

**American Association for Public Opinion Research
Executive Council Minutes
March 10-11, 2020**

ATTENDANCE

Council In-Person:

Nora Cate Schaeffer	President
David Dutwin	Past President
Jessica Holzberg	Associate Communications Chair
Mandy Sha	Conference Chair
Allyson Holbrook	Education Committee Chair
Ipek Bilgen	Associate Membership & Chapter Relations Chair
Rene Bautista	Standards Chair
Tim Triplett	Associate Standards Chair
Mary Losch	Councilor-at-Large

Council Via Webinar:

Josh De La Rosa	Communications Chair
Gretchen McHenry	Associate Secretary-Treasurer
Dan Merkle	Vice President (Joined for part of 3/11)
Kristen Olson	Associate Conference Chair
Lydia Saad	Secretary-Treasurer
Tamara Terry	Membership & Chapter Relations Chair
G. Evans Witt	Councilor-at-Large

Guests Via Webinar:

Emily Geisen	Editor, Survey Practice
Stephanie Eckman	Chair, Code Revision Subcommittee

Unable to Attend:

Rachel Caspar	Associate Education Committee Chair
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Staff:

Delia Murphy	Executive Director
Eric Bailey	Senior Director of Communications
Melanie Goff	Program Manager, Conference and Awards
Sam Nysetvold	Program Manager, Membership and Chapter Relations
Daniel Choppa	Program Administrator, Operations and Education

**AAPOR Executive Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 10**

I. WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER, REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 9:33am ET / 8:33am CT.

Executive Council Meeting Minutes: February 18, 2020

Council reviewed the minutes from the February meeting and had no updates or changes.

MOTION: to approve the minutes. Triplett moved, Holzberg seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

II. SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

January 2020 Financial Statement

Saad reported that AAPOR is at 20% of its budget as of the January financial statement. AAPOR is \$27,000 lower in membership dues compared to this time last year. Conference revenue is down 15% from last year, likely reflecting later deadline for early bird registration this year, with a total of \$137,000 in revenue thus far.

Investments

AAPOR's investment portfolio was about \$1.8 million at the beginning of 2020, but was 1.77 million as of yesterday, a 2.7% decline, due to the drop in the market caused by COVID-19. Approximately 50% of AAPOR's portfolio is institutional bonds, which will help protect AAPOR's investments from the market crash.

Sponsorship

The AAPOR Sponsorship Committee has set a stretch goal of \$220,000 in conference sponsorship and is currently at 92%, or \$189,000. The Committee continues to work on selling some exhibit spaces. The 75th Anniversary donation page has launched on the website and is linked on the conference registration website as well.

Council decided to hold off on marketing the new 75th anniversary donation page until after COVID-19 concerns are discussed and a plan is formulated.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Schaeffer noted that the following consent reports were presented for information:

[3-20 Ed Consent.docx.pdf](#)

[AAPOR Customer Service Tracking.xlsx](#)

[Communications Consent Agenda March 2020.docx](#)

[Consent – AAPOR Scenarios 2020 0306 TO ALL.docx](#)

[Consent 2020-03-Standards.docx](#)

[Consent Conference.pdf](#)

[Group Report \(AAPOR\) February 1, 2020 – March 8, 2020.pdf](#)

[MCR 2019 2020 March Consent Report Terry.docx](#)

Customer Service Tracking

Responding to an action item from the Council January 2020 meeting, AAPOR staff created a 48-hour policy to respond, or at least acknowledge, all requests or questions from the general email inbox or phone. To monitor active improvement in customer service for AAPOR's members via the inbox and phone line, a tracking document was generated to track responses. Council agreed that the policy and tracking document are helpful and suggested some updates to expand data collection, including splitting emails between actionable and non-actionable/automatic replies. The Council also agreed that tracker should be included in future Council meeting consent agendas for at least one year to determine seasonality, track other time based insights and trends and determine how to provide better service to AAPOR members.

ACTION: Choppa will make requested updates and changes to the tracking spreadsheet to be discussed at April Council meeting.

Membership Reporting

Terry raised concerns regarding membership reports: (1) that members that did not renew for 2020 have not been dropped from the reporting and (2) the membership numbers do not equate with the financials. Nysetvold stated that AAPOR staff have recently built out a new report that will ensure the correct information is pulled.

