

# ACM History Committee Meeting Minutes, February 15, 2021 (v. 1)

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## Welcome (Owens)

- Meeting began at 11:00am EDT / 8:00am PDT via Zoom

## 1. Attendees (Owens)

- Barbara Boucher Owens (chair)
- Vicki Almstrum
- Carol Hutchins
- Roy Levin
- Sachin Maheshwari
- Mary Whitton
- Erik Rau
- Jeffrey Yost
- Chuck House (guest)

### ***Not present***

- David Brock
- Ursula Martin
- Kim Tracy (teaching class)
- Amanda Wick

## 2. Minutes from January 2021 meeting (Almstrum)

- Tabled discussion and approval of the January 2021 minutes until the March meeting due to late distribution.

## 3. Committee membership changes (Owens)

- After the January meeting, Bernadette Longo stepped down from the History Committee due to increased administrative responsibilities.
- Barbara has several candidates we might invite as new members for the History Committee. We will discuss this during the March meeting to decide whom to invite.

## 4. Fellowship (Tracy, Rau)

- Fellowship proposals are due February 15, the date of this meeting.
- As of about February 5, there were no applications. Kim, Erik, and Mary put out additional encouragement for applications. Unclear how many proposals we netted.
- Roy noted that most ACM awards had lower numbers of applicants this year.
- The fellowship subcommittee will process any applications that we receive by the deadline and will make recommendations. During the March meeting, we will discuss their recommendations.

## 5. Status of Turing update (Levin)

- No updates on the Turing project during the past month.
- Roy discussed the project budget with Erik. They agreed to keep it at the same level for the next fiscal year.

## 6. IT Support letter (Almstrum)

- Vicki has made progress by collecting all of the pieces of input that have been offered via email. The hard part will be a specific “ask”.
- ACTION ITEM: Vicki will produce a draft to distribute for comments.

## 7. Web work (Tracy)

- Kim has not reported any updates.

## 8. Heritage Project + Preservation Outreach (Almstrum, Wick)

- Vicki reported that she expected to meet with Amanda the following Friday.
- Amanda will be adding the archivist’s point of view, which includes important practical steps and constraints.
- White paper is in progress.

## 9. International (Martin, Maheshwari)

- Sachin reported that one session remains with Prof Ramaswamy.
  - The most recent session did not have the focus needed for the project, so Sachin will investigate whether the recording can be edited to ensure it fits into the overall project.
  - He is working to find a practical approach to transcribing the completed recordings. He has experimented with some tools for automating this. Barbara suggested testing Otter.ai; she will email information to Sachin. Jeff mentioned that CBI has used rev.com, which produces good results and offers both an inexpensive automated option and a human option for the transcription process.
  - Roy and Erik both emphasized that using transcription services is relatively inexpensive and may be a better trade-off than expending too much time and energy on figuring out how to use automatic transcription.
  - Roy asked Sachin whether the earlier feedback for how to improve the interviews had been taken into account. Sachin reported that, while he had passed along the suggestions, the interviewer found it difficult to control the session and keep it fully on track.
- Sachin has also reflected on both budget and process for creating historical perspectives on the two individuals originally intended for this project but who have now passed.

## 10. ACM Award Video Series (House)

- After the last meeting, Roy talked to Pat Ryan about how to keep momentum going in the ACM Award Video Series. Her advice was to send a message with the ask and the

justification that makes clear that slow continuous progress is preferred over interrupting the process.

- Because this is a development fund request for three years of funding, it is of a different character than the regular budgeting process.
- Roy and Chuck will work together to develop this request.

## 11. ACM History page ([acm.org/about-acm/acm-history](http://acm.org/about-acm/acm-history)) (Almstrum)

- We discussed the purpose behind this page.
  - The current page is part of the “about ACM” section, rather than truly a history of the ACM.
  - We agreed that the attribution of the current page should be updated to remove the HC.
  - Carol pointed out the page is intended to “frame” other linked topics. She pointed us to the “About page” for the Amer Math Soc [ams.org/about-us/about](http://ams.org/about-us/about)
  - Vicki pointed out that this work could be harmonious with the work already envisioned for the SIG Heritage project.
  - Mary suggested an executive summary with a quick overview of ACM.
- Chuck recalled a similar discussion several years ago where participants agreed that this was important, but beyond the Committee’s capabilities at that time.
- Suggestion: Take this up during a longer meeting later this year.
  - A page on ACM History is definitely within the charter of the committee.
  - Strategic question: Is the History Committee interested in creating a comprehensive history of the ACM?
  - If not, is the committee interested in creating an executive summary (which would summarize something that does not yet exist)?
  - This is an important topic in the context of the Committee’s charter, what we should be doing, and how to manage that.
  - Working on this would have to be carried out as a project, with someone who “owns” it. A key question is whether we can get away with not doing it. A full-scale version of this project would probably have to be contracted out.
  - The discussions and documents on this topic are being captured in a folder called “History of ACM project” in our Operations area. Vicki suggested creating a bibliography section with annotated resources for the History Committee.

## 12. Podcast contributions (Hutchins, Rau, Yost)

- Carol shared information from a committee report by Moshe Vardi.
- The report expressed displeasure with ACMs IT support and the current iteration of the DL. he report recommended that ACM hire an additional person with expertise in DL development so the ACM DL can better reflect its goals. The report also recommended more specific attention regarding the central organization and features.
- Given the large number of videos and oral history transcripts the History Committee projects are product and the need to be able to find them (i.e. finding media that is beyond just text), this fits well with the action item regarding a letter related to IT support.

- ACTION ITEM: Carol will share this report with the committee as the basis for continued discussion.

### 13. Other business

- Distribution of Turing Video Clips announcement
  - Barbara distributed the announcement to the SIGCSE mailing list in early February and several of us reported that we had forwarded the message to our faculty. Barbara had received several enthusiastic responses.
  - ACTION ITEM: Next steps: Should we produce a nice flyer or an ad? Vicki will share a mock-up on the list.
- Mary brought up the need for revisiting the agreement between CBI and ACM. Jeff is uncertain of the details. Amanda is the person who should be involved with this.
  - ACTION ITEM: Revisit this so the situation is clear.
- SIGGRAPH archival webinar on Thursday, 2/17 -- "Preserving your legacy", where Amanda was to be a presenter. Mary will notify us when the recording is available.

### 14. Upcoming meetings

Monday, March 15, 2021, 11:00 am EDT via Zoom

### 15. Conclusion 12:00 pm EDT / 9:00 am PDT