadership.
- She works with the online chapter report data. **McPartlin** responds to **Helwig's** question about contacting at-risk chapters.

Director of Marketing & Technology Report—Gabriel

- **Gabriel** discusses the agreement with Affinity Marketing, where our logos are licensed. We control that image/brand; Affinity handles the royalties and fees. We might see royalties from that relationship.
- She is working on GMerch issues: streamlined credit cards, promotional items, and new merchandise.
- NEHS will now be able to add in a chapter fee in their invite enrollment.
- They were hoping EBMS would go into its next version before **C**onvention. It will be another year before the web-based version is available.
- Convention judges are volunteering; we have 65 already.
- Penguin internship applications are up.
- **Dillard** wants to know whether current vendors can connect with Affinity licensing. There is a \$20 charge.

Director of Social Media Strategies—Mudd

- **Mudd** says our platforms are continuing to grow and engage members.
- She has changed the types of posts we use on Instagram. Linked-In has allowed us to create a company page.
- We have changed our mail server to Active Campaign. Our new templates have more consistent branding and are more attractive. We have better statistics as well.
- **Gabriel** adds that our first mailing for Convention has 2000 opens. Innovations are helping us to reach more people.
- **Mudd** says STD has started beta-testing Slack for the organization. Our trial basis suggests it will not work for us; currently, it works for the student leadership.
- She asks us to send her article links for works discussing the value of the English major.

National English Honor Society (NEHS) Director's Report & Constitutional Revisions—Wendelin (written report submitted)

- **Wendelin** mentions his work from home in Denver. He wants to thank the CO for the daily support of NEHS.
- The numbers are breathtaking: 23,000 members last year and 77 new chapters this year.
- He will be present at the NCTE convention in Baltimore; high school students will be sharing the importance of NEHS to them.
- The poetry challenge encourages both Advisors and students.
- The badging program is like earning badges in Scouts. The goal is to invigorate chapters—toward becoming “distinctive chapters” that will be eligible for the “outstanding chapter of the year.”
- NEHS is increasing scholarship funding.
- NEHS is offering grants for organizations working with NEHS-related topics. Giving Southern Nevada NCTE and Southern Nevada Writing project are the two organizations NEHS hopes to support and to recognize at the 2020 Convention.

Committee Reports and Updates

Student Advisors, Student Leadership Committee Reports

Student Advisor Report—**Sass and Ayers**

- Imagination Library is the literacy service project, and the Student Leaders (SLs) have been creating videos.
- SLs are working in advance to prepare for Convention, getting smaller assignments out of the way. The event and the workshop will be discussed further in the SL Committee report.
- Simplifying the application process for SLs will encourage more applications, with knowledge about what will be expected of them immediately.

Alumni Representative—Heller

- **Heller** says the last months have been wonderful. New officers have been holding monthly officer meetings and committee meetings. They are holding the committees to goals, including a constitution for Alumni Epsilon. They are also working on fundraising campaigns and to put together alumni spotlight videos.
- *Inkblot* finally got released.
- The mentorship initiative has brought in 19 interested alumni so far. They may work with deactivated or brand-new chapters, or they can network with Regents to be speakers.
- **Heller** is putting together a handbook for the Alumni Representative position.

Brewster calls for a break at 2:50; the meeting reconvenes at 3:12 p.m.

Eastern Regent—Steele

- **Steele** mentions that *Mind Murals* did not happen and has been set aside.
- A Regional conference at Mount St. Mary's is garnering wide participation among several chapters.
- **Steele** asked for a list of things members want—and she has released a list of funded Masters programs (no cost to the student in the program) in the Region that also have STD chapters.
- Can STD be a platform for filling those spots, asks **Gabriel**? **Steele** believes that won't be necessary, at least not now.

Eastern Student Representative [SR]—McCarron

- **McCarron**'s chapter is not yet up and running for the semester, save active posting and one interaction with another chapter.

Far Western SR—Jameson (report submitted)

- **Jameson** mentions that interest in the Regional conference is moving across the Region.

Far Western Regent—Comeford (report submitted)

- **Comeford** has been working with the UNLV chapter regarding including them in Convention. Without a lot of support, they were brainstorming for how to use and engage the members.

High Plains Regent—Bartlett (report submitted)

- **Bartlett** notes that they have a pending Regional conference. They may be extending the deadline. Sarah Smarsh will be doing a reading and conversation. They are partnering with another group on an open mic event.

High Plains SR—Trad

- **Trad** is trying to recruit students for the Facebook page and to encourage High Plains students with future conventions.

Midwestern Regent—Helwig (report submitted)

- **Helwig** sent his fall email blast last week. They are challenging chapters to put one picture from their best event and then 100 words, with a \$25 prize for the most-liked post.
- The sixth annual Regional conference is coming up. They hope to get more than seven or eight chapters involved.

