

Society of Automotive Historians
Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes

October 18, 2021

Note: Due to the Coronavirus pandemic this meeting was held virtually via the website Zoom.com.

Present:

Current Directors: Don Capps, President; Robert Barr, Vice President; Rubén Verdés, Treasurer; Robert Casey, Secretary; Bob Elton, Kevin Kirbitz, Chris Lezotte, Casey Maxon, John Mohr, Dean Nelson, Steve Purdy, Carla Lesh, Bob Schmitt

Guests and ex officio: John Marino, Louis Fourie, Ed Garten, Andrew Beckman, Arthur Jones, Helen Hutchings, John Heitmann, Vince Wright, Matt Anderson

Note: These minutes contain only the summaries of the committee and officers' reports. The full committee reports that have been submitted and the Treasurer's reports are filed with the minutes and are available upon written request to the Secretary of the Society.

President Capps called the meeting to order at 8:07 PM EDT.

Upon completion of the roll call, Secretary Casey declared that with 13 officers and directors in attendance a quorum was present.

- Upon motion made by Chis Lezotte and seconded by Bob Barr, minutes of the April 20, 2021 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Society of Automotive Historians were approved as written.
- **President's Report:** Don Capps reporting
 - President's Report is attached hereto.
 - President Capps noted that due to the Covid pandemic his two years as president had been, as Jerry Garcia might say, "a long strange trip." He is the only SAH president not to preside over a Board meeting or an annual banquet in person.

- President Capps has talked with Diane Parker regarding another International Drive History conference in 2022 and says that she is as “befuddled” as he is. He will talk soon to Mark Stelgerwald, the new executive director of the International Motor Racing Research Center regarding plans for resumption of the Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium on auto racing history.
 - President Capps displayed the signed Memorandum of Agreement with the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum regarding the formal creation of the Society of Automotive History Special Reference Collection for SAH award books at the ACD Museum.
 - President Capps expressed his fervent hope that the next year will be better for the incoming SAH president.
- **Treasurer’s Report:** Rubén Verdés reporting.
 - The Treasurer’s Report is attached hereto and should be consulted for detailed information.
 - Treasurer Verdés noted that there were no surprises in this year’s financial numbers.
 - He also commented that he saw no good reason that SAH could not grow to one or two thousand members, well beyond the current 679.
 - Upon a motion by Bob Barr and a second by Bob Casey, the Treasurer’s Report was approved.
- **Nominating Committee:** Andrew Beckman reporting.
 - The Nominating Committee Report is attached hereto and should be consulted for detailed information.
 - The following were elected officers with terms expiring October 2024: Bob Barr, President; Kevin Kirbitz, Vice President; Rubén Verdés, Treasurer; Robert Casey, Secretary.
 - The following were elected to the Board of Directors, with terms expiring October 2024: Matt Anderson; Bob Elton; Carla Lesh.
 - Dean Nelson was elected to serve out Kevin Kerbitz’s unexpired term ending October 2023.
 - Since Elton and Nelson received the same number of votes, even after employing the tiebreaker specified in the Bylaws, Nelson volunteered to take the short term. Chair Beckman noted that we might want to amend the Bylaws to establish a clear procedure to resolve such situations.

- **Governance Council:** Louis Fourie reporting
 - The Governance Council Report is attached hereto.
 - The Chair and Bob Barr have been in discussion about two proposed Policy and Procedures documents for the Council. Past President Capps will become Chair of the Governance Council and will work with incoming President Barr on those Policies and Procedures.

- **International Committee:** Bob Barr reporting:
 - Report of the International Committee is attached hereto.
 - During 2022 SAH needs to re-engage with the AHA, AHG, AISA, CONAM, PHAF, and SAHB to foster communication and camaraderie with our international colleagues. With that goal in mind, Chair Barr had an enjoyable one hour Zoom meeting with Guy Loveridge, Chairman of the SAHB August 12. He hopes to meet again via Zoom and add participants.

- **Outreach & Marketing/Social Media/Web Presence:** John Mohr reporting.
 - The Outreach & Marketing/Social Media/Web Presence Working Group report is attached hereto.
Chair Mohr and Casey Maxon are seeking ways to orient the SAH website to make it more compatible with getting engagement across social media.
 - One idea is to make some past articles from the *AHR* and *SAHJ* available on the portion of the website available to any visitor. We could promote those articles on social media as examples of the advantages of SAH membership. Casey Maxon demonstrated a mock-up of what a website page might look like.
 - The general response to this proposal was positive, but Louis Fourie noted SAH would need to get written permission from article authors, and Bob Barr emphasized that good record keeping of such permissions is essential. Chris Lezotte added that we must have a procedure for dealing with authors who are deceased. John Mohr asked if we currently have permissions or agreements with authors whose articles appear in our publications. Rubén Verdés replied that we currently have no paperwork. We operate under an implied one-time use for any accepted submissions. He also doesn't think we should seek to own copyright of individual articles because we might

