

**NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
RECORDS OFFICERS**

Board of Directors Meeting  
October 3, 2003 – Syracuse, New York

Meeting was called to order by President Stan France at 10:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Stan France, Kathleen Newkirk, Richard Geer, Wendy J. Roberson, Benjamin Cobb, Sandra Sopak, Donna Mumbulo, Jim Koury, Adelia Pearson, Barbara Sechrist, Eileen Weishan, Patricia Wisniewski.

**ABSENT:** Charles Michaux, Hans J. Finke.

**MINUTES :** *Motion by Kathy Newkirk, seconded by Donna Mumbulo, to approve minutes of the June 3 and June 4, 2003 meetings, with corrections to the attendance, as presented. Carried.*

**TREASURER'S REPORT :** Sandy Sopak distributed copies of the financial statements and reported income of \$11,412.77 and expenses of \$8,059.20 for a net gain of \$3,353.57. Checking and savings accounts balances amount to \$26,425.05; CD stands at \$10,510.67, for total assets of \$36,935.73. She noted that \$2,696.80 was realized from the Spring conference and any reference on the Profit & Loss Statement of a Fall conference is actually the Spring conference. All bills are paid and the organization is financially secure. *Motion by Adelia Pearson, seconded by Barb Sechrist, to approve the treasurer's report, as presented. Carried.*

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None to report.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

• **Budget & Finance – Geer.**

Rick Geer noted that according to the Treasurer's Report, revenues are more than what were expected and the organization is in sound financial standing. This past conference was somewhat more expensive than in previous years, but membership revenue was steady.

• **Bylaws – Wisniewski.**

Nothing to report. Kathy Newkirk asked whether the requirement for award winners to be in attendance to receive their award should be included in the bylaws. Stan France stated that conditions attached to awards were outside the bylaws and did not need to be included.

• **Education and Training Programs. Cobb**

Ben Cobb stated that various ideas had been offered for improvements to the annual school since June and he is in the process of making adjustments as needed. It was his understanding that next year's conference may be in Albany and suggested holding the January meeting at whatever site is selected in Albany. That way he will have an opportunity to ensure that our technology needs will be met and there will not be repeat problem with

Internet connections, etc. Stan France stated he is in the Albany area frequently and can handle this himself.

Kathy Newkirk stated that she and Stan had visited a number of potential sites. She distributed copies of taxable packages and menu choices submitted by the Holiday Inn on Wolf Road in Albany. The first place they looked at was the Mohonk House which, due to its location, ended up to be too expensive. They attempted to negotiate prices, but the hotel would not budge. From there, they went to the Holiday Inn Fishkill and several other sites, including Owego. Owego presented a problem due to its closeness to the Corning area. They finally settled on the Holiday Inn Turf in Albany. They are offering a three day package for \$260.58. The various commuter prices, meal tickets, location of the registration and meal tickets tables, and other charges were reviewed by the Board. Meals will be served in the area where the meeting rooms are. The hotel does not provide a complimentary cocktail hour but will provide a suite for hospitality and a President's suite.

Equipment is complimentary and includes projector screen, microphone, easel with pads, pencils and pads, water, cups, etc. Internet access does cost unless used in the hospitality room. Otherwise, the charge is \$295.00 for the first day and \$150.00 for each additional day. The vendor area will be adjacent to the meeting rooms. If needed, security can be hired, but the hotel will provide covers for the vendors and registration tables. That particular area is pretty well isolated and away from the traffic flow, located on the second floor. There will be a registration sign in the lobby. State rates are sometimes allowed.

Kathy felt Fishkill was an attractive site and not hard to get to, but located on the southern side of the State again and the Capital area would likely draw more people.

Menu choices were also reviewed with Board members and adjustments made to the proposal. Kathy also stated that the hotel has been remodeled and the rooms are very pleasant. Sunday night was left open, with Albany being conducive to tourism.

Ben Cobb stated there have been past problems with meal tickets, except when at the Riveredge. Discussion followed on numbering meal tickets and the method of distribution, with one person responsible for their distribution in order to keep track of the total number sold. Vendors will be provided two lunch tickets and if any additional are needed, they can be purchased. Ben noted that the vendors must let the desk know whether or not they will be needing tickets. If an individual is coming in strictly as a speaker for that day, the meal will be provided, but if staying for the entire conference, meal tickets will not be provided. This should be advised at the time the speaker letters are sent out.

Sandy Sopak suggested that a policy be instituted by the Board where persons are reimbursed without Board approval. She felt there should be previous Board approval and a receipt submitted for reimbursement.

Barb Sechrist felt there should be no reimbursement for meals not taken when that meal was specifically reserved. It was her experience from being on other Boards that if an illness or other occurrence prevented a person from actually taking the meal, there was no reimbursement given. This should be considered an up-front conference cost that must be paid. Once a commitment is made for a specific length of time, there should be no reimbursement for meals or whatever is not attended, and there should be a specified time-frame for cancellation. She noted that State Archives was financially strained last year and while the Association provided a meal ticket for the speakers, there were several who did not attend the dinner and the Association may have been charged for the dinner. Donna Mumbulo noted that those specifications on meal ticket requirements are included with the letters sent to the State speakers.

Adelia Pearson noted that the State Archives people are often the backbone of NYALGRO school sessions. Barb Sechrist stated that with the financial stability of the organization, and if this Board feels the speaker is that significant to the overall school program, then a decision should be made for a certain portion of the expense be paid by NYALGRO. The problem may reoccur at the next school if State Archives remains under financial constraints. She also learned that because the next school site will be in Albany, there may be greater latitude on the part of the State speakers in justifying the expense, as opposed to a school site located elsewhere in the State.

