

To: ASC Board
From: Chris Eskridge
Date: October 20, 2012
Re: Executive Director's Report

This has again been a very busy six months since we last met. The bottom line is that we are financially sound, and remain a vibrant, active professional society. There is much going on in many spheres in our organization. We are now larger than we have ever been, with 3,650 members. We will soon have 8 divisions, and we now have 7 journals. The Chicago meetings will be the largest ever. We expect attendance to possibly hit 3,500 from roughly 40 countries. We also have a host of external groups meeting with us, which is wonderful of course. The Oral History Project is moving along, the ASC-BJS research collaboration initiative has been productive, the divisions are extremely active, we maintain regular contact with our international sister organizations....I am wearing out multiple pairs of tennis shoes trying to keep up with everything!

Some detailed thoughts:

1. Web Page

We continue to update and improve the web page of course. It is a daily effort and consumes a fair amount of our office time and effort. We are particularly focusing on adding material to the history pages and should be done by the first of the year.

2. Policy and Procedures Manual

We made all of the updates to the Policy and Procedures manual subsequent to the Spring Board Meeting and it posted on the web.

3. Columbus Office Update

Sue Beelman has retired and we hired Anne Arendt in her place. Anne is in charge of the newsletter and the web. Nicole shifted over to handle our financial records. Nicole had a baby in October, and we hired an assistant to help us with our financial records during the annual meeting period.

4. Annual Meeting Preparations

- A. Chicago (2012) - We did our site visit last Spring in conjunction with the Spring Board Meeting and lined things up. We have worked with the Palmer House Hotel staff since of course. The hotel is full (as is our overflow hotel), things are organized, the program book is printed, bags and badges have been ordered....if all goes as it now appears and as per above, the Chicago meetings will be the largest ever.

- B. Atlanta (2013) – I went to Atlanta last February and met with Bob and Tim, and got a good look at the hotel. There have been some major renovations since we were there last (over \$100 million), and things look very good. The Atlanta Marriott is a huge property, and we will be able to hold as large a meeting as we want...bring it on!

5. Code of Ethics

We recently received a letter from Michael Lynch regarding the ASC Code of Ethics (attached). ASC does not have such a code. Bob and Rob asked me to briefly address this matter, primarily from an historical context.

The ASC Board spent more than a decade (late 1980s until 2003) trying to develop a code of ethics, and in the end, abandoned the effort. There were many concerns, but they can be classified into two categories – enforcement concerns, and a failure to agree upon a substantive code.

Substantive Code - The ever changing ASC Board struggled to reach an agreement as to the substantive nature of a code of ethics. This was a somewhat devise topic and resulted in a fair amount of tension on the Board for many years. While there were many drafts, in the end, we just could not come up with a code that all agreed upon, with the enforcement provision serving as the primary stumbling block.

Enforcement Concerns- Enforcement carries rather significant costs in terms of both time and money. One organization that has a code of ethics with an enforcement provision is ASA. I attempted to contacted the current ASA Director, Sally Hillsman. She was out of the country, so I spoke with Janet Astner, the Deputy Executive Officer at ASA. The number of ethics issues coming to the ASA office now varies quite a bit she informed me, but they will get as many as 20 a year. I asked how much of Sally's time is spent on ethics matters. Ms. Astner's response -

“It is difficult for me to estimate how much of Sally's time is taken up with ethics matters. There can be several phone calls of varying length involved in clarifying procedures, eligibility, etc. The Executive Officer is heavily involved in the preliminary screening of complaints.”

After the cases are screened by Sally, they go to an Ethics Committee for review and possible action. In the end, the ASA Board makes the final decision. In addition to staff time and the associated direct costs, there is a significant liability issue. ASA spends just under \$7,000 a year for liability insurance (covers officers, board members, staff, and committee members). As a point of comparison, ASC currently spends \$850 a year for all of our insurance coverage – property protection, crime concerns, and liability (FYI, we carry a \$4 million policy in the aggregate). It is not possible to dis-aggregate the liability portion of our insurance policy, but perhaps we could do a simple guesstimate – liability portion is 1/3 of our overall costs, so maybe \$285 a year.

The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences has a code of ethics with an enforcement provision. They have had a different experience than ASA, getting only one to two cases (at most) a year. The cases are reviewed by the president who then sends them on to their ethics committee for deliberation. Like the ASA, the ACJS Board makes all final decisions. ACJS spends \$2,700 for liability insurance in these matters.

Returning to the historical discussion, after failing to develop a code of ethics, the ASC

Board decided to continue the long-standing policy of referring matters of inappropriate conduct (were they to come to the attention of the ASC leadership, and if appropriate), to the accused's home institution, which have disciplinary boards/procedures in place. We have not referred any matter involving alleged professional misconduct to any ASC member's home institution during my entire tenure working with the ASC office (nearly 30 years now).

As a point of information, I receive general inquiries regarding our code of ethics (or lack thereof) perhaps once every two or three years. The Lynch letter is an outlier. I have never received anything as focused or detailed. From where I sit, I sense no particular general interest or public clamor coming from the membership that we develop a code of ethics.

Finally, we do have a webpage with links to codes of ethics of other professional associations (www.asc41.com/ethicspg.html). I refer folks to that site when contacted on these matters.

6. Ice Cream Social

I saved the best until last...you are all invited to participate in the Ice Cream Social which will take place from 1:30 to 2:45 on Thursday in the Exhibit Hall. The event will be sponsored by Wiley Blackwell this year. All current Board members, please get ready to do some scooping!