ARLIS/NA Board Meeting Minutes: August 8-9, 2005
Conducted via email: 4pm EST – 4 pm EST

Participating: Cate Cooney, Rebecca Price, Elizabeth Schaub, Fran Scott, Ken Soehner, Amy Trendler, Deborah Ultan Boudewyns, Ann Whiteside

1) Pre-conference and Post-conference board meeting schedule:
Discussion on the pre-conference and post-conference board meeting schedule for the annual conference. The board discussed the option of having a Wednesday afternoon and a Thursday morning meeting before the conference. Starting later on Wednesday allows one to travel in the morning. The desire to limit our time and financial commitment and be efficient in our work pushed the discussion to the idea of just meeting on the Thursday or even Friday. A Friday meeting would allow some to come later and others to participate in Thursday tours. The post-conference meeting could be shortened to a dinner with the post-conference agenda conducted via conference call and email later in the week. The necessary travel automatically adds a half or whole day to one’s time away.

The point was raised about our participation in conference sessions and activities. Does the membership expect the board to be at sessions? There is value to board members participating in workshops, but maybe the cost is too high. The need for a balance between board activities and conference participation was expressed.

The shortest option for the board would be to meet on Friday, attend conference activities Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and then have a wrap-up dinner meeting on Monday and perhaps Tuesday morning.

2) Development Committee Guidelines:
Discussion about the proposed update for the policy manual
e. Term of office: Chair: Two years, renewable. Members: One year renewable. At least two members should be renewed annually at the discretion of the Chair for 2-6 years in order to allow for continuity of fundraising efforts with vendors and retain some degree of experience.

General agreement that the guidelines look good. There were questions about the long term of office, but most noted that the longer term makes sense for the nature of development work. The chair could be in place for up to three terms.

3) Membership Structure Proposal
The board liked the structure as proposed by the Membership Committee. They felt it reflected the desires of the membership as expressed in the survey. The introductory membership is a good step to bring in new members, without losing much revenue and we could potentially increase membership. We do need to keep statistics on how many continue from the introductory membership to a regular membership. The only change suggested was to say that Roundtables should not be listed as a membership benefit, since
they are becoming Special Interest Groups.

The most difficult part of the proposal was the limiting of the ARLIS-L listserv to members only. On the one hand, it’s a great tool for non-members to learn about ARLIS/NA; but is it a benefit of membership that shouldn’t be given away? The board discussed the example of the VRA, which closed its listserv several years ago, following these same sorts of discussions. Over a couple years, after closing the list, VRA membership did increase – whether it is because of closing the list is not known. The point was made that people ‘jump on and off’ the list to sell things. Should the list be used this way at all? We also know that students will join the list, but not become members; offering a student membership rate that is just slightly higher than the cost of list access may be workable. Or we could let students use the list free for a limited time (1-2 years). Fran notes that we have 40-50 student members each year.

If the list is closed to non-members, we should make a bigger deal of the archives, so that interested people could still get information.

While making the list members-only may serve to identify it as a benefit, the idea of keeping information in a closed off section is counter to the way of the Web these days. It’s not clear that just closing the list would really increase our membership or revenue. The content of the list was discussed: it is mostly reference questions, periodical needs and giveaways. Does the content warrant protection? It was argued that closing it would do more of a disservice to the society.

The suggestion to pro-rate dues for members joining after June 1 was discussed. This is problematic as it may encourage people who aren’t coming to the conference to wait ‘til after June 1 to renew.

It was agreed that we will need to increase dues as they have not increased since 1998.

4) Chapter guidelines for membership status
The board discussed the new guidelines for chapter membership status. They seem clear and helpful. It was noted that the various affiliate levels and fee structures will not appear in the bylaws, but only in the membership material.

5) Atlanta Pre-Conference Minutes
Review for a vote.

6) Revised end of summer meeting schedule
Ultan Boudewyns proposed a revised meeting Schedule for August and early September.

Approved: 9/17/07
Submitted: Rebecca Price, ARLIS/NA Secretary