



ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 25, 2017

Present: Constance Backhouse, Alain-G Gagnon, Guy Laforest, Maryse Lassonde, Jean-Marie Toulouse, Anver Emon, Carl James, John Harris, Geoffrey T. Fong, Ian Graham, Ratna Ghosh, Marcia Spetch, Tracie Afifi, Marie Beaulieu, Candace Krutishniti, Colleen Sheppard.

1. Introduction

Outgoing President Constance Backhouse introduced herself and welcomed and congratulated incoming President, Alain-G. Gagnon. She also thanked Colleen Sheppard for agreeing to assume the Academy Secretary position.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Marie Beaulieu moved to approve the Agenda; seconded by Anver Emon. The agenda was approved.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Maryse Lassonde noted that a correction was needed to the minutes to reflect her presence at the 19 November 2016 meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes, as corrected, by Maryse Lassonde; seconded by Guy Laforest. Minutes approved.

4. Slate of Offices and Committee Members

Constance Backhouse reviewed the leadership and committee membership positions in the Academy of Social Sciences, including the election of the President of the Academy of Social Sciences and appointment of other committee members.

After reviewing the slate of proposed officers and committee members, Jean-Marie Toulouse moved to approve the list of officers. Seconded by Maryse Lassonde, the motion carried.



5. Background Information on the Royal Society of Canada and Selection Process

Constance Backhouse explained the structure of the RSC, including the size and make-up of the three academies, Arts and Humanities (I), Social Sciences (II) and Sciences (III), executive governance structures and increased efforts towards bilingualism. She then reviewed the selection process for new fellows, noting that in the Academy of Social Sciences, there are 16 new fellows in the English division and 5 for the French division of the Academy of Social Sciences. There are a total of 505 fellows in the Academy of Social Sciences. It was also noted that there is an underrepresentation of Francophones in the RSC.

6. New Medal – Yvan Allaire Medal in Governance

Jean-Marie Toulouse informed the meeting of the creation of a new medal in social sciences, to highlight contributions in the domain of governance. The medal may be awarded to members of the Academy or to non-members.

The new medal is named in honour of Yvan Allaire, Emeritus Professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal, for his important work in governance. Though focused on governance, the prize may be awarded to those working on systems of governance in a wide range of disciplinary contexts (e.g. health systems, political science, legal systems).

The prize was created with \$150,000 and has sufficient funding for the next 25 years. In addition to receiving a medal, the recipient will receive \$5,000. After 25 years, the prize may be continued if additional funding is available.

Jean-Marie Toulouse thanked all those who helped to create this new medal and underscored its importance in light of the small number of medals in the social sciences.

Alain-G. Gagnon moved to thank Jean-Marie Toulouse for his important work creating the new medal. Seconded by Maryse Lasonde, the motion carried.

7. Motion to thank and congratulate President Constance Backhouse

President Alain-G. Gagnon introduced a motion to congratulate Constance Backhouse for her work as President of the Academy of Social Sciences. He praised her constant,



diligent and effective leadership and her efforts to advance diversity and the place of women within the Academy. Seconded by Maryse Lassonde, the motion carried.

8. Discussion of Ideas and Priorities

Alain-G. Gagnon began by reviewing some of the key ideas articulated in his Vision Statement for the presidency of the Academy of Social Sciences, including four major issues: (i) the enhancement of cultural and national diversity on a larger scale; (ii) the development of knowledge produced in Canada and links with international networks; (iii) the forging of connections between the three Academies; and (iv) support for research initiatives. He noted his particular concern with, and commitment to, bilingualism within the RSC. Increasing the RSC's presence at ACFAS (L'Association francophone pour le savoir) was suggested as a strategy for engaging further with the Francophone scholarly community.

Alain-G. Gagnon also shared his idea of developing a Quebec Chapter of the RSC across the three Academies. He is planning to organize an event in the Spring 2018 to bring Quebec RSC fellows together.

The meeting also discussed diversity issues and Indigenous peoples. The importance of ensuring the survival of Indigenous languages was highlighted. The RSC has also recently established a Task Force on Truth and Reconciliation, chaired by Constance Backhouse; she noted that former RSC President, Duncan Campbell Scott was one of the architects of the Indian residential school policy.

Fellow Carl James, who chairs the Equity and Diversity Committee of the RSC suggested that we need to think about how equity and diversity issues are approached, grapple with conflicting ideas, and consider who assumes leadership in this domain.

On the importance of supporting innovative and interdisciplinary research, it was noted that the RSC College is an excellent pool to draw on for ideas and insights. The recommendations of the Naylor Report (*Investing in Canada's Future: Strengthening the Foundations of Canadian Research, 2017*) and the importance of filling current vacancies in the Canadian Research Chair program were also discussed. Finally, the limited funding for expert panels was noted as a concern for RSC-sponsored research initiatives.

*** Minutes respectfully submitted by Colleen Sheppard (November 30, 2017).*