

Minutes of the Rsai Council Meeting, Dublin, Ireland, August 22, 1999

Present: Bade (ERSA), Batey (Immediate Past President and ERSA), Cuadrado-Roura (ERSA), Dewhurst (Chair ERSA LOC), Donaghy (Executive Director and At-Large), van Dijk (Observer), Fischer (At-Large), Florax (PRS Editor-in-Chief), Gibson (Observer), Haynes (NARSC), Higano (Observer), Jackson (Editor RSAI News), Kohno (President and PRSCO), Maggi (Chair World Congress LOC), Poot (PRS Pacific Editor and At-Large), Quigley (PRSCO), Rossi (At-Large), Stough (NARSC), and Thill (PRS North American Editor).
Regrets: Getis (At-Large), Kilkenny (At-Large), and Isserman (NARSC).

1. President Kohno called the meeting to order at 9:25.

2. The minutes of the Seoul meeting were accepted as distributed and amended by Kilkenny.

3. President's Report: President Kohno acknowledged the substantial contributions of the LOC and thanked them for their hospitality, arrangements for the Council meeting, and the ensuing luncheon. He reported that the PRSCO16 conference was most successful and thanked Sam Ock Park for his outstanding efforts. President Kohno indicated that he will continue to work with a small number of council members to consider changes in fee structure to increase the size of the RSAI membership.

4. Report from the Long-Range Planning Committee: Immediate Past President Batey announced that the Committee had succeeded in persuading Geoffrey Hewings to stand for election to the Vice Presidency and in producing two candidates willing to stand for election for the At-Large seat that will become open when Poot's term expires John Dewhurst and John Rees. Batey proposed that Donaghy be reappointed as Executive Director for a second three-year term (2000-2002) in the other At-Large seat that becomes vacant at the end of the year and urged that the term not count against the constitutional seven-year service time limit.

Decision: President Kohno asked for and received Council's approval of Batey's proposal.

5. Executive Director's Report: Donaghy expressed his gratitude to the LOC for their excellent organizational work. He reported that the August Newsletter had been mailed to all independent members and to all section officers for distribution to their section members.

Following up on the discussion of the previous meeting, he noted that RSAI News would be distributed in print and electronic formats beginning with the January 2000 issue.

Donaghy reported that the third issue of Volume 78 of Papers in Regional Science (PRS) had also been mailed out to all members from whom dues payments had been received and noted that section officers needed to be encouraged to secure signatures for renewal of memberships in order for the Association to retain favorable periodical postage rates. He reported that RSAI was presently experiencing cash-flow difficulties arising from the transition to the new arrangement for the publication of PRS and noted that when late payments from large sections arrived the headquarters would have a better sense of the Association's financial position. Donaghy promised to distribute a draft of the annual financial report for review prior to the November Council meeting, at which possible changes in operations with implications for both costs and revenues might be considered. He announced that upcoming meetings of the RSAI Council were scheduled for Thursday November 11, 1999 at 9:00 AM at the NARSC meeting in Montreal, Tuesday May 16, 2000 at 2:00 PM in Lugano, and Tuesday August 29, 2000 at 9:00 AM at the ERSA Congress in Barcelona.

6. RSAI News Editor's Report: Jackson had circulated a report on the RSAI web page and RSAI News prior to the meeting. In this report Jackson had indicated that the home page had been contacted about 3,500 times by about 2,500 individuals over the past year, that the web page was being moved to a new server, and that it could be maintained for considerably less expense in the coming year. With respect to the newsletter, he suggested that its useful life may be nearing an end and that an electronic digest might replace it. Jackson proposed that, whatever the newsletter's ultimate disposition, it should no longer include conference programs, which were available on conference web sites,

and served notice that he intended to resign as Newsletter editor no later than June 2000.

Discussion: Haynes requested that the issues of eliminating conference programs and the publication formats of the newsletter be considered piecemeal. Bade suggested that both electronic and print formats were needed but warned that new complications may impose a burden on section officers. Batey observed that RSAI members are at different stages of development of information handling, hence both formats are needed, but agreed that information provided on conferences could be scaled back considerably. Cuadrado-Roura noted that the success of the ERSA electronic newsletter had been mixed. Fischer stressed the importance of continuing to put newsletter in print format, since accessing archival information in that format was easier. Jackson responded that the issue need not be resolved immediately, but that several steps could be taken that would lower costs of production and distribution. He added that section officers needed to be more communicative with him. Gibson remarked that the RSAI News is the publication of record for RSAI and should contain everything necessary to get people into the system. Quigley suggested consideration of a quarterly network 'electronic broadcast' with hot links to keep institutional relationships.

Decision: President Kohno asked for and received Council's approval of the arrangement to a) make RSAI News available in both print and electronic formats in 2000; but to b) eliminate conference programs from the newsletter.

7. Report of PRS Editor-in-Chief: Florax reported that 1) cooperation with Springer-Verlag had been very fruitful and production had become very efficient; 2) an electronic version of abstracts can be accessed from the Springer-Verlag web site; 3) indexing of the journal was already extensive and was increasing; and 4) the volume of paper submissions was good and that there may be a need to increase the number of pages per volume. Florax also reported that numerous RSAI members who had paid for 1999 memberships through their sections early in the year had not yet received any issues of the current volume and suggested that the matter of fee collection be reconsidered. Discussion: Batey remarked that he was delighted that

production problems had been eliminated. Donaghy responded that RSAI HQ mails out the current issue of the journal directly to each member of the Association from whom it has received membership fees for the current year as soon as the issue is received from the publisher. HQ also mails out a limited number of copies to members of sections from which it has not yet received a section payment for the current year, provided that the section officers communicate to HQ the names of section members from whom they have collected fees. Donaghy stressed that it is incumbent upon section officers to send to HQ in a timely manner either membership fees that have been collected or information on members from who they have collected fees.

Action: President Kohno asked Batey, Donaghy, and Florax to convene and consider possible responses to the problem of delays in receipt of issues of PRS by section members who have paid membership fees for the current year and report back to Council in Montreal.

8. Update on Plans for the Year 2000 World Congress: LOC Chair Maggi distributed several pieces of information on the upcoming congress and reported that he was negotiating for fare reductions with Cross Air and endeavoring to get flexibility on hotel space. He noted that the LOC was expecting to receive advisement on the matter of subsidizing travel to the conference of scholars from developing countries or countries underrepresented in RSAI..

Discussion: Batey remarked that in inviting such scholars to the World Congress, RSAI would be expecting them to be ambassadors for RSAI in their home countries. He suggested that RSAI might also try to arrange for packages of subscriptions to regional science publications to be made available to the invited scholars home institutions as a way of promoting interest in regional science. Cuadrado-Roura inquired whether a strategic posture should be assumed in choosing whom might receive subsidies.

Action: President Kohno asked Batey, Cuadrado-Roura, Fischer, Maggi, and Rossi to meet and discuss a subsidization strategy and report back to Council in Montreal.

9. Discussion of the January Institute on Regional Development in South Africa was postponed until the Montreal meeting.

10. Timing of RSAI Council Meetings:
Quigley raised the issue of whether scheduling Council meetings on the morning of the day conferences open was optimal, in that it entailed travel to the meeting a day earlier than was perhaps necessary. After some discussion it was agreed to keep the traditional time.

11.. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 AM.