**Minutes**

**NRHC Business Meeting**

**Friday, November 16, 2012**

**Boston Sheraton**

**Boston, MA**

Margaret Roman - President, Presiding

1. **Welcome and Call to Order**

Dr. Roman, the region’s President, from Saint Elizabeth College, opened the meeting at 8:05 am on November 16, 2012. She welcomed the region’s membership and asked the other officers of the region to introduce themselves.

1. **Minutes of Spring 2012 Meeting**

Dr. Shirley Shultz Myers, NRHC Executive Secretary-Treasurer, from Gallaudet University, presented the minutes from the NRHC Business Meeting held in Baltimore, Maryland on Saturday, April 14, 2012, during the regional conference. The minutes were accepted.

1. **Financial Report**

Dr. Myers presented the financial report, indicating that as of November 12, 2012, the region’s treasury stood at $103, 301.03. She noted this amount represents a decrease of approximately one-third of the treasury within the last year.

The report was accepted.

1. **2012 Conference Feedback Report**

Dr. Roman summarized her written report on the conference feedback.

In response to a suggestion for more structured support for City-as-Text, Dr. Bernice Braid, Long Island University, Brooklyn, and originator of City-as-Text, noted the excellent NCHC City-as-Text during a conference in Philadelphia in 2006, including the options, materials, and the time planned for wrap ups of each thread before the general wrap up. Dr. Braid will share these plans with the NRHC Philadelphia conference planning committee.

Mr. Jeremiah Sammons, student representative on the NCHC board and former student representative on the NRHC board, commented on the positive feedback he has heard about the free app with the conference schedule that conferees could download for information. Users do need to pay some fees, but using an app could reduce on paper costs.

1. **2013 Conference Report**:

Lori Rubeling, President-Elect and Conference Chair, from Stevenson University, reported that the dates for the spring conference in Philadelphia are April 4-7, 2013, and the hotel is the Sheraton Society Hill. The theme is “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness: Foundations, Tensions, and Mediations”; the conference theme statement indicates the opportunity for interesting juxtapositions of past and present.

The block of hotel rooms at the Sheraton Society Hill has sold out already. However, we have added thirty more rooms each night at a Holiday Inn located a few blocks from the conference hotel. Check also for cancellations at the conference hotel. The link for the Holiday Inn reservations will go live on Monday, November 19 [later delayed by hotel processing till Monday, November 26].

In addition to continuing last year’s successful innovations to our schedule, we will host a creative workshop where participants can design a logo for the NRHC.

We will again take advantage of the First Friday Art Walk also offered in Philadelphia. However, the hotel was unable to provide a space for student art. We will be able to add that back at the conference in Niagara Falls in 2014.

Dr. Richard Nigro, Honors Director at LaSalle University, a local host of the conference—along with Dr. Marcella McCoy Deh, Honors Director at Philadelphia University—reported on City-as-Text preparations. Four options are organized by narrative theme and location. The goal of each option presented on a handout is to weave a story or narrative about the places in each area option. To help create that narrative, readings will be sent out prior to the conference. The handout lists numerous possibilities exist for each city area option.

Underlining the importance of story telling is the wrap up planned: “The best day of my life so far” is a program of senior citizens and high school students. The seniors, long time residents, will describe what has changed and the prices of these changes. Dr. Nigro received support for this planned wrap up idea. In lieu of an honorarium, a donation will be made to their organization.

One student noted an organization called “Story Corps,” a national storytelling activity with centers to gather stories. Some of ours may become part of that collection. Lori Rubeling will look into it.

Mr. Sammons noted that we might add City-as-Text options with brief descriptions with the app for the conference schedule. We would need to investigate costs. Ms. Rubeling noted that, since not everyone has the kind of phone that accommodates such an app, we would need to continue both print and electronic means.

The two student representatives reported on their plans for student socials. The two student representatives are Ms. Freda Raitelu, LaGuardia Community College, and Mr. Brent Barge, Lock Haven University. For Thursday, they will once again offer the popular scavenger hunt with pizza and socializing after, as well as the photo contest coming out of that event; on Friday, they will change up the Open Mic night to a game night; and on Saturday night, they plan a “White Out” party with black lights and a photo booth that will print photos with the NRHC Philadelphia logo. All three events will take place in the Hamilton Room, a disco lounge in the hotel.

Ms. Rubeling reminded members that the proposal deadline is Wednesday, November 21. The problem with limiting an IP address to one proposal has been fixed. Notifications of acceptances go out December 15.

The minority scholarship deadline is January 15, and the conference registration will go live on the same date.

1. **2014 and Beyond Conference Report**

Dr. Roman reported that the 2014 conference is in Niagara Falls. She suggested telling students to bring passports if they wanted to go over to the Canadian side. “Say it many times,” she advised. “After all, students are still saying, ‘I didn’t know posters needed to be free-standing.’”

