



Caribbean Studies Association

CSA Secretariat

c/o Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES)

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine

Trinidad and Tobago

Email: secretariat@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org

Website: www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org

42nd Caribbean Studies Association Conference

Melia Hotel, Nassau

Membership meeting

June 8th, 2017

Meeting started: 11.58am

Welcome from President -- Keithley Woolward

Keithley requested for the meeting to proceed with members of each CSA Working Group Committee to present an update to the membership.

Due to time constraints, Terry Ann called a motion for all Committee members to submit reports to the website or newsletter with the exception of the Treasurer and Program Chairs. All reports will be posted on the CSA website once made available.

The motion was approved. The membership will be able to access all submitted reports which are to be posted on the CSA website.

Treasurer -- Dwaine Plaza

Dwaine gave an overview of the 2016 financial reports. He engaged the membership in reviewing the 2016 income statement and the balance sheet.

He spent some time explaining that the income brought in from the CSA conference held in New Orleans was used to aid in the planning and execution of the Haiti conference. The Immediate Past President, Carole Boyce-Davies, was very successful in seeking external funding for covering the costs of some events during the conference week in Haiti. Dwaine Plaza then presented a detailed overview of the expenses and income received from the Haiti conference.

Professors Plaza and Boyce-Davies submitted the financial reports (2016-2017) which were made available on the CSA website, <http://www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/financial-reports/>.

Carole Boyce Davies also submitted to the Secretariat all receipts for payments covered during the Haiti conference. All receipts were received at the secretariat office in Trinidad. Originals were delivered in Nassau to the Secretariat.

The 2016/2017 Balance Sheet quoted the balances remaining in the CSA accounts to run the Nassau conference as at July 31, 2016.

At the start of the Bahamian conference the balance was USD93, 852.00 and deposits had to be made to secure the Melia Hotel. Dwaine Plaza explained that three deposits were made in the following amounts: 10,500, 30,000, 27,000.

He also disclosed to the membership that CSA did not meet the hotel quota and there were penalty charges that the Association might have to cover and that Keithley was in negotiation with the hotel to have the penalty reduced.

The registration and attendee spreadsheets showed that roughly 220 persons attended the Nassau conference.

Dwaine Plaza disclosed that there was roughly USD50, 000-60,000 (in all CSA accounts but advised that some bills were still outstanding in closing off the Nassau conference) for planning the Cuba conference. In terms of moving funds around to finance the Cuba conference, Dwaine suggested setting up a bank account in Canada to transfer funds with the assistance of Past President, Professor Anton Allahar.

CSA funded USD12 000 to its Travel Grant Initiative to assist students with traveling to Haiti. 13 grants were awarded in total.

Kim Robinson Walcott asked about the implications of the budget for conference planning and what the differences in balances over years meant.

Dwaine explained that every conference typically carried over 30-40K for planning the next conference but the cost to host some conferences were more than others because of conference location. Haiti was an expensive conference but some expenses were covered through sponsorship. Dwaine highlighted that as an organization we should not and could not rely on the Association for funding the full conference through income from conference membership and registration to keep the organization running. Keithley then explained the circumstances coming out of CSA-Nassau.

Overview of CSA Nassau Conference: Keithley Woolward

Keithley explained some of the negotiations made with the Melia Hotel. He disclosed that some of the agreements for subsidized cost were compromised because CSA did not meet the quota of room bookings. Despite not meeting the quota, the main conference event room and break-out sessions rooms were free. The Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and the University of the Bahamas also assisted in providing computers for equipping the secretariat office and student volunteers.

425 programs were printed and the database showed that 325 persons were fully registered for the conference. He also spoke about the penalty attrition for not meeting the quota of room bookings and invited the membership to document any problems at the hotel and to email him their concerns. Keithley disclosed that CSA-Nassau was likely to not exceed a total cost of \$40,000. In the case of funding Graduate students, Keithley said that funds were low and, therefore, the Association was only able to assist some Cuban scholars to attend as full travel grantees. The room-sharing exercise was set up too late and aborted for safety concerns. From the experience gained from steering the planning and execution of CSA 2017, Keithley suggested that it might be better to have a bi-annual conference to give ourselves enough time to set up committees and groups to steer all the activities involved in the planning of this large conference and to also ensure continuity and the completion of plans and initiatives of the President.

A member suggested that the CSA needed to look within its membership for expertise in developing new committees and reinforcing existing ones. The point raised was that an assessment should be done to see what areas were in need of greater development and to issue an invitation to membership to volunteer their services in serving as members in these committees.

Michael Barnett called a motion for an extension of the meeting for another ½ hr. The motion was approved.

Angelique raised some suggestions in taking the Association forward:

- As a Caribbean organization we have a responsibility to Caribbean studies and Caribbean issues and we need to strive for greater efficiency in how we represent the region. We have a responsibility to the space we identify with.
- We need to set up committees to plan all aspects of the conference and beyond. Committees with committed members. As CSA members we need to ask ourselves where is our commitment to the organization to allow it to flourish. We need to ask ourselves what are our contributions to the association.
- We need to think about how best to disseminate information to all members of our networks
- There needs to be better accountability

Carolle Charles raised the issue that the Local Organizing Committee and Program Chair must have proper planning and should work together.

Carole Boyce-Davies suggested that the leadership, especially Program Chairs with experience in immediate past conferences should be actively involved in planning the next conference. She drew reference to other organizations that used this approach effectively in succession planning.

Motion: There needs to be a structural collaboration of Past Presidents, Presidents and Program Chairs so that processes can be streamlined to assist with planning of the next conference.

The motion was approved.

