

## Society of Automotive Historians

### Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes

October 6, 2022

Note: This was a hybrid meeting, with some participants attending in person and some attending via the website Zoom.com.

**Current Directors Present in Person:** Bob Barr, President; Kevin Kirbitz, Vice President; Rubén Verdés, Treasurer; Robert Casey, Secretary; Bob Elton, Chris Lezotte, Casey Maxon, Steve Purdy, Dean Nelson

**Current Directors Present via Zoom:** Steve Purdy, Carla Lesh, Bob Schmitt, John Mohr, Matt Anderson,

**Guests and ex-officio Present in Person:** John Heitmann (part time), Kit Foster, John Marino (part time), Andrew Beckmann (part time), Ed Garten (part time)

**Guests and ex-officio present via Zoom:** Louis Fourie

*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 Barr called the meeting to order at 7:53 PM EDT.

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

- **President's Report:** Bob Barr reporting
  - President's Report is attached hereto.
  
- **Treasurer's Report:** Rubén Verdés reporting.
  - The Treasurer's Report is attached hereto and should be consulted for detailed information.
  - Upon a motion by Dean Nelson and a second by Bob Elton, the Treasurer's Report was accepted.

- **Hershey Banquet Committee:**

- Report of the Hershey Banquet Committee is attached hereto.
- The 2021 SAH Hershey event was cancelled due to COVID 19. The 85% cancellation fee of approximately \$3230 was waived by the Hershey Country Club. The 2022 SAH Hershey Board Meeting and Awards Banquet was scheduled for October 5 and 6 respectively at the Hershey Country Club, Hershey, PA. Meal cost to membership will be \$70 per person.
- John Marino noted that tomorrow's Banquet is in the Piccard Pavilion, adjacent to the clubhouse where we have traditionally held our Banquet. Attendance is down this year. We contracted for 65 attendees but we are presently at 42. Hershey Country Club agreed to lower the minimum to 55, so if we can pick up a few more reservations before tomorrow we won't be hurt too badly.
- Next year we need to get the word about the Banquet out sooner and distribute it more widely. We should also remember that one does not have to be an SAH member to attend the Banquet, so we should note that on our announcement and publicize the Banquet beyond the membership. Also, do we want a guest speaker? Note that AV is expensive if we contract with the HCC.
- President Barr notes that we need to go beyond electronic notification and mail physical reminders and reservation forms to members.

- **Nominating Committee:** Andrew Beckmann reporting

- The Nominating Committee Report is attached hereto and should be consulted for detailed information.
- The slate of candidates for Board of Directors was Leon Dixon #1111, Chris Lezotte #4180 (incumbent), David McGee #4931, and Steve Purdy #3535 (incumbent). 68 members voted with timely ballots and one ballot was received beyond the postmark deadline. The SAH Director Class of 2025 is Chris Lezotte, David McGee, and Steve Purdy.
- Congratulation to Lezotte, Purdy, and McGee.

- President Barr thanked to Casey Maxon who is cycling off the Board. We aim to keep him involved, especially with regard to our social media and outreach efforts.
  
- **International Committee:** Bob Barr reporting:
  - Report of the International Committee is attached hereto.
  - The Automotive Historians Australia and SAH joint symposium on September 17<sup>th</sup> was a noteworthy success and laid the groundwork for future annual joint symposiums. Informal virtual gatherings with the SAHB will be developed over the next few months.
  - The officers of the AHA are closely tied to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). Two television production students put on the conference for the AHA as a class project. Both the AHA and SAH intend to make the conference an annual event.
  
- **Academic Committee:** John Mohr reporting:
  - Report of the Academic Committee is attached hereto.
  - The Committee continues to make progress on its goal of finding an academic home for SAH at Kettering University. The Committee is also in the planning stages of making a bid for a panel at the American Historical Association conference in San Francisco in January 2024.
  - People who participate in the panel will have to pay for their own transportation, hotel, AHA membership and conference registration. The SAH would have to pay a reservation fee for the room in which the panel is held; any rental of AV technology, podiums, etc.; any sort of Society sponsored hospitality such as a reception. John's rough present estimate of these expenses is \$2000. Would be good for SAH to re-establish with AHA, make connections, raise our profile, etc. Do we want to spend this money.
  - Ruben Verdés suggested that we look for ways to raise funds to cover SAH expenses. He suggested that Mohr think about devising a one-page bulleted fact sheet to serve as a fund-raising device.
  - John Heitmann expressed some surprise at the \$2000 cost estimate. The last time we sponsored an AHA session was 2017 or 2018 and he did not think the cost was that high. In the past attendance at SAH sessions has been 15-20 people. He suggests that an SAH-sponsored

- reception for those attendees in the hall after the session would not be excessively expensive.
- There was some discussion about whether enough SAH members could meet AHA membership requirements. Carla Lesh noted that her reading of the AHA website suggests that one needs only to pay the dues to become an AHA member. Kit Foster noted that his holding Electrical Engineering degrees and absence of history degrees did not keep him from becoming an AHA member.
  - Mohr will investigate membership requirements. He noted that the room fee is new because the AHA has had problems with people reserving rooms and not using them. He needs more time to put together a more detailed and accurate budget.
  - Chris Lezotte notes that none of the arrangements with Kettering University would have been possible without Kevin Kirbitz's efforts.

