

SEAC Executive Board Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2025

Compiled by Amanda Regnier

Attendance:

Officers: Jane Eastman, Ashley Dumas, Amanda Regnier, Jon Marcoux, Mary Beth Fitts, Tony Boudreaux, Elliot Blair, Jessica Kowalski, Trevor Duke, Karen Stephens, Michelle Rathgaber, Shawn Lambert, Matthew Rooney

Committee/Task Force Chairs: Stefan Brannan, Karen Brunso, Emily Clark, Lindsay Cochran, Carol Colannino, Aaron Comstock, David Cranford, Tony Farace, Maureen Meyers

With: Rich Weinstein, Mark Rees, Joesetta LeBouef, Matt Gage, Ashley Smallwood, Tom Jennings

President Jane Eastman called the meeting to order at 10:45 AM.

The first item on the agenda was upcoming meetings. Rich Weinstein, who is organizing the 2025 meeting in Baton Rouge had trouble logging on to the Zoom, so we went ahead to the next two meetings.

2026 Meeting – Matt Gage

Matt Gage, organizer for the 2026 meeting in Birmingham, reported that the 2026 meeting will take place from November 12 through November 15, 2026. This is the week of Veteran's Day and will be beneficial with travel days for government employees. The conference hotel will be the Sheraton adjacent to the Birmingham Jefferson Convention Center. The nightly rate will be \$199 with a Wednesday through Sunday room block.

Gage is still working with the conference center on the cost for rooms. The Thursday reception will be at the McWayne Science Center and is being organized by Lauren Downs and Kim Pyszka. They are currently making arrangements with caterers and beverage providers.

The conference is looking for sponsors and Gage asked if there is a list of national sponsors. He was directed to the previous organizers, who would have that information.

They are still looking for a band. Gage asked about the deposit for a meeting and Treasurer Jon Marcoux asked if the amount was set and stated they could work that out.

2027 Meeting – Ashley Smallwood

Ashley Smallwood, organizer for the 2027 meeting in Louisville, which will be a joint meeting with the Midwestern Archaeological Conference. Dates are October 27 – 30, 2027.

The room block at the Galt House Hotel will have rates of \$179/199 per night. The organizers are currently looking at a band and at donation possibilities and had questions about lists of previous donors. They were referred to the SEAC guide document produced by previous organizers.

The organizers are still deciding how to split the money between the MAC and SEAC. The 2004 meeting in St. Louis was a joint meeting with MAC and there is an upcoming Plains Anthropological Society/MAC meeting that could also be a guide, so the organizers are meeting to figure this out.

Treasurer's Report – Jon Marcoux

The check deposit for Louisville has been paid. SEAC is still in the black.

SEAC has been using Quickbooks for its financials. This is a subscription service that costs roughly \$100/month. The online service will be about \$1500/annually and will allow for a seamless transition once Mary Beth Fitts takes over as Treasurer.

A proposal to approve the move to online Quickbooks at the slightly higher annual cost passed unanimously.

2025 Meeting – Rich Weinstein

Rich Weinstein – Baton Rouge meeting organizer (November 5 – 9, 2025)

Rich requested \$200 deposit for band and \$500 deposit for venue, approved. The funds for the meeting were routed through a local bank account last time the conference was in Baton Rouge but are being routed through Coastal Environments this year. Rich will send information on where to send deposit checks.

Rich had some questions about costs for the Student Reception as there were concerns that may be too high. The Thursday evening reception will be at the Louisiana Arts and Sciences Museum and will be catered, which means maybe less spending on student catering on the same night would make sense.

The website is ready to go with tours and descriptions also up. There is some question about access to the Mazique site, so this tour may change to Emerald and Fatherland sites instead.

There will be a public day at the Capitol Park Museum on Saturday coordinated by Josetta LeBouef, which also needs to go on the website.

The backup hotels are arranged. Both are within walking distance and Michelle will have information up on the website. The main hotel information will be posted very soon as well.

