

MSERA Fall Board Meeting
February 5, 2024
Doubletree - Chattanooga, TN

Officers Present: George Noflin, Stefanie Sorbet, Tina Allen, Sherry Shaw, Randy Parker (non-voting), Rebecca Robichaux-Davis (non-voting), Charlie Notar, Nancy Hamilton, Raglena Salmons, Ashley Wicker, Donald Snead, Kasey Warren, Rochelle Felix, Mary Giles, Tony Latiker, Jane Nell Luster, Mindy Waldrop

Officers Absent: Mark Haley, Sarah Salisbury

Committee Chairs Present: Larry Daniel, Dustin Whitlock, Kelly Byrd, Kecia Hawkins, Eric Oslund, Lisette Manuel, Earlisha Whitfield

George Noflin, President, called meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Welcome & Overview

- George welcomed everyone and went over the agenda.

Executive Director's Report

Randy reported the following actions since his previous report last spring:

- Received and deposited all funds into checking account in a timely manner
- Dispersed all invoiced payments in a timely manner
- Reviewed and reconciled all checking account statements monthly
- Renewed Bonding of MSERA Checking Account Signatories through October 2025.
- Maintained and updated 2024 Membership and Annual Meeting Registration Databases
- Coordinated with the Webmaster on the posting of MSERA information on the Association website
- Replied to inquiries and requests by Officers, Directors, and members in a timely manner.
- Worked with President, Webmaster and Program Chairs to secure use of the Oxford Abstracts System and coordinated the use of the system for 2024 Program Submission and Development, and Managed Annual Meeting Pre-Registration.
- Worked with the Program Chair and President in developing and finalizing the 2024 Annual Meeting Program and Schedule of Events
- Negotiated with the Doubletree-Downtown Chattanooga to schedule facility room use/setup; food/beverage service, and contracted Audio/Visual services for 2024 Annual Meeting.
- Negotiated with the Hilton-St. Charles (New Orleans) to complete and sign the contract for MSERA 2025.
- Negotiated with the Embassy Suites – Huntsville to complete and sign the contract for MSERA 2026.
- Coordinated with MSERF Officers to receive MSERF funds to support MSERA Website and to provide MSERF Donations received to the MSERF.
- Assisted the University Student Committee Chair and MSERF Members in the identification of 2024 Outstanding RIP Award Applicants.

- Coordinated with the Development Committee and State Directors to secure Institutional Memberships and Sponsorships for 2024.
- Coordinated with the MSERA President and Universities to secure one (1) Exhibiting Institution and two (2) Program Advertisements for the 2024 Annual Meeting.
- Worked with the Faculty and Administration of Mississippi State University to facilitate MSU's Full Sponsorship of the 2024 MSERA University Student/First Time Attendee Social.
- Worked with the University Student Committee and Local Arrangements Committee Chairs to coordinate Annual Meeting Activities.
- Secured All 2024 Award Plaques and Certificates.
- Secured all registration supplies and materials for the 2024 Annual Meeting.
- Represented MSERA at the Celebration of the Life of Sharon McLean – wife of our good friend and colleague James E. (Jim) McLean.

He stressed that a continued effort should be made to increase the number Institutional Memberships and Sponsorships for future Annual Meetings.

Sherry Shaw made a motion that a search committee be established for a successor for the Executive Director. Nancy Hamilton seconded. Motion passed.

Financial Report

Randy gave the following financial report for FY 2024:

Beginning Balance 1/1/24	\$10,989.66
2024 Income to Date	36,818.05
Total Expenses to Date	31,940.05
Expected Balance 11/9/24	\$15,867.66

Motion by Charlie Notar to accept the final statement as reported; second by Ashley Wicker. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes from Spring Board Meeting

Minutes from Spring Board Meeting were presented – no approval needed at this meeting

Ad Hoc Committee – Timelines for The Researcher – Jane Nell Luster

- Jane Nell reported that the original name was The Mid South Educational Researcher. She reviewed some of the items from the initial issues.
- There was discussion about what the purpose of the publication is and what should be the name.
 - Rebecca stated she considers it a benefit of membership and likes the idea of 4 issues per year. She also stated that it would be nice to have at least one thing in each issue that “someone would want to read.”
 - Tony if it is a newsletter, we should want to get to largest audience possible.
 - Several ideas were suggested for a new title. MSERA Today was selected.

- Contents should include “normal” stuff as well as additional education information with 4 issues per year.

Jane Nell made a motion that we have a call for an editor and that the current ad hoc committee submit the proposed call to the Exec committee for approval by the end of the annual meeting. Mary Giles seconded. Motion passed.

Ad Hoc Committee – Ethics – Larry Daniel

Larry presented a proposed Commitment to Professionalism and Code of Ethics along with a proposed Grievance Procedure for violation of the codes. Stefanie will put the documents in a google doc so that board members can comment and questions can be resolved with the intent of taking a vote at the Spring 2026 board meeting.

