



Mentor

The corporate newsletter of Arisia, Incorporated

Volume 10, Issue 80

January 1998

Minutes of the January Meeting

Time: January 18, 1998 at 5:08 PM.

Location: Westin Hotel, Waltham MA

In Attendance: Drea Brandford, Amy Chused, Glen Goodwin, Adam Gratun, Joel Herda, Jeff Jordan, Walter Kahn, Zanne Labonville, Ben Levy, Pat McCormack, Elka Tovah Menkes, Skip Morris, Brendan Quinn, Noel Rosenberg, Diane Rosenburg, Paul Selkirk, Nick Shectman, Cris Shuldiner, Keith McCormic (Red Shirt), Kara Savoia (Red Shirt), Tom Murphy (Red Shirt), Christopher Amshey (Red Shirt), Jim Wolf (non-member), Evan Jamison (non-member), Randy Smith (non-member from Nebraska)

• Proxies

Kyle Hollingsworth to Brendan Quinn, Scott Cobb to Brendan Quinn, Scott Campanella to Drea Brandford.

• President's Report

We had a convention. A preliminary report indicates that we didn't lose too much money.

The corporation authorized \$500 for permanent signage. We ended up going a little over budget; the final bill was \$1219.90. On the bright side, I estimate these signs will last us 20 years. MOVED to authorize the expenditure of \$1219.90 for permanent signage. Motion PASSED.

• Vice President's Report

We had a convention, and my brain is now tapioca.

The Grant Committee met to consider a grant request from 5Con. *[Editor's note: 5Con is the 5-Colleges convention, held this year on April 3-5 at Smith College in Northampton MA. For more information, see www.smith.edu/ssffs/5con.]* After some discussion, we revised the request amount, and recommend a grant of \$1980.36 for GOH and Program expenses. MOVED to authorize a grant of \$1980.36 to 5Con. Motion PASSED.

(At this point, the president urged all corporate members and staff members to help run 5Con.)

• Treasurer's Report

We've had 2 requests to borrow equipment. Buccaneer wants to borrow our art show panels. They will handle transport, and will pay us \$500 if they make money. We've also just spent \$1200 on ballroom cabling and video cables for the live cable feed, and we may want to lend them to Lunacon, Balticon, and Buccaneer.

• Clerk's Report

Everyone is reminded to sign in.

Everyone who is giving a report is requested to submit it in writing or email to the clerk, or suffer gross transcription errors.

• Budget Committee

No report.

• Arisia 1997

BankBoston has provided us with half the missing statements.

• Arisia 1998

We had a convention, but it's not over yet; everyone please help clean up. We'd like to close the books today, and turn it over to the Eboard, but I'm afraid we'd be lynched.

• Arisia 1998 Treasury

We've got money coming in, and money going out. I'll have an expense report by March at the latest. I was directed to keep it under \$50K total, and \$10K in the red. It looks like we may be more like \$4K in the red.

• Arisia 1999

We have a GOH, Roger McBride Allan.

MOVED to set dealers rates at whatever they were at Arisia '98. TABLED to a later meeting.

MOVED to authorize the Arisia 1998 committee to reproduce the con video, and to distribute it to Arisia members and the general public at cost. TABLED to the Eboard.

- **Arisia 1999 Hotel Search Committee** (Skip Morris)
(Note: This is a combination of information Emailed to the corporate EMail list plus the verbal info reported at the last business meeting at the con.)

At the last meeting, a straw poll of the membership showed very strong interest in the big Boston hotels, strong interest in Providence and Braintree, some interest in Danvers and Newport, and no interest in Hartford,

I've spent the last month making lots of phone calls and driving around and visiting many sites and hotels. I've made site visits to the Sheraton Tara/Braintree, Several hotels in Providence, and several hotels in Newport.