The registration costs uses the 2012 Baton Rouge meeting costs and estimations on the Williamsburg cost and suggests that SEAC should come out ahead on the meeting.

CRM firms and other organizations are sending contributions. If we get enough donations, free beer may be provided at the museum reception. Trying to keep costs down since catering has been a big expense in recent years.

Looking at cover art for the program – confirmed artifacts must match up with the SEAC image policy.

Investment Committee

After a long and extremely successful tenure, Paul Welch is stepping down from the committee. The paperwork is currently being shuffled for Jon Marcoux, Patrick Livingood, and Kandi Hollenbach to be on this committee.

Archaeology in the Community Partnership – Maureen Meyers

The partnership with Archaeology in the Community still remains a task force. During the time it was a task force, the membership put on workshops for SEAC members and wrote publications about developing partnerships with descendant communities.

Need to decide whether the desire is for this to remain a task force or to be part of a standing committee.

There is a suggestion to fold it into the Diversity committee, which has gone defunct – Maureen is going to write up a one-pager on the committee's goals and accomplishments and would like to see a decision made by the annual meeting, as she would like to rotate off of this task force.

Mentorship Network and Climate Change Task Force – Lindsey Cochran

The Mentorship Network has gone defunct, but plans are to put out a call to bring it back

The Climate Change Task force, including Emily Jane Murray and Ramie Gougeon, is finding success and has conducted a survey to determine the needs of the membership.

One of the major concerns is worker safety. This should probably be promoted to a committee

CRM Stewardship Award – Stefan Brannan

The information about the award is on the website, and instructions on how to submit nominations will be edited. Stefan expressed concern that nominations have been difficult

to come by since it lacks visibility compared to the other awards. Hoping for a good slate of nominees for this year's award.

Native American Affairs Committee – Karen Brunzo

Expecting to see decreasing tribal participation at upcoming conference given issues with federal budgets and THPO funds. May have to get creative to fund tribal members to attend.

A forum is planned for the upcoming conference where tribal members can communicate their needs. Maybe a lightning round format?

Committee is looking into ways for tribal representatives to make contact with students.

Question about policies for book room tables and who can exhibit and sell items?
Committee would like to see a policy about this.

Back to Annual meeting in Baton Rouge

Rich asks does the EC want a place to hold their board meeting? Hotel has a tunnel bar that could be used? The board meeting will be before the conference on Zoom. Jane will be getting the presidential suite so there may be a meet-up there.

Lifetime Achievement Award – David Cranford

Two people currently on this committee; need to recruit a third person

No nominations yet. Last year four people were awarded. Question on whether there should be a cap on how many SEAC awards each year?

Would this narrow the field? How would the committee make sure individuals qualify?

Suggestion to limit the number and nominations can roll over for 3 years before someone must be re-nominated

David will work with Jane and Ashley to develop a set of criteria for the award. Also looking for committee member suggestions.

SHARP Coordinator – Shawn Lambert

Shawn, Robbie Ethridge, and Carol Colannino-Meeks have been meeting to discuss how to improve the SHARP grievance procedure

Suggestion to have a board liaison who consults with the SHARP Task Force since the board can vote on an investigation without really know details of that investigation

Other question is what happens if a situation goes beyond one complainant and one respondent. Is it possible to make a template for complaints/investigations with more than two people involved? Exploring this.

Need a better set of guidelines, since these are currently informal

Jane suggested that the president makes the decision on a case-by-case basis to appoint that liaison, but the committee would like some time to make recommendations on whether the liaison should serve a term, be appointed case-by-case, or until they choose to step down.

Website needs to be updated to reflect that Shawn is the coordinator. Karen will fix

Need more committee members, Shawn will be sending out a Google form to help recruit committee members

Karen Stephens notes that any communications or calls that need to go out to the membership will be sent through her. We really need a call for committee membership to go out since many committees have vacancies. Jane will follow up with committee chairs on this.