- then have to expend resources to defend those copyrights. But if we want to follow Maxon and Mohr's suggestions we should acquire written permissions from the authors involved. We should not use articles less than two years old, so that if people want to read recent articles they must be members.
- Mohr and Maxon discussed the likely need to hire a service to do regular social media posts to relieve the burden on Carla Lesh and Bob Merliss who are currently doing this. However, until we make more content available such a service is not needed.
 - John Heitmann noted that we have a trove of articles in *AHR* alone, but getting permission to use the images in those articles could be a bigger problem. He has kept permission files for the articles appearing under his editorship, but doesn't know the status of image permissions in previous issues.
 - President Capps noted that this discussion has highlighted the key issues and problems that must be overcome, but that the concept is sound and the incoming president and board must take the next steps.
 - Rubén Verdés added that this idea can be used to drive membership. Many current publications such as newspapers offer partial access to online content with the opportunity to subscribe to full access after a certain time. We can do the same.
- **Academic Committee:** John Mohr reporting:
 - Report of the Academic Committee is attached hereto.
 - The Committee is presently focused on two goals. The first is the listing of the SAH's publications in a scholarly database such as American History and Life of JSTOR. To accomplish this SAH must have a bricks and mortar home in an institution that can host the database.
 - The second goal is to organize a panel presentation at the 2023 meeting of the American Historical Association. We could not arrange for a panel in 2022 due to the current uncertainty surrounding in person meetings. Chair Mohr will seek out people interested in participating during 2022. John Heitmann noted that he has spoken to someone who may be interested.
 - **Awards Committee:** Chris Lezotte reporting.
 - Report of the Awards Committee is attached hereto.

- The 2021 SAH Award winners have been selected and –due to the cancellation of this year’s Awards Banquet at Hershey—will be announced shortly after the October Board meeting. The Awards Committee thanks the individual Awards Panels for the completion of their work in what has been another challenging year.
- The Awards Committee is in the final stages of constructing a Policy and Procedures document that will outline uniform processes and procedures for the individual Award Panels.
- Chair Lezotte noted that we want to raise the profile of the awards, the winners, and thereby the SAH. Louis Fourie added that this is an opportunity to make media widespread announcements that will publicize SAH.
- Ed Garten said that we would like to get a wider array of nominations for the Cugnot Award, and Arthur Jones noted that we “are not overburdened” with nominations for the Cugnot Language other than English Award.

Awards: Reports received from Awards Panels are attached hereto and are summarized below.

- **Brigham Award:** Andrew Beckman reporting:
 - Report of the Brigham Award Committee is attached hereto.
 - Two nominations were received for the Richard and Grace Brigham Award: *The Automobile* (UK) nominated by Kit Foster; and *Vintage Metal*, nominated by Don Capps. By unanimous vote, *The Automobile* (UK) was selected as recipient of the 2021 award.
- **Cugnot English Language Award:** Ed Garten reporting:
 - Report of the Cugnot Award Committee is attached hereto.
 - The Committee received 13 nominations for the Cugnot English Language award. The Committee gave the 2021 award to *The Cellini of Chrome: George Walker – Ford Motor Company’s First VP of Design*, by Henry Dominguez. An Award of Distinction was given to *Driving While Black: African-American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights*, by Gretchen Soren.

- **Cugnot for Books in a Language other than English:** Arthur Jones reporting:
 - Report of the Cugnot Award for Books in a Language other than English Committee is attached hereto.
 - The 2021 award for Cugnot Books in a Language other than English goes to *Danskbilproduction*, by Erich Karshold, published by Strandbergs Forlag A/S. It is a record of automobiles produced in Denmark by American and French companies from the beginning of the 20th century through the early post-WWII period.
 - An Award of Distinction was given to *Fanaille & Despeaux, l'ancetre d'Esso*, by Christian Rouxel, published by Editions E-T-A-I. It is a history of the development of the French petroleum industry and its eventual domination by Rockefeller interests.

- **Bradley Award:** Ed Garten reporting:
 - Report of the Bradley Award Committee is attached hereto.
 - No Bradley Award was made for 2021. The board agreed with the committee recommendation that the award become “Occasional” rather than annual.

- **Friend of Automotive History Award:** Andrew Beckman reporting:
 - Report of the Friend of Automotive History Award Committee is attached hereto.
 - Mr. Richard Lentinello is the 2021 Friend of Automotive history.

- **Scharchburg Student Paper Award:** John Mohr reporting.
 - Report of the Scharchburg Student Paper Award Committee is attached hereto.
 - No Scharchburg Awards were given this year. There were no eligible submissions and no committee deliberations were held. It is hoped that next year will be more fruitful in terms of submissions and eligible papers.
 - Two awards will be given in the future: one in the graduate category and the other in the undergraduate category.