Quick Summary:

- Out: Sheraton Boston, Newport, Braintree.
- Pending (i.e., not sure if feasible, still talking, etc.): Park Plaza, Marriott/Copley and Royal Sonesta/Marlborough (a recent suggestion).
- In: (i.e., what's left of possible locations): Danvers/Sheraton Tara, Westin/Copley, Westin/Waltham (alone), Waltham Westin & Doubletree (together), and Providence Biltmore & Westin (together).

Boston/Park Plaza: Cris has called many times. We're not sure about the status of their renovations, and they haven't returned phone calls.

Boston/Marriott Copley: I've called several times. An administrative assistant filled out a "form" listing our needs, etc., but no one from sales has gotten back to me.

Boston/Sheraton: Is in the process of renovating currently. From Dec. '97 to June '98 half of their rooms are unavailable. From Dec. '98 to June '99 the other half of the rooms plus ALL of their function space will be off-line. They *are* interested and available for Arisia '00 however, but will probably have high room rates ('98 rates are \$145 single/\$160 double for this time of year). Lack of availability for A'99 mean they are out.

Boston/Westin Copley: They're interested. They've sent us a contract. The initial offer was \$139/\$159 single/double. We've since talked them down to \$119 single or double. This hotel has lots of rooms and lots of function space. It is a little upscale and prices can be expected to rise ten percent every year as is per standard in Boston. Other costs will be high as well such as parking, etc.

My conclusion: Overall this hotel is the best site for a traditional Arisia with the only disadvantage being the cost. Pat M. has suggested we try to negotiate a multi-year contract to guarantee a price over a several year period.

Danvers Sheraton/Tara: This hotel is located off Route 1/I-93 northwest of Boston about a 10 minute drive from the intersection of Route 1 and 128. It was used for a "BosClone" convention the year before Noreascon 2 (1980). It also used to be a Radisson. It has good function space but is short of hotel rooms. There are no overflow hotels nearby. The local commuter rail station is a distance away, but the hotel is ready

to try and mitigate this problem by running a shuttle and reimbursing attendees for the cost of commuter rail tickets. They're offered us rates of \$85 single or double, \$95 triple, and \$105 quad.

My conclusion: This site would be ruled out except that they're willing to make special arrangements to try and solve the transportation problem. We still need to look at the overflow hotel room problem as well.

Waltham/Westin: The hotel from this year really liked us and wants us back. We could either repeat the convention as we did this year (which would mean a \$10,000 cut in the con budget), or work it as a two hotel convention using the Doubletree across 128 as a second function hotel (requiring a constant bus shuttle between both hotels).

My conclusion: They liked us, we liked them. Returning here either alone or as a two hotel con is a workable option.

Waltham/Doubletree: This hotel is directly across Route 128 from the Westin. It has 275 rooms. It is a suite hotel with every room effectively a two room mini suite. The second floor mezzanine area has most of the rooms arranged around a big open hospitality area that would be ideal for parties and the Dealer's Row. The function space includes a medium sized ballroom, a few other medium rooms, and a couple smaller rooms. It could effectively hold the Art Show, Huckster's Room and several smaller functions such as Video Theater, Gaming, etc. Rates for this hotel tend to be in the \$99-\$119 for a suite. We don't have an offer yet, but we're still talking and they are talking to the Westin.

My conclusion: This hotel would be a work good in combination with the Westin. We would free up hotel rooms, ballroom space and several other rooms in the Westin to alleviate the crowding problems. The downside is that we would need to have a reliable bus shuttle leaving every few minutes between both hotels, plus we would need a video link strong enough to send a signal the 2200 feet between both hotels which can be expensive.

Braintree: The Sheraton there has slightly over 350 rooms. It has OK function space. One large ballroom and some smaller rooms. Basically the hotel is very similar to the Waltham Westin. However there are no overflow hotels any where within walking distance. There is *one* small Days Inn a short drive down the road. Driving access is good right off 128. Public transit access seems nonexistent. Local area is nice, right across the street from the South Shore Mall(?), lotsa restaurants, etc.

My conclusion: Functions space too small, not enough hotel rooms, no overflow opportunities nearby, public transit access limited all mean this location is ruled out.

