



**American Association for Public Opinion Research
Executive Council Teleconference Minutes
January 20, 2011**

ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER.

Frank Newport	President	Present
Scott Keeter	Vice President	Present
Peter Miller	Past President	Present
Barbara O'Hare	Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Joseph Lenski	Associate Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Reg Baker	Standards Chair	Present
Timothy Johnson	Associate Standards Chair	Present
Rob Santos	Conference Chair	Present via phone
Dan Merkle	Associate Conference Chair	Present
Kelly Foster	Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Joe Murphy	Associate Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Jon Cohen	Communications Chair	Present
Rich Morin	Associate Communications Chair	Present
Roger Tourangeau	Councilor-at-Large	Present
Linda Piekarski	Councilor-at-Large	Present
Staff		
Susan Tibbitts	Executive Director	Present
Barbara Gunderson	Administrative Director	Present
Lindsay Arends	Marketing and Communications Manager	Present via phone
Jill Hronek	Director, Marketing and Communications	Present via phone

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Frank Newport called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. EST. The meeting agenda has been changed to include a consent agenda in the interest of increasing the Council's time to focus on strategic plan objectives, in particular initiatives identified as priorities for the coming year. Additionally the agenda more clearly differentiates between information only (consent) items and items requiring active discussion and decision.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft minutes of the December 16, 2010 Executive Council teleconference were reviewed. Roger Tourangeau moved, seconded by Peter Miller, that the minutes be approved with minor edits. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer, Barbara O'Hare reported that AAPOR staff is currently working on end-of-year financials. The cash balance as of January 14, 2011 is \$379,175 and after outstanding obligations, it is expected that AAPOR will end the year with more than \$100K in reserve. The 2011 budget anticipates a \$10K deficit due to conservative estimates on the conference revenue. However, the expectation is that AAPOR will end the 2011 year in the black. There are no plans at present for the use of reserves. Council may decide to re-examine this option depending on action on strategic initiatives or other opportunities.

A. Investment Status

The total market value of endowment investments is \$201,503 and the total value of operating investments is \$728,068. As part of its investment portfolio, AAPOR has \$150,000 in CD's set to mature at the time of the annual conference. Cash flow is not an issue, and the FDIC has lifted its insurance limit on non-interest bearing accounts.

Currently, AAPOR's unrestricted reserves represent 1.2 years of operating expenses. Standard association practice for the size of reserves is a minimum of six months however given the current economy and concern for conference attendance, the Council prefers to maintain a larger reserve to assure service delivery.

While the budget for Council and committee activity is slightly lower than 2010, based on the approved budget AAPOR expects spending to increase in 2011 to support council and committee activities including AAPOR visibility at affiliated meetings, the new member survey, member recruitment, launch of the redesigned website, AAPOR webinars and several new task forces.

B. Endowment Committee Fundraising Appeal

The Endowment Committee initiated a general year-end appeal to the membership during December. Although the appeal was met with limited success, the committee would like to work on a long-range campaign targeted to specific initiatives identified by the Council.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Conference Committee

Conference Chair Rob Santos reported that program planning is well underway with more than 400 formal papers accepted, 12 planned demonstrations, three methodological brief sessions and 150 poster presentations. Although approximately two-thirds of the papers submitted were methodological, the program committee made every effort to slot all relevant substantive papers submitted to create a more balanced program. There are theme-related sessions planned each day. Because the number of abstracts submitted is on pace with previous years, there is nothing to indicate a drop-off in interest in the conference in spite of concerns over the location.

1. Plenary Session

Currently three outside speakers have committed to speaking on a panel during the plenary: Henry Cisneros, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Doris Meissner, former Director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and Senior Fellow and Director, Migration Policy Institute; and Rudolfo O. de la Garza, Eaton Professor of Administrative Law and Municipal Science, Columbia University. AAPOR President Frank Newport will also participate as moderator. Additional invited guests are pending. The plenary will focus (broadly) on the history of immigration legislation in the U.S., policy perspectives, the history of Latino migration patterns, economic issues, social policy and political views.