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

- **Carl Benz Award:** Don Keefe reporting. Report of the Benz Award Committee is attached hereto. Winner is "Upward Mobility: The Low Cost Luxury Cars of 1966, by Kit Foster in the October 2021 issue of *Collectible Automobile*.
- **James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award:** Ed Garten reporting. Report of the Bradley Award Committee is attached hereto. No award made for 2022.
- **Richard and Grace Brigham Award:** Andrew Beckman reporting. Report of the Brigham Award Committee is attached hereto. Winner is *Rare and Unique Vehicles*, Pál Négysi, editor and publisher.
- **Cugnot English Language Award:** Ed Garten reporting. Report of the Cugnot Award Committee is attached hereto. Winner is *Delage:Records & Grand Prix*, by Daniel Cabart & Sebastien Faures Fustel de Coulanges. Awards of Distinction go to *Joseph Figoni Le Grand Couturier de la Carrosserie Automobile Alfa Romer, Vol. I*, by Peter M. Larsen and Ben Erickson; and to *Tom Tjaarda: Master of Proportions* by Gautam Sen.

- **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. Winner is *Mercedes Benz C111* by Wolfgang Kalbhenn, Gerhard Heidbrink, and Joalchim Hack.
- **Friend of Automotive History Award:** Andrew Beckman reporting. Report of the Friend of Automotive History Award Committee is attached hereto. Award goes to Donald Davidson.
- **E.P. Ingersoll Award:** Steve Wilson reporting. Report of the Ingersoll Award Committee is attached. No Award given this year.
- **Richard P. Scharchburg Student Paper Award:** John Mohr reporting. Report of the Scharchburg Student Paper Award Committee is attached hereto. Graduate award winner is Mark P. Forbes for “Models of Automotive Firms Past and Present: Insights from Transaction cost Economics and Industrial History.” Undergraduate Award to William Thompson for “The Automobile and Black Americans.”
- There were an unusually high number of exceptional nominations in many categories this year. Because the previous two award ceremonies were cancelled due to COVID 19, the 2022 SAH Awards Banquet will also celebrate the 2020 and 2021 winners.
- President Barr noted that Chris Lezotte and Ed Garten put in countless hours revising the awards process and creating a new, more streamlined policies and procedures.
- Ed Garten emphasized that panel Chairs must communicate to nominees that did not win awards.
- Ruben Verdés noted that winning books and nominated books nominees should be reviewed for the SAHJ. Please give Ruben a blurb on the authors for the SAHJ.
- **Publications - SAH Journal:** Rubén Verdés reporting:
  - Report of the *SAH Journal* Committee is attached hereto.
  - Since the start of our reporting year (October 1, 2021), *SAJ Journal* issues 311 through 315 have been printed and mailed, and 316 has been circulated with mailing underway as of this report’s date. These

items are reiterated from the May 5<sup>th</sup> report: Reben has accepted an offer to edit *The Classic Car* magazine and *Bulletin* for the Classic Car Club of America. He greatly enjoys editing the *SAH Journal* and intends to remain in that position. He encourages all the distinguished officers, board, and extended committee members to please contribute media, articles, and book reviews.

- **Publications - Automotive History Review:** John Heitmann reporting:
  - Report of the *AHR* Editor is attached hereto.
  - COVID 19 meant that fewer academic papers are being written
  - Heitmann will reach out to the Australians about publishing some of the papers from the joint conference. He is also in touch with Watkins Glen about possibly publishing papers from November's upcoming Argetsinger conference. Also contacted Thomas Schmitt in Germany about an upcoming conference in Turin. There are two Scharchburg papers this year whose authors will submit their work. He would like all Scharchburg papers published to encourage young people even if the quality is not necessarily absolutely tops.
  - Heitmann notes several family health concerns that have kept him occupied.
  - President Barr noted that he is in favor of all student papers being published.
  - Ed Garten asked if shorter student papers could be published in *SAHJ*? Ruben Verdes replied that he is happy to accept them.
  - John Mohr is very much in favor of publishing student papers and is willing to work with Scharchburg authors to improve their papers for publication.
  