- **Publications - SAH Journal:** Rubén Verdés reporting:
 - Report of the *SAH Journal* Committee is attached hereto.

- Issues 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, and 310 have been printed and mailed since 9/30 last year. As of this date issue 311 is well underway.
- **Publications - Automotive History Review:** John Heitmann reporting:
 - Report of the *AHR* Editor is attached hereto.
 - Volume 62, with 84 pages and 7 articles, was published in April. Two submissions have been received for Volume 63, with a third perhaps in the works.
- **Publications - Website:** Tom Jakups and Louis Fourie reporting:
 - Report of the Website Committee is attached hereto.
 - Mike Reilly, who has provided essential technical assistance with the website, will no longer be able to do that. Cornerstone might be able to provide those services, but we will have to determine what they would charge.
- **Chapters and Sections Report:** Bob Barr reporting:
 - Report of the Chapters and Sections Committee is attached hereto.
 - Chapter activity continues to be curtailed during the pandemic, but is beginning to ramp up.
 - The reactivated Pioneer Chapter is working to create a list of library holdings in automotive museums. Such holdings are not typically listed in World Cat.
- **Hershey Banquet Committee:** John Marino reporting:
 - Report of the Hershey Banquet Committee is attached hereto.
 - The 2021 SAH Hershey event was cancelled due to Covid 19. The Hershey Country Club agreed to waive the 85% cancellation fee, saving SAH \$3230.
 - The AACA has set the dates for next year's Hershey event, moving everything back one day. John Marino will contact the Hershey Country Club to see if we can have a Board meeting on Wednesday and a banquet on Thursday in 2022.
- **Hershey Tent Committee:** L. Fourie reporting:
 - Report of the Hershey Tent Committee is attached hereto.
 - The 2021 SAH presence was downsized to a small pop-up tent and accompanying rental toilet. Committee members staffed the tent on

Thursday and Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The banner was displayed and SAH brochures were handed out. Market attendance was lighter than usual (but better than feared). Activities included chatting with members who stopped by, and evangelizing to walk-ins who wondered who we are.

- **Bricks & Mortar Working Group:** Chris Lezotte reporting
 - The Bricks & Mortar Working Group Report is attached hereto.
 - A formal agreement has been made with the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum in Auburn, Indiana to store, maintain, and promote the SAH Award books and publications under the title of the SAH Reference Collection at the ACD. The Working Group is now pursuing the second part of the original plan—to establish a relationship with an automotive educational institution to serve as a meeting place for the SAH Board, provide storage for SAH archives, publications, and papers, and assist students in pursuit of an automotive education.
 - Chris Lezotte and Kevin Kirbitz will meet with Dina Mein of Kettering University Library next week regarding the second part of the plan. They will discuss access to American History and Life, Project Muse, and JSTOR databases.
 - Lezotte and Kirbitz will also explore the possibility of an SAH funded internship at Kettering. Rubén Verdés noted that such an internship is a good fund raising opportunity, and Bob Casey remarked that such an internship is on target with SAH's mission.

- **New Business:**
 - Louis Fourie noted that the gentleman who has the remainder of *Automobile Quarterly's* inventory of AQ volumes is looking to clear out his inventory. He also has a number of the AQ books on specific marques. Louis suggests that Bob Barr be empowered to negotiate for the acquisition of the inventory. Bob Barr stated that he will follow up, but will ask for a list of all publications first.
 - Chris Lezotte asked to meet the newly elected Board member, Matt Anderson. Anderson introduced himself, noting that he is the Curator of Transportation at The Henry Ford, and is also on the board of the National Association of Automobile Museums.
 - President Capps extended heartfelt thanks to Helen Hutchings for her contributions, especially her work as a prolific book reviewer for

- the *SAH Journal*. He also extended thanks to all the Board members for their work and support during these past two years, and then turned the SAH reins over to newly elected President Bob Barr.
- President Bob Barr thanked Don Capps for his leadership under difficult circumstances. As someone who had actually been under fire he was the right person for the job.
 - President Barr said that he will focus on what General Motors calls organizational sustainability—doing the things that will allow the SAH to thrive into the future. Part of this will be the drafting of Policy and Procedure documents for the various committees. The first should be for Awards, coming from Chris Lezotte and Ed Garten. Those drafting such documents should write them for the people who will replace them.
 - Don Capps noted that he will be representing the SAH at the opening of an exhibit of paintings at the New York Historical Society on Wednesday, October 20.

Bob Casey moved that the meeting be adjourned; Kevin Kirbitz seconded; motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 PM EDT.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Casey, Secretary.