

2013 MATC Executive Committee Minutes

Hyatt situation. Upon learning about the Unite Here global Hyatt boycott last spring, our first action was to ask the Hyatt Cleveland for more time to make our decision for 2014. We also investigated the labor status at our contracted 2013 location, the St. Louis Hyatt, and learned this though this hotel was not a hot labor site, the St. Louis did not have a labor contract with their workers and therefore was not a Unite Here approved hotel. We stopped to consider our options.

- For 2014, we could have gone outside the region to a safe Hyatt like Philadelphia, Atlanta, Louisville, or Denver. But some of these Hyatts are in right to work states (where unionizing is essentially illegal), which was not what we wanted either.
- We decided to poll the membership. 91 out of 93 responses said to not break our contract with the St. Louis Hyatt due to the catastrophic damage it would do to MATC's finances. The poll supported looking for other ways to express our discontent. A large percentage of those responding to the poll said we should make labor issues a part of our decision making process.

So, with this information from our membership, Scott Magelssen wrote a letter to Unite Here explaining our decision to honor our 2013 contract with the St. Louis Hyatt, but to contract with a labor-friendly hotel (not a Hyatt) for our 2014 conference. The conference planners looked at lots of options, and ultimately decided upon The Wyndam Cleveland at Playhouse Square. Though this Wyndam is not represented by Unite Here, it does have a strong relationship with theatre unions at the Playhouse Square. We also chose to use all of our Hyatt Loyalty points on 2013 St. Louis conference.

Future Conferences: Time to look West again for 2015. Chicago is far and away our most expensive location, and given our recent legal expenses, it is not an option in the near future. Kansas City is the number one choice. Hotel properties we are considering include the Westin at Crowne Center, the Crowne Plaza, The Raphael (an historic property), The Sheridan (with a rotating restaurant on the top floor), The Ambassador, and The Hilton President.

- Question was raised if we are looking for another chain to partner with or the best fit in each place. Once we stay at a hotel, that chain will hound us to be repeat customers. We decided to wait to be courted by the chains and then push for the best rates and deals, discounts, AV contracts, etc.

Budget Report – Tyler pointed out we need to be in the black every year. The following topics were discussed to either raise more money or decrease our expenses.

- Tax-Exempt Status. Now that we have our non-profit status reinstated, we can expect to save a lot of money on our upcoming conference expenses. Tyler will apply for tax-exempt status in Ohio for the 2014 conference in Cleveland. Looking ahead to Kansas City, Tyler is optimistic we will get tax-exempt status, as we have been successful in MO for past conferences.
- Conference Registration. The most obvious way to increase our income would be to raise the conference registration fee. The idea of raising the Faculty conference fee by \$10-\$15 was discussed. MATC's registration fee has remained the same

- for many years, and our registration is significantly less expensive than other theatre conferences (ATHE, ASTR). We agreed to examine how much more revenue such a registration fee hike would bring in (by checking how many faculty registrations we had this year) before making a decision.
- Fellows Fund. The suggestion was made to approach the fellows about contributing to an endowed maintenance fund. Maybe John Poole can lead this charge. The Poole Money Pool! We might ask use this fund to sponsor the Thursday night reception.
 - Food Costs. Food is one of our biggest expenses, so we looked at the following ways to reduce this expense.
 - o The first suggestion was to move the Co-Chairs meeting to an offsite location, and there was consensus this was an excellent idea.
 - o St. Louis food prices have proven to be only slightly cheaper (couple dollars/head) than Chicago.
 - o Not staying at the Cleveland Hyatt in 2014 will save us money by not having to use the House of Blues.
 - o Cash Bar. A cash bar at the reception, (no free drink ticket) reduces our costs. Discussion of replacing the hors-d'oeuvres with pizza was decided against based on the backlash to a similar move at ASTR.
 - o Sunday morning food. This was only added a few years ago, when we were at the Cleveland Hyatt and there were no breakfast options close to the hotel. We decided to keep this to encourage membership to attend those early sessions.
 - o Conference Size. We discussed the numbers of people who are turned down for the conference (approximately 100 turned down from THS), and whether we should hold more sessions. The consensus was that we value quality of the conference over the impulse to accept more participants to increase our revenue. The THS co-chairs saw a clear dividing line between the papers they accepted and rejected, so there is no plan to increase the number of THS sessions at this time. We also discussed how some people are participating in high numbers of sessions, and decided to limit the number of sessions a member can participate to 2.
 - o Journal Costs. The question was raised if it would save money to make the journal online instead of printed. It might reduce costs, or it might not since there would still be layout and editing labor. Converting to an online format would also lower the journal's status for promotion and tenure, so we decided against this course. Instead, Liz will investigate other publishing contracts that are more cost effective and offer a faster turn-around time. Our current contract with U of Alabama has a 13 month turn-around, which is painfully slow for those on the tenure clock. We also agreed to pursue getting THS indexed on Project Muse. This would increase access to the journal (now largely limited to membership) and it would also create revenue for MATC.

Nominations and appointment committee. John Fletcher crafted the language for this bylaw proposal. This committee will include the President Elect (2 year term), the 4

Senior Symposium Co-chairs (1 year term) and 2 members-at-large (2 year term). Nominations proposed by this committee would be on the website and sent to membership by Feb 15, in advance of the annual conference. Members-at-large would be elected at Business Meeting. Since Jeff LeRoche and Elizabeth Cawns have been effectively serving as these members-at-large, we decided to ask them if they will continue serving until next conference (2014 Cleveland) when we will vote in new members-at-large.

Business meeting. Decided not to make any changes to the “pipeline,” since the creation of the nominating committee has created work for the President Elect.

Board of Directors. One of the requirements for our tax-exempt status is to have a Board of Directors. According to our articles of incorporation, the Executive Committee is the Board of Directors.

Bylaws state language. Tyler explained that the list of states may create problems as we apply to states for tax exempt status that are not on the list (i.e. Ohio). New language reflecting our Midwest origins and our national tier status in rigor, quality and membership will be proposed at this year’s Business Meeting. We will provide a copy of the revised bylaws for each of the lunch tables on Saturday.

2014 Kenote. Rajiv Joseph is our first choice to be for next year’s keynote speaker, due to his ties with Cleveland. Liz Reitz Mullinix will ask Mr. Joseph. Other names brought up were Ann Bogart, Gene Simmons, and Caridad Svitch.