Eileen Weishan provided sample copies of letters used by the Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board for its conferences, including confirmation letters explicitly outlining what is expected of the speakers, exhibitors forms, conference timeline etc. She noted that one person should be in charge of vendors, and a separate person in charge of speakers, to avoid confusion. Stan France stated whoever is in charge of those duties needs to be at the registration table in the event of any questions.

The Board then discussed the issue of reimbursement without Board approval. Ben Cobb stated that special circumstances sometimes arose and referred to the special speakers brought in following 9/11, but that situation did have prior Board approval. Stan France stated that a problem faced by the Board is that it meets quarterly and certain situations do come up or standard expenses, i.e. postage, which cannot wait three months.

Jim Koury stated that under the bylaws of the State Clerks Association, the Treasurer is authorized to pay expenses up to \$250.00. Anything over that amount needs to be approved by the President. It was suggested that any conference expenses can be approved at the final Board meeting, but that receipts must be provided, as well as vouchers specifying mileage, etc. for speakers. Kathy Newkirk stated that a policy must be developed to cover situations where an unexpected expense is incurred at a conference. After further discussion, ***a motion was made by Ben Cobb, seconded by Adelia Pearson, to develop a policy of procedures for the conference, to be voted on at the January meeting.*** ***Motion carried.***

- **Nominations and Elections. Newkirk**

Kathy Newkirk distributed copies of the offices to be voted on and short biographies of the candidates known so far, including Ben Cobb who will be running for President, Michelle Henry who is running for Treasurer, and others. Four director seats are up for election. The Board also offered other potential candidates.

- **Legislation. Sechrist**            Nothing to report at this time.

- **Membership. Michaux**        Charlie not available at this meeting.

- **Publicity. Roberson**        Wendy stated she was short on articles. Several board members offered to submit articles, but Wendy noted that submissions for the immediate newsletter were actually due in September, and she will still need items for the next newsletter. Stan offered a technology article and Ben Cobb will work on an article relating to the annual school. Items of interest across the State were discussed with the possibility of contacting other members to write articles of interest from their area.

- **Scholarships and Awards. Geer**

Rick Geer stated that whomever is chosen for the Melius award should be present to accept it, but this is sometimes difficult when attempting to preserve the surprise element. Adelia Pearson felt if the individual was aware of being selected, it would give that person an opportunity to collect their thoughts about what to say when receiving it. Stan France stated that it may be necessary to inform the recipient beforehand, unless the recipient's supervisor can be reached and arrangements made on that level for the person to be present at the school.

Rick noted that it is still difficult to obtain applicants for the other scholarships, even though well advertised and open to any attendee. Often times, the recipient is not chosen until the school sessions begin. Stan France stated that if there is a lack of applicant pre-school, notice of the scholarship's availability could be posted when school sessions begin with an opportunity for attendees paying their own way to complete an application at that time. In any event, confirmation must be provided that the individual paid their own expenses.

- **Technology. Finke**

Stan stated that Hans is now back at work, noting the serious nature of his illness.

Stan said there was a lot of activity right with the Chief Information Officers in the area of strategic planning with State agencies and how local governments play into that. There is growing interest in cost saving measures, i.e. bulk purchasing, training opportunities.

- **Regionalization. Pearson**

Adelia stated she had little opportunity to work on regionalization this past summer. She asked for some direction on what area the organization is looking to reach, and if there were specific topics of interest. Stan France gave a brief history of the problem encountered in the past with the issue of regionalization. At its initiation, NYALGRO looked at the Town Clerk's model of regionalization. There was a movement at one time to prepare budgets for the various regions for the promotion and scheduling of workshops, etc., with the intention of generating interest in NYALGRO and increasing membership. A couple workshops were scheduled in the past, but the resources for sustaining them simply weren't there. At this point, the organization needs to identify a specific area where there may be interest in holding a workshop. Kathy Newkirk noted the expense involved in the NY City regional meeting and nothing has materialized over the last several years.

She suggested that if a specific topic needs to be addressed, the board members could determine whether or not it would generate enough interest to schedule a workshop in a specific region. The RAOs could assist in this venture since they are aware of what needs attention in their own areas, with the possibility of an available board member traveling to a State workshop for promotion of NYALGRO, etc. After discussion, it was the overall consensus that the issue of regionalization, as it relates to NYALGRO, is not currently effective.

- **Other Business**

The Board discussed the need to work out the bugs with both the selection process and timeframe for scholarships so that everything is in place well before the next school commences.

Kathy Newkirk also brought to the attention of the Board the need for a backup in the event the keynote speaker becomes unavailable or fails to appear for the school. Wendy Roberson also noted that NYALGRO needs to invest in good, well qualified speakers in the future.

Suggestions for themes for 2004 school:

- Document Doctor
- Fugitive Records
- Using State Archives and historic records (school districts)
- **Records Management: It's a Capital Idea**  
Chosen as the theme. Stan France also noted that holding the June school sessions in Albany has the potential of drawing a higher attendance.

- **Next Meeting**            January 23, 2004. 10:30 a.m. Syracuse.

**ADJOURNMENT:**                    *Motion by Adelia Pearson, seconded by Jim Koury, to adjourn. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia C. Wisniewski,  
Secretary