



**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 10, 2005
ARIZONA ARTS, SCIENCES, AND TECHNOLOGY
ACADEMY FOUNDATION, INC. (AASTA)**

The second regular meeting of the Board of Governors of AASTA was held at Arizona State University on December 10, 2005. The following members were present: Charles Backus, Betsey Bayless, David Berliner, Michael Cusanovich, Lee Drickamer, Peter French, Vincent Fulginiti, John Hildebrand, Jane Maienschein, Al McHenry, Robert Millis, Pierre Meystre, Nancy Felipe Russo, Zachary Smith, Sander van der Leeuw, and Neal Vanselow. The following members participated by telephone: J. Lyle Bootman, Lynn Nadel and Leslie Tolbert. The following members were not present: James Buizer, Philip Christensen, Gerald Jakubowski, Nasser Peyghambarian and Joaquin Ruiz. Also present were Patrick Burkhart and Suzanne Reuss.

Chair John Hildebrand called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

John Hildebrand welcomed the Board to its second regular meeting and stated that all share an important responsibility to guide this new and still fragile enterprise to a level of growth and stability such that the interests of AASTA's members are served and the public purposes for which AASTA has been created can be realized.

John reflected upon AASTA's Founding Fellows and remarked that it is simply astounding to think of the sheer scale of talent that has been attracted – and continues to be attracted - to our new organization. Without question, the premises of public service and collegiality have resonated with an elite and diverse set of intellects statewide.

AASTA is, as far as we know, unlike any other state organization in the U.S. There were no state-based models that we could emulate. We began literally from scratch, using national organizations as our models. We had no major sponsor, nor any state endorsement. We are in some respects, a self-invited entrant to Arizona's arena of public discourse.

It is becoming increasingly clear that a new level of engagement is required from within our organization and its volunteer leaders and some novel approaches need to be considered if we are to be successful in the near term to adequately resource our aspirations.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the September 10, 2005 meeting of the Board of Governors were approved as distributed.

Discussion

A lengthy discussion took place concerning suggestions from the members of the Board of Governors regarding the means by which AASTA could take action to improve its near term cash flow and programming. Several ideas were contributed including establishing workshops for state legislators and their aides, interacting with the Governor's P-20 Council, applying lessons learned from the turn-around of the New York Academy of Sciences, and rapidly expanding AASTA's membership base. It was noted that by ramping up program related activities, AASTA will become more attractive to prospective members. It was also noted that the quality of AASTA's activities was paramount to our long term success and that the Board must choose carefully what it wanted to roll out within our capabilities.

Based on the work of the AASTA panels, a recommendation was made to proceed with implementing the proposed study of the economic impact of astronomy, space sciences and planetary sciences research in Arizona. **A motion was made, seconded and approved** to proceed with this project.

Similarly, a suggestion was made to conduct a conference on the topic of preparedness for a potential avian flu pandemic. This conference would take place at the time and place previously reserved for AASTA's annual conference in April. **A motion was made seconded and approved** to proceed with this substitution. The annual conference will be rescheduled to Fall 2006.

President's Report

Patrick Burkhart summarized the progress to date in making philanthropic contacts and in soliciting a number of foundations. It was noted that Research Corporation had approved a \$25,000 grant award to AASTA.

He further reported that 15 new Founding Fellows have joined AASTA since the last meeting of the Board of Governors.

Treasurer's Report

The financial summary for the period 12-01-04 to 11-22-05 was presented. The summary revealed a positive cash balance and projected cash flow.

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee presented its report to the Board and recommended several basic changes be made to AASTA's bylaws by means of a special ballot. **A motion was made, seconded and approved** to conduct a special election among the Fellows to amend AASTA's bylaws as suggested with the additional recommendation that the language of the bylaws be edited to reflect gender neutral terminology.

Request for Endorsement

A request for endorsement of a third party's efforts to improve educational performance in the State was considered by the Board of Governors. Following a lengthy discussion, a consensus was reached that AASTA should not formally endorse such efforts but should offer to be a helpful collaborator.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Suzanne Reuss
Patrick Burkhart