Midwestern SR—Moore

- **Moore** is planning a workshop that mirrors what the national Convention does, with similar topics.

Southern Regent—Dillard

- **Dillard** says their Regional conference will involve five or six chapters. She'd like to rotate the conference.
- She has been meeting with other officers and Advisors in the Region, as well as with a student who would like to start a chapter at Emory.
- She has launched Slack in the region, and it has involved a considerable number of Advisors.

Southern SR—Whatley (report submitted)

- **Whatley** has been using Facebook to encourage conversations that share good ideas.

Southwestern Regent—Ezell (report submitted)

- **Ezell** says they started a Regional student journal *Gaillardia*. The student editor made notes for how the next editor will create the next issue.
- A future Regional conference is an option.

Southwestern SR—Seale

- **Seale** has been reaching out to the very different parts of her Region and to make the Region cohesive.

Brewster calls for a ten-minute break at 3:03 p.m. The meeting reconvenes at 3:19 p.m.

Taskforce Updates**Advocacy for English & Related Disciplines—Dillard**

- **Dillard** says they've talked about what this taskforce title means and how it ties into other conversations the organization has been having. The page of links needs to be dynamic and useful and substantive.
- Their next step is for the students to do research into what other organizations do, particularly in relation to advocacy and what that means.
- **Dillard** is planning to draft a letter to Advisors asking what works for them and what they would need to make the conversation more effective. **Wendelin** invites collaboration with NEHS chapters.
- **Sass** adds that such resources are already being shared. So, how can we get people to utilize them, and what gaps can we fill? **Brewster** mentions how important and useful such research can be.

Convention Chair & Committee Processes—Steele

- **Steele** reads the charge. The taskforce has an architecture for the document. They wonder whether we can have better long-term planning for future Convention chairs.
- We discussed ways to help chairs find speakers, without being too prescriptive, including new areas and good speakers. Contracting might need to be something that the Central Office takes over.
- They will use a Google doc for the drafting of the handbook.

Constitution/By-Law/Policies/Procedures and Revisions—Steinberg

- **Steinberg** presents a simplified version of the Budget Policies, Principles, Procedures document. **The motion to approve the revised version carries.**

Engaging Non-Traditional Students—Phelps

- **Phelps** points out that a blog could be created that touches on such issues as surviving in class, group work, and having chat board and web meetings.

- Annual reports can include statistics of non-traditional students in chapters. Discussion raises questions about self-reporting, availability of information to advisors, how this information might be collected, and FERPA.

Board Manual Development—Steinberg

- **Steinberg** has a couple of recommendations and a motion out of the taskforce. The recommendation is that the handbook should be an online document, with ability to change it frequently. The taskforce suggests a list of specific information and documents that should be on the Board page on the website. There should be a to-be-written timeline.
- The taskforces want committee membership to be visible on the public section of the website. This used to be on the website, confirms **Gabriel**, and **McPartlin** points out that the committee lists are available. This section needs to be updated.
- New Board members should continue to be assigned seasoned mentors.
- **Moves that a brief one-page summary of passed motions appear on the public website-- timeline.** Friendly amendment from Schroeder to add the word “passed.” **Motion carries.**

Committee Reports

Executive Committee—Brewster

- The Committee discussed the Strategic Plan, a discussion that continued in the Strategic Planning Committee. Topics also included the Executive Director succession plan, elections and Board recruitment, moving a simplified Treasurer’s report online in a simplified form, transfer student eligibility, chapter organization, changes in the discipline, the Past President’s council, and the STD Centennial.
- **Johnson** proposes increases in salaries for CO. He explains how the changes for NIU employees have affected salary. **Moves that the ED receive a 4% increase. Motion carries.**

Brewster calls for a ten-minute break at 4:28 p.m. The Board reconvenes at 4:38 p.m.

President’s Report—Brewster

- **Brewster** was able again this summer to go to the Central Office. The planning allowed by that visit is invaluable, and he thanks the CO staff for their hospitality.
- He thanks the other Board members for what they do for the society.

Vice President’s Report—Steinberg

- **Steinberg** is continuing to streamline policies and to think about the Strategic Planning retreat and Board members’ virtual handbook.

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report--Schroeder

- **Schroeder** discusses the simplified version of the budget.
- She worked in concert with **Johnson** and financial advisor Leslie Evans-Dunn to revise the portfolio. We are going to set money aside in a money market, to make yearly necessary withdrawals easier. We also agreed to strike a more conservative ratio between stocks and bonds.

Board Officer at Large Report—Phelps

- **Phelps** appreciates what the other Board members have to say.