B. Standards Committee

Standards Committee Chair, Reg Baker reported there are no current standards complaints pending. The committee has been primarily focused on the Transparency Initiative since the December meeting. In the near term the committee will be updating the website materials, ensuring there is consistent positive messaging as launch of the new site nears. Standards Committee member Jim Wolf is working with the Communications Committee. Standards is also considering a revision to the push polling statement.

C. Communications Committee

Committee chair Jon Cohen reported that the AAPOR newsletter was emailed the last week of December. In an effort to provide more regular and timely communication to the membership, the committee is moving to a new schedule of six newsletters per year in 2011 with a shorter, more targeted message for each issue. A process map and production schedule was submitted to Council for review and comment.

D. Membership & Chapter Relations Committee

Committee chair Kelly Foster reported that AAPOR ended 2010 with record high membership of 2,420 members; a 7% increase over 2009. Membership continues to grow and representation by dues category remains consistent. The committee plans to work to increase membership in 2011 by fully promoting existing member benefits and developing a strategy for retaining student and complimentary members.

V. 2011 PRIORITY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

A. Governance Review

Frank Newport reported that the Governance Review Task Force members have been appointed. The task force is co-chaired by Mark Schulman and Patricia Moy; the members include Peter Miller, Scott Keeter, Don Dillman, Barbara O'Hare, Linda Piekarski and Nancy Belden, with Executive Director Susan Tibbitts serving in an ex officio capacity. The task force held an initial teleconference on January 5, 2011 to discuss their assignment and rough timeline for forming recommendations for Council consideration.

B. Member and Former Member Surveys

Joe Murphy presented a draft of the member survey expected to be sent in June 2011. The survey questions and objectives were reviewed and discussed by Council. To assure that the results offer AAPOR as much guidance as possible, the Council suggested that a pilot survey be sent to a small sample of members with more open-ended questions to capture any member issues and concerns not currently in the draft full survey. Council members agreed to send any additional recommendations to Associate Chair Joe Murphy no later than January 28 for incorporation into the second draft of the survey.

C. Education Programs

Frank Newport reported there is currently no update available regarding the education initiatives.

VI. 2010 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

A. Communications

The Council discussed AAPOR's role and options to continue to improve the image of the profession by educating the public on public opinion and survey research. Among the topics of discussion were:

- i. Conduct and promote position papers and issues papers prepared by task forces on key issues of importance to the image of the survey and public polling industry. AAPOR could articulate the value of opinion research and communicate the contribution to society made by survey and public opinion research professionals.
- ii. Have representatives attend affiliated organization conferences and meetings to increase AAPOR's visibility.

B. Strengthening Cross-Organizational Relationships

A conversation is underway between AAPOR and WAPOR leadership to explore the long-range best interests of both organizations. Currently, WAPOR members are predominantly U.S.-based, and there is believed to be a large overlap in membership between AAPOR and WAPOR.

Discussion followed focusing on global reach and positioning including the advantages of closer collaboration with ESRA and ESOMAR. It was recommended that AAPOR consider expanding the focus of the conversation underway, and/or appoint a task force to look at the issue of global positioning.

C. Fundraising

The Endowment Committee is seeking direction from Council on its fundraising activities and campaigns. Council members engaged in a spirited discussion of focal opportunities for a fundraising campaign including:

- National campaign to improve the image of the profession
 - Education component
- Public service announcements
- Cover the cost of speakers fees for the annual conference
- Graduate student travel awards to attend the conference
- Transparency Initiative including information archive, education and communication
- Establishment of an AAPOR endowed chair in survey methodology; endowed lectureship
- AAPOR-commissioned research through modest grants
- Credential/board certification program
- Expand the AAPOR archives and Heritage program; add other sources to the archive collection.

Barb O'Hare and Joe Lenski will share the Council discussion with Endowment Chair Dawn Nelson and propose next steps at the March meeting.