Providence: There are four big hotels in the downtown area. Two of them, the Westin and the Biltmore are across the street from each other. (Walking between them is similar to walking from the Park Plaza to the Castle.) The Holiday Inn is down the street, and the Marriott (which I didn't visit) is about 1/2 mile

away or so. The Westin is part of a larger complex which includes the Rhode Island Convention Center plus a large parking garage (2700 car capacity). I've talked to the sales department of both the Westin and the Biltmore. Both hotels are "wide open" for MLK weekend '99 and seem anxious to deal. Both hotels have sent us initial proposals. Function space is excellent between them both and the adjoining RI Convention Center is also huge. We could either use the function space in the Biltmore and Westin alone, or use the Westin in combination with the Convention Center. The hotels are located right off I-95 exit 22. Driving there from the intersection of Rt. 128 & the Mass Pike took me 45 minutes. The initial rate offered by the Westin \$115/room (Note: We haven't tried to negotiate it down yet). The front desk also told me that they've seen convention rates as low as \$100/night during the past year. The Biltmore has an interesting room mix. 136 rooms (out of 244) are "Junior Suites", with a sleeping room adjoining a living space. 83 other rooms are typical hotel rooms, and the other 25 are large suites, etc. The initial offer from the Biltmore is \$110 for standard rooms and \$130 for a junior suite. The front desk stated they've seen convention rates as low as \$89 during the past year. Parking in the adjoining garage is \$7/night. Public transit access is good. The Providence Amtrak station is diagonally across the square from the Westin/Biltmore. I didn't look for a bus station. I also didn't have time to drive around the downtown area checking out local restaurants, etc., but the area is similar in looks to the area of Boston where the Park Plaza is.

My conclusion: The Westin/Biltmore would be a usable combination. There are enough rooms to hold Arisia, function space is more than adequate even if you don't count the convention center. Prices are higher than we would like, but are still within acceptable limits. Access via driving and public transit is excellent. Parking is easy and cheap as well.

Newport: A large number of hotels in the downtown area. All within a 1 to 10 minute walk apart. Unfortunately the largest hotels were the farthest apart, it took me 10 minutes to walk from the Viking to the Marriott. The Marriott would be a great hotel for daytime programming, Art Show, Hucksters, etc. The Viking for evening activities since it has the ballroom with 10,000 square feet. Marriott has 317 rooms, Viking 184 rooms. The Newport Harbor hotel is usable as well, it's about 250 yards from the Marriott. It has 133 rooms and some function space. The Doubletree (another long walk in the opposite direction) has 268 rooms and good function space as well. There are a number of smaller hotels (50-100 rooms each) in the area as well. Newport is accessible by bus from Boston. The bus station is next to the Marriott. The downtown area of Newport is great. It's filled with interesting shops, restaurants, museums, etc. Driving time is about 1.5 hours from Boston. There is a large (cheap) city parking garage/lot next to the Marriott.

My conclusion is that Newport is usable only as a last resort. The city is too far from Boston, public transport

access is limited, the functions would have to be spread among at least 2 hotels, but the hotels are too far apart to make a distributed convention easily manageable without a shuttle bus.

A discussion was held and the Hotel Search Committee (Skip and Cris) answered questions about each location. Skip requested a straw poll as to what all the folks present (voting members plus con attendees) thought about each hotel and whether or not we should continue discussions with each site.

Most locations (Danvers, Westin/Copley, Westin/Waltham, Westin + Doubletree, Park Plaza, and Royal Sonesta Marlboro) received strong support for continuing to talk. The group was split evenly on Providence, and strongly against the Marriott Copley. Another straw poll show that out of about 20-25 people present, about 5-7 would NO LONGER STAY in the hotel if we were in a more expensive site such as the Westin/Copley in Boston.

MOVED: Hotel Search Committee to setup sites visits to all viable sites (viability to be determined by the EBoard). Motion PASSED.