Nadia Celis stressed the importance for there to be proper communication and collaboration in order for effective planning

Yolanda Wood agreed and saw the importance of such collaboration and the need for well-developed committees to assist the President and Program Chairs.

Michael Barnett motioned to extend the meeting time to 1:30pm and this was approved.

Michael added that there was already some level of collaboration but had some concern about the VP position and suggested that perhaps for proper planning a call should be placed for a co-president.

He explained further that it was more a suggestion for putting succession planning structures in place, and there should be a network of people to have proper succession planning and to assist with the leadership of the Association.

David Hinds suggested that a Program Committee should be in place for about 2-3 years instead of just a year. In this regard, a motion was called and passed to put forth this proposal for an internal review of CSA processes.

Program Chairs' Report: Guido Rojer Jr., Okama Brook

Guido Rojer suggested that because of problems he, Okama and the past Program Chairs had with using the abstract submission platform on Eventsforce, CSA should only use the software for managing membership and registration but use Google Docs for receiving abstracts and managing submissions for the 2018 conference.

This was challenged by Angelique Nixon who described the overall efficiency of Events Force in the CSA-Haiti conference and asked that it not be abandoned and included that other organizations use it successfully. The treasurer talked about the fact that there was a cost associated with getting Events Force so it cannot just be abandoned.

In terms of the content of the 2017 conference, Guido said that he worked with Okama to make sure that the themes and sub-topics were well interconnected. He emphasized that the interconnected structure of the 2017 program was also linked with the Association's main conference theme in drawing on scholars internationally to share their discourses on Caribbean

development. The theme for the 2017 conference was, “*Culture and Knowledge Economies: The Future of Caribbean Development?*”

Announcement of Voting Results: Keithley Woolward

The results of the 2017 Election were announced and the successful candidates were:

Vice President - Catalina Toro Perez

Newly elected EC Members: Beverly Bain, Guido Rojer

Re-elected EC Member: Michael Barnett (to serve for one additional year)

Student Representative: Keisha Weil

Keithley explained that at the end of the conference week, the current Vice President, Yolanda Wood, would become the President and she would head the newly elected slate of Executive Council members in planning the 2018 conference.

Keithley announced to the membership that moving forward as an Association, CSA should have a fully constituted Financial Committee. Members of this Committee would be required to volunteer their time and advice in making financial decisions in the best interest of the CSA. Keithley thanked Professor Dwaine Plaza for his continued commitment and support as the Treasurer, as although he stepped down formally after the Haiti conference, Dwaine Plaza holds the position of Treasurer until a suitable replacement is found.

Angelique Nixon and Karen Flynn indicated that they would like to be on the Financial Committee.

Logistics for CSA 2018, Cuba: Yolanda Wood

Michael Barnett suggested to the in-coming President, Professor Yolanda Wood, to work on clearing up all travel logistics for persons from North America who wish to attend the Cuba conference. As well as to negotiate concession rates with airlines that usually goes to Cuba from the Caribbean and North America.

Yolanda: I am going to do everything I can to put systems in place so that we can have the CSA conference in Cuba next year. It would be an honor to have so many scholars in Cuba, scholars who have done studies about Cuba and now we are getting the opportunity to have scholars from all around the world to present their research in Cuba.

We are going to publish on the CSA website all the travel connections so that all can come to Cuba. In terms of visa requirements, we will also look into updating the website with these details. In the case of those travelling from the US, we will provide more information on flights and travel entry requirements. In terms of the finances, I know it will be difficult to find funds.

We have to be imaginative; we also have to extend our relationships as Cuba has diplomatic ties with other countries. We need to be very novel with our ideas as we move forward.

Nadia mentioned that in the case of planning CSA-Cuba we needed to know how we were going to support the Local Organizing Committee. She suggested that persons should come forth to assist the LOC.

2018 Conference – Cuba

Yolanda thanked Keithley for his assistance during the early stages in trying to secure Cuba as the destination for the 2018 conference. Yolanda announced that the conference will definitely be in Cuba.

Proposal: Yolanda requested for the 2018 conference dates to be shifted. The conference is usually held during the beginning of June. However, in Cuba, between July 3rd and 9th there is the Festival of Fire which has been in existence for almost 30 years. Yolanda suggested the idea of this one-time date change to allow persons attending the conference to also experience the Festival of Fire if they wished to attend the event. The proposal was to change the date for the conference to be held during the last week of June and first week of July.

Nadia explained that in requesting such a shift it would be necessary and useful to clearly describe and share with the membership what the Festival of Fire was all about and allow the membership to decide whether it would be okay before deciding on shifting the dates. Maggie supported Nadia's call to include the membership in making this decision.

A motion was passed to include not only the membership present at the meeting but the wider membership in the decision to change the date of the next conference.

Pat Noxolo expressed the view that consulting with the rest of the membership might affect whether people could make it and help to better decide whether it would be a wise decision.

In the case of the conference theme, Akua Benjamin suggested that there should be some inclusion of panels or discussions about resistance and, if possible, the word "resistance" should also appear as part of the theme.

Yolanda disclosed that the theme of the conference included education and culture and she mentioned that the theme also tied in with the University of Havana's 51st Anniversary. The conference theme for the 2018 conference is, "Education, Culture and Emancipatory Thought in the Caribbean".

Yolanda reminded the membership that she would be reaching out to them within two weeks to get feedback on whether they were in support of the proposal to have the date of CSA-Cuba to be shifted.

Carole Boyce Davies suggested that once the dates were confirmed, we should start working to spread the information as widely as possible via all our networks and with other organizations.

Michael Barnett recalled that the last time CSA was held in Cuba was in 1992 and to make this the second time, the Association would need a great deal of support in mobilizing persons to put things in place to make the event possible.

Keithley thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was closed at 1:52pm.