

## 2024 MSSA Business Meeting Minutes

Westin Convention Center, Pittsburgh PA

Friday, Oct. 18th, 12:15 pm

Room: Butler East

Officers Attending:

Ryan Cragun (Treasurer), Jana Riess (Past President), Johannah Palomo (Student Board Member), Spencer Greenhalgh (Secretary), Levi Sands (Student Board Member), Thomas Murphy (President), Scott Vance (Board Member), Nancy Ross (President-Elect)

Meeting began at 12:26pm.

1. Land Acknowledgement (Thomas Murphy) [12:26pm]
  - a. We are meeting on the traditional lands of Iroquoian and Algonquian speaking peoples, particularly those of Senecas, Shawnees, and Lenapes
  - b. Remember the ninety-six Delaware-Mahicans who lost their lives at Gnaddenhütten to our west in March of 1782 at the hands of the Pennsylvania militia from nearby Fort Pitt
  
2. Welcome and Introductions (Thomas Murphy) [12:27pm]
  - a. Current MSSA Officers
    - i. Thomas Murphy, President (through 10/25)
    - ii. Nancy Ross, President-Elect (through 10/25)
    - iii. Jana Riess, Past President (through 10/25)
    - iv. Ryan Cragun, Treasurer (through 10/25)
    - v. Spencer Greenhalgh, Secretary (through 10/25)
    - vi. Christine Cusack, Communications (through 10/25)
    - vii. Rick Phillips, At-large board member (through 10/25)
    - viii. Cristina Rosetti, At-large board member (through 10/25)
    - ix. David Heap, At-large board member (through 10/25)
    - x. Scott Vance, At-large board member (through 10/25)
    - xi. Johannah Palomo, At-large student board member (through 10/25)
    - xii. Levi Sands, At-large student board member (through 10/25)

3. Membership report (Spencer Greenhalgh) [12:31pm]

\* 75 subscriptions to mailing list

\* ~ 55 people open each newsletter

\* 45 dues paying members

none of these measurements is a perfect representation of membership, but taken together, they give us a rough idea

I will be reviewing the mailing list soon and pestering people to renew membership

4. Financial report (Ryan Cragun) [12:33pm]

\$2,589 in our checking account

over \$83,000 in our investment account, largely thanks to a generous donation to help set up the JMSSA

5. Report on MSSA Journal (Thomas Murphy, Spencer Greenhalgh, & Rick Phillips in absentia) [12:33pm]

- a. The website has been redesigned and volume two has been published. Spencer designed the site so that new articles and volumes can be added easily.
- b. For volume 3 we currently have the Vernon lecture in the last stages of copyediting, and it will be posted soon. Two articles are under review, and two book reviews have been commissioned. We're hoping MSSA members will submit papers.
- c. We continue to pay a \$500 honorarium for every published article.

Tom clarified that honoraria are not available to board members; however, Ryan also clarified that a single person can receive multiple honoraria.

Spencer and Jana also mentioned that JMSSA could use reviewers for papers.

Carrie asked about print copies of the journal. Ryan shared his best recollection of Rick's take, that we have the technical capacity to do this, but we're not clear on what the demand would be or how much it would cost us.

6. Nominations for Gary and Gordon Shepherd Graduate Student Paper Award (Thomas Murphy) [12:37]

Nominations go to the board for review, and there needs to be a copy of the paper. The process for nomination is to inform Tom, and to get from the graduate student a copy of the paper that's being nominated. Graduate students can also self-nominate by sending a paper to Tom. This all needs to be done by the end of the month so that the board can review things.

Spencer asked for clarification: Are these published papers or conference papers? Tom and Ryan clarified that these do not need to be published. Johannah asked if MSSA presentations from previous years could be submitted this time around, and there was support for this.

7. Nominations for future officers (terms to begin 10/25) [12:40]

Officers are on a two-year system; leadership will roll over at MSSA 2025.

Tom invited nominations, starting with board members who are interested in or willing to continue in their positions. By April 2026, we will send out electronic ballots to dues-paying members who will vote on candidates with plenty of time to hold the election

Ryan clarified that Secretary and Treasurer are appointed positions.

Tom invited nominations for President-Elect to start in 2025.

Scott Vance raised the possibility of Spencer Greenhalgh starting as President-Elect. Spencer said that he's open to this, but that Rick is also interested in having him do more at the journal, and that doing both might be too much to take on.

Tom and Ryan clarified that nominations can come later.

Tom invited nominations for board members.

Johannah self-nominated as a board member.

After a question from Spencer, Ryan clarified that Secretary, Treasurer, and Communications Officer are all appointed from among the board members.

Spencer and Ryan both self-nominated to continue on the board. Ryan nominated Jana to continue as a board member after her service as Past President concludes, and she accepted.

8. One day MSSA conference at UTU? (Nancy Ross) [12:47]

Nancy mentioned that the Juanita Brooks conference is going to move to Utah State, after Christina Rosetti's departure. However, there is still a Juanita Brooks lecture, and Nancy is still interested in holding a one-day MSSA conference at Utah Tech in April 2025. She mentioned that a CFP will be coming out eventually. We don't have a date for this yet, but Nancy doesn't see a reason not to hold the conference. People have previously come from as far away as Southern California and Idaho for the conference.

Sujej asked what days the conference would be scheduled for. Nancy mentioned that it has typically been on a Friday, but Ryan clarified that we have more flexibility now that we aren't tied to the Juanita Brooks conference.

9. 2025 Glen Vernon Lecture next year in Minneapolis (Oct. 31-Nov. 2) (Discussion)

As a memorial to Glen Vernon, one of the founders of the MSSA, we do an every-other-year, honorarium-supported lecture from someone.

Ryan noted that we don't have a lot of money, but if there's someone "local" that we can bring in, that would be really helpful.

Jana suggested Taylor Petrey, who's not in Minneapolis but in the broader Midwest.

David Campbell is in Indiana and could also present.

Mckayla Horton Thatcher is a local author who recently wrote *Beehive Girl*.

Michael Ing is based in Indiana as well. His recent work has been on Hawaiian Mormon literature.

10. Conference Reminders [12:56pm]

- a. MSSA adjacent sessions listed in newsletter and [blog](#)
- b. MSSA affinity group - Friday, Oct. 18, 8:30 pm, in Butler East

Carrie noted that sometimes we have 5 people, sometimes we have a couple dozen. This is a good opportunity to make connections, and she encourages people to attend.

- c. Informal no-host dinner (Rick normally selects a restaurant but is unable to attend this year, any volunteers? Spencer is collecting a [survey](#).)

17 people raised hands, and we know of 3 others who would like to attend.

We'll meet by the fireplace in the hotel lobby at 6pm on Saturday.

Henri recommended the Barcelona wine bar.

- d. Sunday afternoon, following Jason Palmer's book panel, Tom will lead a walk from the hotel to and from Fort Pitt (stopping for light lunch en route) and discuss his interpretation of the Anti-Nephi-Lehi massacre in the Book of Mormon as an allegorical inversion of the slaughter at Gnaddenhütten.

We will meet at 12:30, again by the fireplace in the hotel lobby.

The meeting concluded around 1pm.