- **Publications – Website Working Group:** Kevin Kirbitz reporting:
  - Report of the Website Working Group is attached hereto.
  - The website is being updated to ensure that it serves the SAH well, while providing a stable platform for years to come. The Website Improvement working Group continues to carry out these tasks, in anticipation for the Working Group being succeeded by a free-standing Website Committee.
  - Still need to determine how to make website format more attractive, engaging, and stimulating. We are working on consistency between website and printed materials in style, color, etc.

- President Barr noted that new board member David McGee has been instrumental in website improvements.
- President Barr noted that the image collection must be removed from the website because of website stability issues. The Studebaker Museum uses a cloud storage service that allows gatekeeping, which is important to us. We are investigating moving the image collection to such a service. It is also possible that we might have a separate website for images. We also are working on a word search function for our publication back issues.
- **Chapters and Interest Groups Report:** Kevin Kirbitz reporting:
  - Report of the Chapters and Interest Groups Committee is attached hereto.
  - The WSAH is back to a full schedule of meetings and activities. Peter Hollinshead has succeeded Brian Baker as President of the Leland Chapter. The San Diego/Inland Empire chapter activities are still on hold. The possible reactivation of the Pioneer Chapter as a non-geographic chapter or as an ad hoc committee is on hold. We are still looking into the desirability of revising the relationships of chapters to affiliates or focus groups because of concerns about legal and liability issues.
- **Conferences and Symposia:** Bob Barr reporting:
  - Report of the Conferences and Symposia Committee is attached hereto.
  - The Automotive Historians Australia and SAH joint symposium on September 17<sup>th</sup> was a noteworthy success and laid the groundwork for future AHA-SAH collaboration. We look forward to the Sith Annual Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium for International Motor Racing History on November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in Watkins Glen, NY.
- **Hershey Tent Committee:** Bob Barr reporting:
  - Report of the Hershey Tent Committee is attached hereto.
  - SAH has returned to the Orange Field after a two-year hiatus, with plans to stage a large Book Signing event. Overall Hershey attendance and Book Signing traffic should be analyzed after the 2022 Hershey Week to gauge the extent of our Hershey activities next year.

- President Barr noted the need to split up the responsibilities of tent organizing. Louis Fourie and Pat Younge were not able to attend this year and Vince Wright could not organize the Book Signing due to new work requirements. Barr noted the importance of getting foot traffic into the Book Signing.
- **Bricks & Mortar Working Group:** Chris Lezotte reporting
  - The Bricks & Mortar Working Group Report is attached hereto.
  - The Working Group has finalized the agreement with the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum to store the SAH award winning publications (now referred to as the SAH Special Reference Collection at ACDM). The proposal to form a partnership with Kettering University – to store SAH records and documents, promote the *Automotive History Review*, and serve as a meeting place for SAH meetings and events – is very near completion.
  - President Barr thanks Chris Lezotte, Kevin Kirbitz, and John Mohr for their efforts to bring these to fruition.
  - Ruben—elaborate on the travel endowment: Chriss—we will provide \$1000-1500 and use that as a basis for fund raising to increase it.
- **New Business:**
  - The President is now using MailChimp to make email broadcasts to the membership.
  - The Annual General Meeting (AGM) which took place at our Orange Field Tent at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. Only directors and officers were present but we had a good discussion.
  - The President will make a large delivery of Cugnot-nominated books (2018-2020, 2022) to our collection at the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum on the way home from Hershey. The collection and premises will be inspected, with a report to the Board to follow.
  - The Argetsinger Symposium on November 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> is fully booked with presentations and will be live streamed, courtesy of an IMRRC supporter. The IMRRC gratefully acknowledged the \$1,000 of support received from the SAH in September.



- President Barr notes that Hershey is becoming more expensive for individual members and SAH. We should look at those costs and assess the value of attendance at Hershey.
- Spring board meeting—if we do a hybrid should probably be in Flint/Detroit area. Hybrid meetings will probably become the norm.
- Kevin Kirbitz asked for feedback from Zoom and in-person participants in this meeting.
- President Barr noted that the table arrangement with people seated in a square is not ideal for this type of meeting. People should be closer together so that the camera can see everyone, or at least most people.
- Steve Purdy noted that it was sometimes hard to hear; it is also desirable to be able to focus camera on the speaker.
- Chris Lezotte asked if we could have a podium for speakers.
- President Barr will survey the Board about preferences for a Zoom vs. a hybrid spring meeting
- Kit Foster—Asks that someone else to step up and be mentored to be the SAH person who handles the Paris meeting.

Steve Purdy moved that the meeting be adjourned; Kevin Kirbitz seconded; motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:38PM EDT.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Casey, Secretary