Student Affairs Committee – Tony Farace subbing in for Tara Skipton

SAC started a student experience survey in November

Major concern for students was gap between funding from their universities and the cost to attend meetings

Most student have a positive impression of SEAC

Committee would like to publish the results of this survey in the newsletter

Committee expresses interest in starting a student poster award, noting that many other organizations have this already. This does not have to be a huge award, just a small cash prize. This would not be organized by SAC, but they would help

Question if these would be judged at the conference or ahead of it like the papers? This would need to be a separate committee from the student paper competition. The SAC would like to plan this for the 2026 meeting and determine what the prize would be.

Concern about prices going way up for the student reception (particularly catering expenses). Would it be possible to have this outside of the hotel to avoid the surcharges? Any way to do fundraising for this? Selling shirts, buttons, hats? The last t-shirt run was 20 years ago, looking into this. Rich notes that if the reception is outside the hotel, the SAC

would have to figure out how to have defined hours, but since it is before the catered museum reception on Thursday, is it necessary to have elaborate food and drink?

SAC would like to have a table in the book room and at registration to advertise to students at the meeting. Rich says that's fine and it is free

The committee requested \$100 for promotional materials (buttons). Motion is seconded and carries.

Nominations Committee – Jane Eastman for Megan Buchanan

A call for nominations was posted in the newsletter. The committee is keeping an Excel file for people who have been nominated and are interested but have deferred.

Nominations Committee is always up for lists of people who would take on the more labor-intensive positions (President, Editor, Treasurer)

DEI Task Force – Jane Eastman

Task force has been inactive, those asked to take over did not feel they could safely do so any more due to political climate around this issue

Would it make sense for this task force to stay active or to distribute the goals of the committee to other standing committees? There was general agreement that the latter seems to be the better option

Also an idea of reformulating with a focus on membership recruitment and engagement in running the conference. This would mean disbanding the task force and attempting to meet these goals in other ways.

Webmaster – Karen Stephens and Michelle Rathgaber

SEAC currently has Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter) accounts. They are managed with Buffer, which now supports BlueSky. X followship has declined over the last year and continue to drop. Most followers on X (Twitter) have left the platform, so the suggestion is to move over to Blue Sky. LinkedIn and BlueSky are both growing networks – Michelle will prepare a report that documents this. Most of the announcements on X (Twitter) were for job opportunities, committee recruiting, etc. Decision was made to move over to BlueSky and delete the X (Twitter) account.

Will develop a proposal to split duties for this position to a Webmaster and a separate Social Media Coordinator

Website – we need to move the website to a new platform. This will cost more but will help stave off the need to hire an executive director to manage the website.

SEAC details will need to be posted by June on website

Editor's Report – Tony Boudreaux

Recent issue is behind, but currently working on page proofs. Articles submitted as part of special issues just take longer to get into production

Cupboard is bare with articles right now and finding peer reviewers is tough. We need to encourage people to register as reviewers to expand the pool.

Newsletter – Matthew Rooney

The newsletter is up on the website and will be emailed

Recent minutes are not up on the website.

More submissions for committees are needed for newsletters. Anyone can submit items for the newsletter at any time. Newsletter deadlines are typically April and October.

Newsletter will include a special announcement for committee nominations when needed

We could use better records for the committees so they will know when they should expect to be most active.

New Business

The Society for American Archaeology is looking at creating three levels of organizations, creating stronger ties to regional organizations like SEAC. They are trying to allocate resources and fight for the profession of archaeology and the preservation of sites. This requires distributing the SAA Code of Ethics to members. They are also encouraging people to join the RPA

Still looking for a way to call for nominations and committee memberships since we have a number of available slots

Question about SEAC archives – do we need a SEAC Historian position?

SEAC archive in DC; Pat Galloway and Ken Sassaman had both been collecting documents; at least some of these had been passed around. Ken has a list of documents that may be on the Google drive. It likely makes sense to create a committee to look into this.

Other question is how do we add/remove people from the shared officers' Google Drive? Karen will work on this since it is informally a webmaster job.