

OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES!

Southern States Communication Association Conference 2024 **Communication Theory and Methodology Division Business Meeting**

Chair: Quinten Bernhold (on Zoom), *University of Tennessee*

Vice Chair: Kelly Morrison, *University of Alabama, Birmingham*

Secretary: Steven McCornack, *University of Alabama, Birmingham*

Attendees: Jenny Crowley, Jen Kopfman, Leah LeFebvre, Emily Scheinfeld, Dennis McCarty, Michael Kotowski, Leonard Ali Wako Memon, Tim Levine, Shelley Wigley, Marley Schrauth, Charla Markham Shaw, Curt Anderson,

Prior to the beginning of the meeting a terrible “spoiler” was revealed: the “New Business” is that Emily Scheinfeld is married! Much celebratory hooting and hollering followed this extraordinary revelation. Kelly Morrison then issued the proclamation that all longed for but feared would never occur: “let it be known that the meeting has commenced!” Frightening tapping of the gavel stunned those present; after which Kelly promised, “everyone gets a gavel and a muffin!” She then clarified what many had long suspected: that she “is not Quentin [Bernhold].” She then lauded all of his hard work; after which Jenny Crowley waived the “Certificate of Appreciation” toward the screen where Quentin was (on Zoom). Emily suggested that Jenny would “photoshop it and put it in her office,” after which Jenny boasted that “she already had two.”

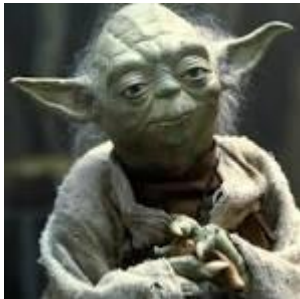
A motion was then presented and seconded to approve the minutes from 2023; and the minutes were unanimously approved. Jen Kopfman described them as “the best she had read in a long time.”

It then was noted that the division had eight total submissions which were read by three reviewers; and there was a 100% acceptance rate. In terms of programming, we had six slots and a co-sponsored roundtable with health; and the latter was “well attended and received.” Kelly described “the joy of the business meeting.” Our next conference will be in Norfolk Virginia; and will feature “a naval theme tied to anchoring.” Jenny declared “Anchors Away!” and much discussion ensued regarding “anchors” and “anchoring communication.” Emily exclaimed “Lord have mercy,” then noted how they “accidentally gave her a big room that she isn’t paying for.”

Kelly reported on the executive council meeting discussions of the “strategic communication director” and “marketing director” positions; then lamented that “we can’t clone Kevin Bryant;” as he is doing everything including retention, fundraising, and internal/external communication. The financial status of the organization is “very VERY strong!” A resolution on cease-fire for Gaza was discussed, and a Task Force committee will pursue this further.

Jenny then waived Quentin’s Certificate of Appreciation around again, for all to see. The Top Student Paper Award for the division was awarded to Leonard Ali Wako Memon. Leonard hugged the laptop with Quentin on screen; after which Jenny praised his “thoughtful hug.” The top faculty paper went to Shelley Wigley & Michel Haigh. Quentin gave Shelley a thumbs-up from his screen; and Kelly thanked the readers and attendees; then noted that she “had gone out of order and we need a parliamentarian.”

Kelly noted that “we’re holding steady as a division” and that “we want to keep our division happy and holding strong.” To facilitate this, she inquired as to whether “anyone wants a pre-election muffin?” Shooting carp in a barrel was discussed. Kelly pushed muffins again. The “Vice Chair Elect” position was raised, after which Kelly asked Jenny if she wanted to describe it. Mike Kotowski cautioned that “it’s best to not tell people in advance.” Jenny discussed “dipping back in the carp barrel;” then nominated Mike. Emily also was nominated; after which speeches were called for; but Jen called to close nominations. Leah Lefebvre argued “age before beauty” for the speaking order. Emily then declined her nomination, and Mike accepted his. Steve McCornack clarified what many already had suspected: that the 2023 minutes “almost had been edited, due to McCornack household discord.” Kelly noted that, “she had suffered the outcomes of Steve’s ribald minutes for years and was being sensitive to those less jovial than our division members.” Steve clarified that he had “sent them to reviewers,” and Jenny – using Yoda-like syntax – proclaimed, “send them, I say!”



Mike ominously warned that “the division didn’t die under my first tenure, so it WILL during my second!” Despite this fear appeal (or perhaps because of it) he then was unanimously elected; after which much gleeful and celebratory shouting ensued. Emily pondered “understanding things, life.” Dennis McCarty will plan Norfolk, Mike will plan Birmingham. The 2028 conference will be Houston, Little Rock, or Memphis.

The presence of any new business was queried. Kelly wished “the speed with which the meeting was run to be noted for the record;” then asked the question all attendees REALLY wanted answered: where did Quentin get his walnut kitchen cabinets? Paneling attendance and preferences were discussed; as were posters and coffee time. Posters were judged as “a great thing.” General consensus ensued regarding “more opportunities for dialogue and interaction.

Emily noted how business meetings used to be stacked, instead of overlapped, which made attendance easier. Hybrid meetings were discussed, and Kelly noted it would take a constitutional change. Density on panels was debated, after which Jenny boldly declared, “bring on the papers and the density!” Ways to encourage submissions and the quality of locations were discussed. Jenny suggested inviting students from local universities. Kelly asked whether there were any other weddings; then tried to get Quentin to virtually pass the gavel. Jenny physically passed the gavel. A motion to adjourn was offered, seconded, and passed at precisely 4:46 – making the meeting only 31 minutes long!! And not a single muffin was touched.