ACTION: Choppa to redo the monthly membership reporting.

ACTION: Choppa to set up meeting with Terry and Bilgen to rework the membership data visualization to enhance readability.

Conduct Policy

In the February 2020 Council meeting, the urgency of the timeline for an update to the conduct policy was discussed. Schaeffer asked about the role of an Ombudsman, if Kellen can provide this service and at what cost.

Council agreed that the sooner a vote on the changes to the conduct policy can take place, the better. The discussion over next steps for the Conduct Policy will take place during the Council call in April, and all council members should prepare for a vote. The vote on Conduct Policy updates also needs to be scheduled for AAPOR members.

Schaeffer stated Council can vote on the policy, but leave the implementation as a separate issue. There will be a reporting procedure developed and produced by Council, led by the Standards Chair.

ACTION: Murphy to provide information and cost pricing for Kellen to serve as Ombudsman to Standards Committee Chair before April meeting.

MOTION: to accept the consent agenda, with the revisions and action items. Losch moved, Dutwin seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

IV. **AAPOINTMENTS**

Council brought forth no appointments.

V. **BYLAWS REVISION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Losch reviewed the bylaws revision recommendations already shared with Council during previous meetings and the final proposed amendments from the Committee that include suggested language from the Council.

Council held a discussion on Ad Hoc Committees and Council's desire to have all Ad Hoc Committees and other groups be given some line of accountability through a specific Standing Committee up to Council. There are currently several Committees that are not attached to Council by this line of accountability, including History, the POQ Advisory Committee, and the Diversity Coordinating Committee (DCC). Losch noted that the History Committee has been suggested to become a Subcommittee under the Education Committee to create this reporting structure and the POQ Advisory Committee could report to a Councilor at Large. The DCC reporting is more complicated.

Council debated the pros and cons of adding a seat on the Council for the DCC. The DCC as it is now, needs a clearer, more functional role and structure and the Council debated whether the DCC should first propose a structure for itself, or if adding a seat on the Council or creating a reporting structure through a Councilor at Large may help to create the needed structure. Adding a person who is responsible and accountable for DCC to the Council may provide the structure to ensure that AAPOR is being as inclusive and diverse. The DCC does not have resources, and the AAPOR database does not have the infrastructure to track the diversity efforts very well. Pipeline issues are difficult and do not show improvements in the short term. The DCC's work is a long term effort. One of the Councilors-at-Large could be charged with working with Membership and Chapter Relations and the DCC to create some structure within the committee to ensure things are moving forward. Council also discussed if adding a third Councilor at Large position with a 3-year term might help maintain progress overtime and consistency since Council roles transition quickly.

ACTION: Losch and Evans will request a report from the DCC outlining its work and evaluating their progress to submit to the Council.

ACTION: Losch and Evans to create a list of what each Councilor-at-Large position is tasked with for Council's reference and future Councilors.

ACTION: Losch to lay out the next steps and timeline for Bylaws revisions to be reviewed and voted on by membership. Timeline will be discussed during the April Council meeting.

VI. **TRAINING FOR NEW COUNCILORS/RESOURCE HANDBOOK**

Schaeffer asked for Councilors to spend some time sharing knowledge between chairs and associate chairs for when the Council transition takes place in May. New chairs will need to share knowledge with incoming associate chairs and explain specific roles and responsibilities. There are currently job descriptions for Council positions for the nominations process, but not for the Committee roles. This could be a good starting point for how to have a more transparent declaration of duties. One other resource for institutional knowledge is AAPOR staff.

ACTION: Sha to share Conference Committee's documentation with Councilors as a template to develop documentation of roles and responsibilities for Committee Chair and Associate Chair roles. Murphy will also look for month-to-month responsibility calendars that may have been created in the past.

ACTION: AAPOR staff to export calendars of major deliverables through the year from project management software and send to incoming councilors in May. Staff will make sure these calendars are current and updated for following years and expand on the tasks in the calendar with more contextual information if possible.

Schaeffer also mentioned the table of contents for the Resource Handbook for new Councilors and asked for any comments or documents that should be included.