Communications Committee—Ezell

- **Ezell** says the Committee considered new forms of inexpensive communication with members.
- **Gabriel** asks whether the Communications Committee should be charged with exploring whether print versions of the journals are still valid. The second edits of the journals are finished and the hard copies will be ready soon. But do we want to investigate electronic submissions? Some chapters are moving toward online journals.
- They also discussed the taskforce on advocacy and how this Committee could contribute.

Convention Committee—Comeford

- **Comeford** notes that **Gabriel** shared a mock-up of the slimmed down version of the print program. We will provide PDF versions for those who prefer printed versions. This takes us from 80 pages down to 30 pages.
- Students still have access to the app or the electronic versions of the program. For faculty who are involved in judging, we can include that list for tenure/promotion. We may want to automatically generate a letter that could be sent or provided as a PDF. **Helwig** asks whether it affects advertising. No, says **Gabriel**. And **Steinberg** confirms there will no longer be an index. **Schroeder** likes the benefit to future convention chairs.
- Transfer student issues related to Convention can be resolved at the chapter level. The pilot option this year: the student has to be a fully inducted member by the end of December and can provisionally submit to Convention.
- The Committee wants to address gender fluid pronoun choices. The suggestion from **Gabriel** was to create a button with preferred pronouns; the alumni will staff that station, says **Heller**. Discussion considers colors for buttons, options for other pronouns, and further recommendations for moderators regarding pronouns.
- The Committee is piloting another program: area chairs for convention, modeled after the Southwest PCA. Area chairs will receive papers and will create sessions for the Convention. These would be selected positions; the Committee has already identified and invited most of those area chairs. **Steinberg** asks for clarification regarding the classifications. Discussion ensues.
- **Comeford** says that roundtable acceptance will need to include outside research in some way to increase scholarly quality.

Scholarships and Academic Awards Committee—Dillard

- **Dillard** explains that the committee may have another virtual meeting in January or February.
- She and **Gabriel** will look at recognition issues and policies for awardees. Promoting the awards more widely requires research into what info we need.
- The Committee hopes to improve and increase the applications to the LIT grant. Bringing this stipend up specifically during the scholarship workshop may help. Changing where the website lists opportunities for individuals applying for money may make this grant more visible.
- **The Committee moves to add five Classroom Library grants to the fall cycle.** This would add \$2000 to the budget. **Motion carries.**
- **Gabriel** provided the Committee statistics related to our previous numbers of applications.
- The CO needs to remember to use and record the buffer amount for any overage in Scholarships, Awards, or Grants.
- **Dillard** reads the revised versions of the prompts for the scholarship essays.
- Future meetings will consider the language of the Study Abroad scholarships, as relates to the number of weeks required. The Committee will also consider the involvement requirements for online students—how can they be viable candidates for scholarships? **Comeford** asks specific questions about the LIT research grant. The example from this year, **Dillard** confirms, can help students understand what we're looking for. Discussion ensues.

Service and Partnerships—Helwig

- **Helwig** says the Committee worked on suggestions for the Strategic Plan. This includes developing another internship.
- He mentions that one of our finalists for Penguin was selected; we want to better prepare our students for all stages of the application process. Conducting short interviews with our finalists will help impress upon them the importance of that aspect of the interview process. A list of best practices for all parts of the interview will be useful.
- **Steinberg** asks how many students are strong candidates. **Helwig** says that each time, ten or so candidates are strong. **Steele** asks whether Penguin turns down our applicants. Yes, say several Board members. **Fitzpatrick** applauds the idea of interviewing via phone and training our students in that way. Kristen Capano, former intern and current Penguin employee, is willing to provide some tips.

- Students who participate with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library project need to be recognized. We may want “swag” for those students from the Imagination Library.
- Staffing a table at registration might allow students to ask questions and get information.
- **Steinberg** asks whether professional development can be part of the SL workshop.
- **Helwig** notes that there will now be an NCTE internship. **Gabriel** explains: This intern would cover the NCTE convention in a journalistic way. The timeline works with our current AwardSpring calendar. **Helwig** and **Ezell** will tweak the application for Penguin for use here.

Steinberg moves to adjourn for the evening; Comeford seconds. **Brewster** dismisses the Board at 7:56 p.m.

Saturday, September 21, 2019

Brewster calls the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Strategic Planning Committee—Steinberg

- **Steinberg** says the day-early retreat for the strategic planning in Denver in the fall will be on Thursday. Voting members of the Board and student advisors, as well as CO staff, will participate in the retreat. **Fitzpatrick** will join us for the strategic planning retreat as co-chair.
- A large group, including previous Board members, will receive a detailed survey for strategic planning. An abbreviated question will appear on the annual reports on a voluntary basis. **Fitzpatrick** says gathering this data will show major themes and help to sculpt the vision for the next several years. The SWOT analysis will form the basis for the reporting.
- **We move to un-table the motion regarding the vision statement: “Transforming the world/words with words.” Steele seconds.** **Steinberg** explains the way that a tabled motion works, and **Fitzpatrick** explains the need for a vision statement. **Motion carries.**
- **The previous motion was to adopt the vision statement “Transforming worlds with words.” Motion is defeated.**
- **Motion to adopt “Transforming the world with words.” Motion carries.**
- The Board will hear more about strategic planning in the spring.

