

## **New England Regional World History Association Zoom Meeting Minutes 6 December 2022**

Present:

David Kalivas, President

Christoph Strobel, Vice-President

David Burzillo, Treasurer

A. J. Andrea, Secretary

Nicolas Hardisty

Angela Lee

Tom Johnson

Violetta Ravagnoli

Nicholas Roberts

The agenda submitted in advance of the meeting:

1. 2022 elections
2. The Treasurer's report
3. Future symposia
4. NERWHA's annual donation to the WHA and its funding travel grants
5. The future of NERWHA

Following social chatter, largely regarding Nic Hardisty's new daughter, Marigold, now an honorary member of NERWHA, President Kalivas called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Andrea reported on Fall elections. Given that three members who still had a year left on their three-year appointments to the Executive Council vacated their seats, NERWHA faces an extraordinary situation. In addition to the annual filling of three seats, each for a three-year term, three seats with one-year terms need filling or, more correctly, refilling. To date, Angela Lee and Tom Johnson, whose terms expire in December, have expressed willingness to stand again for three-year terms. Additionally, Holly-Lynn Busier, emerita at UVM, has expressed a willingness to serve, after Andrea asked her to stand for the office.<sup>1</sup> After noting that his letter to the listserv resulted in no volunteers coming forward, he offered to send out another letter asking for persons

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<sup>1</sup> In a fit of absent-mindedness, the Secretary forgot that Heather Streets-Salter will nominate a graduate student to fill one of these six seats. Inasmuch as she was away, celebrating her anniversary, she was not present to remind him.

to come forward. Discussion on this issue was briefly suspended in anticipation of picking it up again when the EC discussed the future of NERWHA.

In anticipation of further items on the agenda, David Kalivas noted that NERWHA's Zoom symposia during the Covid shutdown were successful, but now, he asked, where do we go from there? The hybrid meeting at Northeastern in the Fall only drew about 22 to 25 in-person participants, and many of these were presenters. And then there were electronic problems with Zoom. But putting this issue also in momentary abeyance, the EC moved on to the Treasurer's report.

David Burzillo was welcomed back with warmth and enthusiasm following his unavoidable absence. He reported that NERWHA's balance stood at \$7,274.83. The association had a good summer of renewals and new memberships; at least 15 members have renewed for '23. Last year at this time, the number of renewals was 25, but still, this is good news.<sup>2</sup>

In light of this good news, strict adherence to the agenda was suspended, and the EC voted unanimously to make its annual \$500 donation to the WHA and to fund two travel grants, each of \$500.

Returning to the issue of elections, the Secretary suggested that each EC member invite a colleague to stand for election. Actually, the Secretary used such verbs as "bully-rag," "dragoon," and "shanghai," but he meant politely invite.

Angela Lee suggested that we should ask persons who have presented at a NERWHA symposium to stand for office. Andrea responded, if it was possible to draw up a list of such persons, along with email addresses, he would invite them, despite the coming holidays when business takes a break.

As long as we were discussing service (and now agenda item #5 leaps over agenda item #3), David Kalivas noted that it was probably time, after multiple terms as president, for him to step aside when his current term expires in December 2023. So, let's see if we can get new people to serve. He also asked the long-serving Secretary if he was ready to step aside. With characteristic firmness of conviction, he responded, "I dunno." Tom Johnson pleaded with Kalivas to stay on as president, but also pointed out that joining and serving in one of NERWHA's offices should be attractive for younger colleagues. Unlike most learned associations, its dues are affordable, it also has something to offer in terms of importance and serving in an office is an easy and sure CV-builder.

Angela Lee noted that we should conduct one-on-one office-recruiting among our active members. Andrea pledged that if the Treasurer gave him a list of current members, he would send each a personal appeal to consider standing for office.

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<sup>2</sup> In another fit of absent-mindedness, the Secretary, who still had a year to go on his multi-year membership, renewed for another 3 years. Given such lapses, we can all be thankful that he does not handle NERWHA funds.

Angela Lee noted she did not intend to overly burden the Secretary and suggested each EC member might participate in this project.

Tom Johnson asked, “May we reach out beyond our current membership?” The digitally challenged Secretary, who could not find the screen button to raise an electronic hand, shouted out, “Yes! But the person must become a member.”

With these ideas articulated but no formal action taken on them, we moved back to symposia.

David Kalivas noted that hybrid symposia with plenary sessions worked well, so what shall we have in the Spring?

Nick Roberts noted that a “terraqueousa” theme integrating oceans, seas, and adjoining lands might work well.

The Secretary, who wishes to maintain nineteenth-century standards of proper English, went ballistic over what he termed “neologicistic jargon,” but was ignored.

After this impertinent interruption, Nick Roberts went on to note that linking water to land would be a theme well worth investigating.

Kalivas noted that NERWHA already had sponsored a symposium in Maine on the maritime world, and it had been a rousing success. But we can revisit the oceanic world.

Angela Lee voiced her yes.

Tom Johnson offered his opinion that NERWHA should focus a symposium on the history of the five crises that confront us today, whereby we could make connections between past and present.

Nic Hardisty noted that last year Tall Ships America sponsored a conference on maritime history that was quite successful.

Tom Johnson then withdrew his proposal.

With all of this in mind, the EC voted for a “seas and lands” theme, and Nic Hardisty suggested that Tall Ships America might even provide a small sponsorship for a NERWHA symposium on the topic.

Nick Roberts then proposed a possible keynoter, Fahad Bishara, of the University of Virginia, who is currently working on a microhistory of dhows in the Indian Ocean. Kalivas asked Nick to write Bishara to see if he were willing.<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the date of the symposium, Spring is too soon, as Kalivas noted, let’s go to the Fall. All agreed. September or October? First, we must find a host and integrate our symposium into its schedule, but October is best for NERWHA.

Several suggested Mystic Seaport in Connecticut. Nic Hardisty promised to look into Mystic and get back to the EC on this.

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<sup>3</sup> Nick Roberts reported on 7 December that, indeed, Bishara is ready to join us as the keynoter.

New Business: Angela Lee noted that the National Council on Social Studies meets in Boston in 2024, and suggested NERWHA must do something. Teachers are hungry for world history.

With Christoph and Angela leading the way, it was decided NERWHA must offer some panels. Angela assured the EC that the program chair will push through our proposals.

In final thoughts, David Kalivas noted we must contact Lincoln Paine in regard to this proposed symposium, and Christoph noted we must also reach out to Dane Morrison, who also works in the area. Andrea, a close friend of Dane and for whom Dane is writing a book on Yankees Abroad, promised to do so.

With a universal acknowledgement that it was good to have Dave Burzillo back, we adjourned at 8:03 PM. In time for the Secretary to catch another episode of his favorite Sicilian drama—"Commissario Montalbano."

Respectfully submitted,

A. J. Andrea, Secretary