ACTION: all Councilors to read through the [Resource Handbook Table of Contents](#) and reach out to Murphy with any missing items they think would be helpful.

ACTION: incoming Chairs will be invited to attend the new council orientation in May as an option if they would like to join.

VII. SURVEY PRACTICE-PEER REVIEW STATUS

Geisen joined the meeting via webinar to share an update on the peer review status of Survey Practice. There is a desire for AAPOR journals to be Plan S compliant for peer review, which is currently a more popular form of peer review in Europe but is expected to grow in importance in the US in the coming years. Plan S compliance focuses on open access journals, and should be an easy jump as Survey Practice is already open access. Survey Practice is currently editor-reviewed rather than the traditional version of peer-review but plans to change its approach to have an editorial board to be Plan S compliant. Articles will not be required to have more than 1 reviewer or be double-blinded. Scholastica, Survey Practice's publisher, is on board with becoming Plan S compliant. Survey Practice will need to be completely transparent about what "peer review" means for the journal so readers understand. This will be good for the future of the journal and will provide a more solid footing with Scholastica and their list of journals.

De La Rosa asked if there is any funding or revenue from Survey Practice and how the reach of the journal could possibly be expanded moving forward. The Council and Editorial Board can brainstorm ways of increasing support to make the articles and the journal more visible once it becomes Plan S compliant.

ACTION: Geisen and Bailey to coordinate communications seeking associate editors/editorial board members via email, AAPORnet, and in the March newsletter.

VIII. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Sha reported a record number of presentation submissions have been included in the finalized program and the online interactive program is scheduled to launch on March 27.

Sha walked the Council through the AAPOR Timeline project, which NORC has sponsored and will be making web-enabled, so it can be posted on the AAPOR website if approved by Council. The kiosk for the timelines planned for the conference in Atlanta has an associated cost to AAPOR, but is already part of the regular budget. NORC has offered to send a technical person to manage kiosk. There is a monthly fee of approximately \$10 to host the AAPOR Timeline on the AAPOR website. Sha acknowledged Janice Ballou, Chair of the History Committee and Co-Chair of the 75th Anniversary Committee, who has done a lot of the work to manage the accuracy of the content of the timeline. NORC would like to be involved in the publicity of the timeline.

Council agreed that the History Committee should take over the Timeline project after Conference and that it would ideally be updated every 5 years. A sponsor may be needed to afford these updates.

MOTION: to pay the fee to host the AAPOR Timeline on the AAPOR website going forward. Triplett moved, Losch seconded. The motion passes by a unanimous vote.

ACTION: Mandy to express appreciation to History Committee/75th Anniversary Committee/NORC for this work and will share the ask from Council to the History Committee to accept responsibility for the maintenance of the online timeline as part of their charge. History Committee to take over the AAPOR Timeline project moving forward to continue to update it in years to come. Create a plan for how it will be updated every 5 years.

ACTION: Sha, Murphy, and History Committee to determine how to recognize NORC on the website timeline for future years.

IX. AAPOR CODE REVISIONS

Eckman joined and reviewed the previously shared recommendations and materials for updating the AAPOR Code of Ethics, which includes AAPOR's Disclosure and Code of Conduct Policy. There were minimal changes in sections 1, 2 and the introduction. The majority of the recommended changes are in section three.

The Executive Council needs to approve the changes and will then distribute the document to membership for a formal vote. The Transparency Initiative is directly tied to the Code, and Eckman noted that they may want to have their own disclosure form. We need to have the disclosure in the Code, but is there an appetite to enforce this?

The Council also discussed IRB and HIPAA privacy officers and how they may need to be mentioned or incorporated. The role of Ombudsman for AAPOR is in process with Kellen.

Councilors shared concerns that the crosswalk is confusing and discussed the need for a clarifying document.

ACTION: Standards leadership and AAPOR staff will work together to schedule a call with Council, including Eckman and Kirzinger, to discuss the recommendations before the April Council meeting.

X. POSITION ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19 ON THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Council discussed the situation with COVID-19 and how to proceed with the AAPOR Annual Conference. Discussion included the cancellation options as laid out in the contract with the Hilton Atlanta hotel, recommendations from the AAPOR meetings team, and current and emerging data and reports from the CDC, WHO, and other public health organizations.