As for future locations, we investigated Flushing, NY. The hotel there could host the conference but not give us enough rooms. New York seems too expensive otherwise. Dr. Katherine Murphy, Monroe College, suggested that, for a more affordable option close to NYC, we might consider the Westchester conference center, and easily get into New Rochelle or White Plains or go from there into NYC for City-as-Text explorations

Dr. Andrew Martino, NRHC Faculty Representative, from Southern New Hampshire University, commented that Portsmouth, NH may be even more enchanting than Portland. It is smaller. The village does not close down in winter. A possible hotel is the Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside hotel at a cost of $145/night. To get there, you could fly into Portland, ME or Manchester, NH. Manchester is about 50 miles from Portsmouth. Amtrak does not go to Portsmouth but to Dover or Hanover—about 30 miles from Portsmouth.

Some enthusiastic supporters commented on the attraction of Gettysburg, where we last had a conference in 2003. The history is fascinating. The hotel rates are inexpensive: Wyndham offers rooms at $119/night, and the Eisenhower at $105/night. The drawback is that the locations of these hotels would mean busing all conferees to the City-as-Text choices—costs for the current average of over 400 conferees could eat up savings elsewhere.

Dr. Luis Camara from the University of Puerto Rico encouraged us to consider going to Puerto Rico again. The last conference there was in 2000. He mentioned that his wife works for a travel bureau that might help with travel arrangements.

Dr. Natalya Blank from Norwich University suggested Burlington, VT. It has a small airport, allows a visit to nearby Montreal, and presents an eclectic city on the shore of Lake Champlain.

One more possible location is Cooperstown, NY. The city has wonderful things to do beyond the Baseball Hall of Fame and a great conference space.

1. **Registration Service for 2014 and After**

Dr. Joanna Gonsalves, Immediate Past President, from Salem State University, reported on her investigations of possible registration services.

Background: Last year and this year, we used a software program called C-vent. Although the cost per registrant is competitive at $13, it is labor intensive in setting it up, teaching it to the next conference chair, and monitoring and following up on missing dues payments for registrations at member rates, and more bookkeeping of conference registration deposits made in the NRHC bank account. In addition, we must apply for tax exemption in each state, and we pay a 3% per transaction credit card fee and a $10 monthly charge year round.

Possibilities for conference registration services:

1. **University of New England** - $25/registrant and no name tags.
2. **University of Southern Maine** - We used this service for our 2010 conference in Portland, ME. The price then was $12/registrant. This service allowed us exemption on hotel taxes without applying for an exemption, supplied name tags, and reports as needed. No additional fees were involved. The current proposal is for $18/per registrant with the same conditions, or $15/registrant if we sign a three-year contract.
3. **NCHC** - $10/registrant with name tags. One year trial since we are their first effort

outside their own conference. If it works well, they will offer this service to all of the regions. The price may change, but it seems worth taking this good deal for 2014.

1. **NCHC Sponsorship**

Dr. Gonsalves reported that NCHC offered to sponsor our regional meeting with a $500 donation. Considering this offer as a pilot for other possible sponsors, the board accepted it. We will recognize this sponsorship in the program and in signage.

1. **Proposed Amendments to the Constitution**

Dr. Myers explained that all of the amendments concern allowing the option of online voting or electronic communications. We will be voting on these amendments at our business meeting in Philadelphia.

1. **Proposal to Raise Annual Dues**

Dr. Myers reviewed the justifications for this increase, which she included in the notice of this proposal sent out via e-mail. Those in attendance indicated support for the increase and still modest rate of $100 for institutional members. One member noted that, with budget cuts everywhere, she would prefer a 50% rather than a 100% increase. Another member felt the smaller increase would only mean coming back with another request in a few years; she felt it would be better to increase dues to $100 and possibly keep that rate for the same period as the current dues—10 years.

1. **E-Newsletter/Website**

Dr. Brian Etheridge, NRHC webmaster and newsletter editor, from the University of Baltimore, reported that the editorial advisory board had proposed a number of actions, including “thought pieces” from members, similar, perhaps, to the essay Dr. Etheridge had provided for the discussion on challenging trends in higher education and the role of honors in these trends. We hope to begin this series in the coming year.

Also suggested were a cycle of reminders and postings, more online participation on discussion of issues between meetings, and a re-design of the website. A student at UMD, now graduated, designed the current website for $500. It loads slowly at odd times of the day. The board is planning for a re-design this year.

Dr. Etheridge’s two-year term ends this spring 2013. He notes that any new editor/webmaster benefits his or her students in hiring capable ones to assist in uploading, removing and editing the website as needed.

1. **Preliminary Call for nominations for NRHC officers, May 2013 election**

Dr. Myers announced the positions open this spring: Vice President (a four year cycle with the second year as conference chair), two Student Representatives (one year terms), one Faculty Representative (two year term), and the Newsletter Editor/Webmaster (two year term).

Dr. Roman adjourned the meeting adjourned 9:05 a.m.