Program Committee

- George thanked Dustin and Earlisha for their work on the program.
- Dustin presented an overview of proposals submitted (204) and accepted (169) and a breakdown of types of sessions; 63 reviewers. 195 unique institutions represented.

Registration and Meeting Room Locations

- There are currently 207 paid (or expected to be paid) registrations.
- Randy went over the check-in and registration process. Will need assistance with attendee check-in prior to opening in the morning.

Technology

- Kasey will have some adaptors available and will be floating around if anyone has technology issues.

University Student Committee

- The committee has planned and organized activities for the new student reception, and reached out to university students, encouraging participation in conference.
- It was suggested that the organization possibly establish a scholarship that would pay registration for university students.

Local Arrangement/Events

Kasey Warren and Mary Giles, committee co-chairs reported they began work in August securing local information and silent auction items and door prizes for new member/student meetings. There will be a QR code in each goodie bag that will open a document that contains local information.

Kasey also reported that several social events have been planned for the conference.

Keynote Luncheon/Keynote Q&A

George reported that he has spoken with the keynote speaker and she is on her way. He conveyed how excited he is to have her here.

Nominations/Elections

Sherry reported that we have one nomination for each office that is open. She reminded everyone that nominations will be taken from the floor, but that each nomination needs support of the nominator and three others.

Evaluation Committee

Tony Latiker reported that the evaluations committee has prepared three surveys, a presider survey, annual conference satisfaction survey and individual session evaluations.

- There are QR codes that link to each survey.
- These will be printed and placed in each presentation room as well as a few extras in the registration area.

Outstanding Papers

Stefanie gave an update on the Outstanding Paper awards and encouraged everyone to attend the presentations of the winner on Friday morning.

Operations Manual

Stefanie gave out copies of revisions to the Operations Manual and went over the requested changes.

Raglena Salmons made a motion, with Charlie Notar seconding to accept proposed changes.
Motion passed.

RIP Awards

Kelly reported there were 10 RIP proposals who were sent information to apply for the award; of those 8 responded and will be receiving the award.

MSERA Service Awards

Will be awarded at the business meeting.

Silent Auction

Sherry thanked everyone who donated or solicited items. The auction will end on Thursday at noon.

There was discussion about whether to continue the silent auction, what the proceeds would be used for, and who would be responsible for coordinating it in the future.

George appointed Mindy Waldrop to chair an ad hoc committee that will report back at the spring board meeting.

Future Sites

Kelly reported the Hilton St. Charles in New Orleans has been secured for the 2025 Annual Meeting.

She visited Huntsville this summer and was treated like royalty. The Embassy Suites Hotel and Spa in Huntsville has been secured for the Annual Meeting to be held Nov. 3-6, 2026.

The following items need to be considered:

- Secure state for MSERA 2027 – rotation is set for Pensacola, FL. Will need to send out proposal 18 months prior to meeting

Publications

Tina reminded the board that prior to the fall board meeting last year, she announced that she would be stepping down as editor of The Researcher. Lisette Manual expressed interest in taking over as editor of The Researcher, and since that time, she has been working with Tina as co-editor during 2024 to learn the requirements of the position.

Mentors

Larry reported that there will be one MSERA mentor session included in the 2024 meeting, which he will chair.

He also reported that no one monitored the request link on the website, so there was no follow-up with those wanting to mentor or be mentored.

He announced that none of the current committee members are able to maintain commitment to MSERA mentors, and he requested that the President appoint a new MSERA Mentors chair for 2025.

MSER Foundation

Larry reported that in Fall 2023 the Foundation did an overhaul of its By-Laws to account for needed updates, changes in board structure, and clarification of certain procedures. A strategic plan was introduced but tabled due to other more pressing matters.

He announced that the board did a soft launch of a challenge gift and raised approximately \$300.

He also reported that the Foundation maintains a fund balance of approximately \$34,000 and has agreed to continue to support the RIP awards, the McLean Outstanding Paper award winter, MSERA web hosting, and other reasonable requests from MSERA.

Membership

The Membership Committee reported they were there to support state directors when needed, but there was a need to come up with additional ideas for how to recruit members.

Constitution and Bylaws

Rod Uzat was absent/no report

Historian

Rebecca reported on her actions for the previous year. She also reminded everyone that she will need minutes from the 2024 Spring and Fall MSERA Board Meetings, electronic copies of Committee Reports shared with the board, the membership as of December 15, 2024, roster of the 24-25 Officers and other members of the leadership team, an electronic copy of the Financial Reports and the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting, which will occur on Thursday, Nov. 7.

Webmaster

Ashley reported that she had performed a website audit to identify duplicated and erroneous information and made updates where appropriate. She requested to let her know if anyone sees anything that needs to be updated.

NEW BUSINESS

A search committee for the new editor of The Researcher was appointed. This committee will consist of Jane Nell as chair along with the 2025 Executive Committee.

There being no further business, Raglena Salmons moved the meeting adjourn. Second by Charlie Notar. Motion passed. Adjourned at 4:51 p.m.