Regents Committee—Bartlett (written report submitted)

- Regents had a fairly narrow set of charges. Getting applications in a timely manner and faculty recommendations for SLs was a major topic. The online application system that the CO created will help streamline the application process.
- **Bartlett** provides some context for the changes to the application process and notes that an earlier application timeline will allow current SLs to answer questions from potential candidates and provide full application materials to members in the Region. **Moves to amend Bylaw V, Section IV, replacing final sentence (“Students wishing to run for Student Representative or Associate Student Representative should declare their candidacy by the end of official events on the second day of convention.”) with “Students wishing to run for Student Representative or Associate Student Representative must declare candidacy by applying in advance by the date determined by the Board of Directors, which will be communicated through the website and other Society communications. Candidates must attend the Convention to be eligible for election.”** **Brewster** asks whether the Regents have considered what will happen without a firm deadline. **Steinberg** asks about students applying at Convention and deciding to run then. **Bartlett** responds to the concerns about a lack of applications and the need for some advance decisions. Declaring candidacy needs a process. **Seale, Sass, and Handy** explain the advantages from students’ points of view. **Bartlett** returns to the purpose of the motion. **Motion carries.**
- The Committee also discussed Regent handbooks, recruitment, and availability at Advisor workshops during conventions.

Student Leadership Committee—Sass and Ayers

- **Sass** begins by talking about their plans to explore the area for locations to review, including restaurants and attractions, for Convention attendees.
- The 2020 Convention will again feature a Friday night game night.
- The workshop needs to provide tangible things students take home. Students cycling through the six stations meant too little interaction. The attendees can now go through three of the six stations.
- **Ayers** mentions the social media takeovers and their efficacy. She and **Sass** both point to the high quality of the Student Leadership.

Past President's Council—Fitzpatrick

- The Past President's Meet and Greet will be a more structured event at this coming Convention. It will acknowledge the faculty on the Board and some of our more active Advisors in the Regions. **Fitzpatrick** will invite two additional Advisors from each Region. The Meet and Greet will also be a recruiting tool for the Board.

Budget Review and Approval

- **Schroeder** finishes working through the details of the budget as presented, with a correction to the income for 2018 EOY. Some discussion of the budget precedes the motion to approve.
- **Steele moves that we accept the budget as revised; Bartlett seconds. Motion carries.**

Other New Business

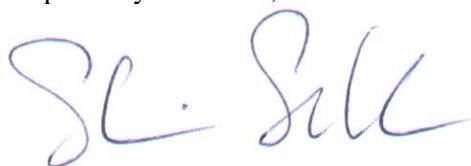
- **Comeford** notes that we have no accommodations for people with hearing impairments. She asks whether we need come up with additional funds to compensate for accommodation. **McPartlin** communicated with the Disability Support Center at Northern Illinois University. The cost for an interpreter for one individual is over \$800/day. The electronic devices and costs for onsite assistance vary. **Fitzpatrick** wonders if we could have an interpreter for larger public events. **McPartlin** notes that a previous participant with a hearing impairment was not able to participate in sessions. **Bartlett** suggests we could upload papers for such participants. **Steele** proposes that we need to know how many people might be missing Conventions because of the lack of accessibility. **Gabriel** suggests we might have a survey about accessibility. Discussion ensues, covering legal and practical obligations.
- **Steinberg** asks if we can have an update about the schedule. **Comeford:** Terry Tempest Williams will be speaking Thursday, with a Friday morning workshop. Michael Branch will speak on Friday afternoon, with a conversation with students on Saturday morning. Discussion includes the time for the President's Reception on Friday.

Announcements

- **Johnson** reminds the Board about submitting travel reimbursement information via the form.
- **Whatley** asks about availability of computers and printing.
- **Brewster** comments on his willingness to be chair for the 2021 Convention in Denver.
- He reminds all committee chairs of the two-week deadline for committee minutes.
- **McPartlin** emailed reimbursement form to Board Members.

Schroeder moves, Dillard seconds, to adjourn. Brewster adjourns at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shannin Schroeder, ΣΤΔ Secretary/Treasurer
Draft completed on September 21, 2019

Revision completed on February 29, 2020
Revised draft FOR APPROVAL on March 23, 2020
Approved March 27, 2020