Council carefully reviewed the financial implications of various scenarios, given that a deficit budget was already approved for the 2020 fiscal year. There are options for moving funds out of AAPOR's investment accounts to make up for a deficit. A discussion was held on the possibility of holding a virtual conference to replace the in-person conference and the various implications for presenters, sponsors, and attendees. Council agreed that content still needs to be delivered to members and some kind of celebration for the 75th anniversary needs to happen.

Council opted to make a final decision on the path forward with the Annual Conference on Day 2 of the Council meeting.

XI. ADJOURN DAY 1

MOTION: to adjourn day one of the Council meeting. Losch moved, Dutwin seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Wednesday, March 11

I. CALL TO ORDER, RECAP OF DAY 1

Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 8:33 am CT.

II. EDUCATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Holbrook provided a report of Survey Fest 2020, which took place at Stanford University in January. The event had several attendees that registered on-site and the SurveyFest Subcommittee put a lot of effort into outreach to increase attendance. Holbrook noted that the panelists who participated in the event were very good. Holbrook recommended that the Subcommittee plan another SurveyFest for 2021 and incorporate some of the valuable lessons learned, including the selection of a location with a highly diverse population and an area that is easily accessible by public transportation.

III. CIVICS EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Holbrook provided an overview of the recent work of the Subcommittee and the request for input from the Council on a possible collaboration with iCivics to create a 2020 Election Infographic for Teachers. The Subcommittee believes that trying to create a huge curriculum would not be most effective use of time, and smaller actions more impactful could be more beneficial. iCivics is a company focused on civics education that has developed games about civics and infographics that teachers can use. Working with them would cost about \$5,000 to AAPOR to develop an infographic for teachers to use in classes about the 2020 election. The Subcommittee has also explored the idea of holding a webinar with social studies teachers, possibly as an online panel, to work with them to reach out to their network and make contacts with people in the K-12 civics world. Council wondered if there be a possible sponsorship opportunity to help cover the cost of the collaboration, but the Council is interested in hearing further details.

ACTION: Holbrook will set up a conversation between the Civics Education Subcommittee and iCivics to develop a more detailed and thorough plan to present to the Council for approval.

IV. 2024 CONFERENCE SITE

Murphy shared that neither of the two locations suggested by Council for the 2024 Annual Conference, Portland, OR and Seattle, WA are available for the requested conference dates. The Council held a brief discussion of some past conference locations that might be possible to look at for 2024, including Minneapolis, Miami, Austin, Denver, and Phoenix.

V. FINALIZATION OF OFFICIAL POSITION ON COVID-19

Council continued the previous day's discussion on COVID-19 and how to proceed with the AAPOR Annual Conference. Sha walked through a proposal for what a virtual conference could look like if Council voted to move forward with a virtual rather than in-person meeting. The Council thanked Sha for the hard work and forward thinking to quickly put together a proposal.

MOTION: to cancel the hotel commitment and initiate discussion, using any and all strategies, to mitigate any cancellation issues and financial responsibilities. These discussions will begin immediately and to be finalized no later than the hotel's deadline, after which the cancellation fee goes up significantly. Dutwin moved, Triplett seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

MOTION: to restructure the 75th Annual Conference and anniversary celebration in an alternative format and time frame. Sha moved, Bilgen seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

The Council then held a discussion on critical next steps to move forward with an alternative format for the conference, including:

- Presenters need to be surveyed about their willingness to present virtually
- A software platform will need to be vetted and selected for a virtual conference
- Sponsorships need to be re-worked and presented to sponsors
- New conference registration will be developed at a lower cost
- Path forward for award winners
- Process to be developed for processing requested refunds

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Holbrook presented a small allocation request from the budget to renew the Survey Monkey subscription which ends on April 23, 2020. The Survey Monkey subscription is used for the Conference survey and other surveys sent to membership.

MOTION: Move to authorize an expense \$990.90 for a subscription to Survey Monkey if AAPOR cannot get another free subscription. Schaeffer moved, Triplett seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council began Executive Session at 12:30 pm CT.

VIII. ADJOURN

Following Executive Session, the Council meeting was adjourned.