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Trustee Report For The Second Half of 2006

The Board of Trustees had two major items to deal with in the second half of the year along with other various administrative functions to vote on. The first issue was to nominate person(s) for an "Honorary Membership". These people are non landscape architects that have significantly influenced or supported our profession. I nominated Mike Houck for this award in recognition of all the environmental education and work he has done not only in the METRO Region, but the state and beyond. He recently was one of the speakers during our lecture series this past year. He was approved along with 12 others from across the country. He joins Nancy Buley from J. Frank Schmidt Nursery and Representative Earl Blumenauer who were previously selected.

The second main topic was whether we should reallocate our investments to a more traditional, balanced portfolio to meet or exceed our fiduciary responsibilities to our members. During the previous four years, we had our funds placed in what are called Socially Responsible Investments (SRI's). The finance committee did a thorough job of research and hired an independent financial consultant to provide additional input. The bottom line indicated that the SRI Funds were not diverse enough to provide the balance necessary to meet our goals. As a result we failed to gain about \$750,000 over that four-year period compared what the traditional investment funds obtained. I voted to make the change back to these traditional funds with the knowledge that we will continue to monitor how the SRI's are doing and if it appears they become more diverse and are obtaining the returns necessary, we can revisit this decision. As a new member of the Finance committee, that will be one of my responsibilities. A majority of Trustees also felt this additional income will better allow our organization to fund issues that do educate and promote our environmental and sustainable goals.

Other Trustee actions at the Annual Meeting included: adoption of the FY 2007 Annual Operating Plan; approval of FY 2007 and 2008 operating and capital expense budgets; establishment of a new Audit Committee (I will be on this committee and also the Chair of the Professional Practice Committee) and adoption of corresponding Bylaws changes and corporate/administrative policies; discussion of 2007 legislative priorities; approval of Disaster Response Task Force recommendations for next steps toward developing an ASLA disaster response plan; and approval of a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Landscape Architecture Foundation. Another focus included issues regarding continuing education for licensure and the need for additional landscape architecture programs and program graduates.

One final item was a response to "practice what we preach" on sustainability. One Trustee requested the Board set up a committee to review how we can make our Annual Meeting more sustainable. I also requested we do the same for our whole organization. I was informed that we already do many things within our national office's operations that address this fact besides our Greenroof. I then indicated that we should document and promote this information. The Executive Committee indicated they would follow up with specifics.

Check the *NewsWire* for monthly Trustee updates or contact me directly with questions or comments.

Dave Walters