- **Corporate Inventory Control**

We have some stuff in storage, and we have a lot of stuff here. If anyone has any Arisia property at home, let me know, and we'll arrange to get it to storage.

- **Corporate Sales**

Not present [position still vacant].

- **Records Task Force**

I think we have the last of the stuff from Marshall. At some point we'll get together to sift through it.

- **Meeting Adjourned** at 6:18 PM due to the fact that we should have been out of the room 15 minutes ago. No old business, new business, or announcements. Sorry.

More Hotel Information

Skip has put together a comparison grid of all of our current hotel options. This includes some information that has come out since the January business meeting.

The February business meeting is likely to be dominated by hotel discussions, so it would be helpful if you would honor the work he's put into it by at least glancing at it (or squinting at it, as the case may be) before the meeting.

Calendar of Events

Sunday, January 25, 1998, 2:00 PM

Arisia 1998 Concom Debriefing
Building 66, MIT, Cambridge.

February 13-15, 1998

Boskone 35
Sheraton Tara Hotel, Framingham MA

Sunday, February 22, 1998, 2:00 PM

Arisia Corporate Meeting
Building 66, MIT, Cambridge.

March 20-22, 1998

Lunacon '98
Rye Town Hilton, Rye Brook NY

April 3-5, 1998

5Con 6
Seelye Hall, Smith College, Northampton MA

April 10-12, 1998

Balticon 32
Baltimore Omni Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore MD

Executive Board

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Arisia 1999 Treasurer:

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Committee Members & Corporate Appointed Officers

Budget Committee:

Skip Morris (chair)
Pat McCormack

Awards Committee:

vacant

Grant Committee:

Brendan Quinn (chair)
Drea Brandford
Elka Tovah Menkes

Committee

Corporate Sales Officer:

vacant

Corp. Inventory Control Officer:

Ken Elwell

Corp. Systems Administrator:

Cris Shuldiner

Arisia Audit Fund:

Ben Levy

Records Task Force:

Ben Levy (chair)
Ailsa Murphy
Kyle Hollingsworth

Long Range Planning

Kim Van Auken
Kyle Hollingsworth
Scott Cobb

Membership Roster

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Agassi, Aaron (Red Shirt) | Amshey, Christopher (Red Shirt) |
| Bazemore, Rob | Brandford, Drea |
| Campanella, Scott | Cantor, Dave A. |
| Chinsen-Lee, Tsuilian (Red Shirt) | Chused, Amy |
| Coapstick, Clara (Red Shirt) | Cobb, Scott |
| Cooper, Brian | Ellis, Marshall |
| Fallon, Kevin | Fish, Tom |
| Flynn, George | Goodwin, Glen |
| Gratun, Adam | Herda, Joel |
| Hollingsworth, Kyle | Jordan, Jeff |
| Kahn, Walter | Kent, Allan |
| Labonville, Zanne | Levy, Benjamin |
| McCormack, Patrick | McCormic, Keith (Red Shirt) |
| Menkes, Elka Tovah | Morris, Skip |
| Murphy, Ailsa | Murphy, Tom (Red Shirt) |
| Quinn, Brendan | Robison, Mary |
| Rosenberg, Noel | Rosenburg, Diane |
| Saroff, Matthew | Savoia, Kara (Red Shirt) |
| Selkirk, Paul | Sheckman, Nicholas |
| Shuldiner, Cris | Silverman, Rachel |
| Van Auken, Kimberly | Vandenberg, Pat |

Membership/Subscription Info

Subscriptions to Mentor of Arisia are included in Corporate membership to Arisia, Incorporated. Membership runs from September 1st to August 31st and costs \$24.00. Dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for members joining during the year.

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|-----------------|-------------|--------|------|
| September | \$24 | March | \$12 |
| October | \$22 | April | \$10 |
| November | \$20 | May | \$08 |
| December | \$18 | June | \$06 |
| January | \$16 | July | \$04 |
| February | \$14 | August | \$02 |