D. Task Force and White Paper Initiatives

The Council identified several areas for in-depth focus with potentially high value to the profession, including identification of key areas of concern for members. The Council noted the value of white papers, such as the paper on cell phones, and guidelines, such as the Standard Definitions, in communicating best practices to the industry and data users.

White Papers

The Council discussed the value of further developing a series of position and issue papers for posting. These should include both peer-reviewed, fully vetted research topics as well as research on emerging issues, such as social media. AAPOR has the opportunity to help shape the discussion and research. Further, there may be benefits in integrating AAPOR discussion with other survey organizations such as ESOMAR, ESRA, CASRO and MRA.

Guidelines

The Council discussed the advantages of providing guidelines (a set of considerations) associated with task force reports and white papers to provide members with practical applications. There was general agreement that regular updates to guidelines may be accomplished more easily than a revision to the report itself; and that AAPOR should avoid issuing guidelines in areas lacking sufficient documentation and literature. Several members commented that it is also important for AAPOR to inform the membership when there is no literature on the particular issue. One framework proposed included three tiers: 1) best practice guidelines, 2) emerging recommendations, and 3) things to consider.

Hot Topic Issues for Strategic Discussion

At the encouragement of the president, Council members then discussed areas where the potential exists for AAPOR to better define and/or advance issues including:

- Impact of social media as means of communication with respondents
- Online surveys, surveying on social networks and in virtual communities
- Use of non-probability panels
- Automated surveys and self-administered surveys; implications of respondent response to machines
- Multi-mode surveys
- Robo polls
- Use of administrative records in place of survey questions
- Incentives
- Respondent burden; relationship between burden and survey participation
- Response rates and non-response bias
- Address-based sampling (ABS); mixed modes
- Declining respondent participation among general public; barriers, implications and refusal conversion
- Measuring public opinion without using surveys – web, GPS, administrative records; are surveys and samples becoming obsolete?
- Behavioral research
- Post survey adjustment techniques to address missing data
- Ethical issues

VII. NOMINATION COMMITTEE: 2011-2012 CANDIDATE SLATE

Nominations Committee Chair Peter Miller described the process followed by the committee, which was revised significantly this year, to give more responsibility to the committee to solicit, verify and recommend a slate of candidates for Executive Council's review and approval. Staff will be documenting the process.

The identification of qualified members interested in service on the Executive Council began with multiple requests to the membership for nominations and self nominations. In addition, committee members interviewed Council members for their recommendations.

From an initial list containing nearly 300 names, the committee reached a short-list of 50-60 qualified members who submitted materials and signed the statement of willingness to serve. Short-listed members were scored by each committee member and the scores were then discussed within the group. Included in the committee's consideration were such factors as prior service to AAPOR and related organizations, leadership potential and geographic and gender diversity.

The committee identified a ranked list of 3-6 candidates for each of seven open positions, and presented the top two candidates for each office to the Council. Prior to the meeting, Council members were provided with detailed biographical information on each candidate on the recommended slate.

Motion: To accept Reg Baker and Paul Lavrakas as candidates for the office of AAPOR Vice President/President Elect. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Dan Merkle.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and was passed unanimously.

Motion: To accept Sandra Bauman and Rachel Casper as candidates for the office of Associate Secretary-Treasurer. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and was passed unanimously.

Motion: To accept Patricia Moy and Michael Traugott as candidates for the office of Councilor-at-Large. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Rich Morin.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and was passed unanimously.

Motion: To accept Nancy Bates and Paul Beatty as candidates for the office of Associate Conference Chair. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and was passed unanimously.

Motion: To accept David Cantor and Ron Langley as candidates for the office of Associate Standards Chair. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

Motion: To accept Marjorie Connolly and Trevor Tompson as candidates for the office of Associate Communications Chair. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Joe Lenski.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and was passed unanimously.

Motion: To accept Liz Hamel and Andy Zuckerberg as candidates for Associate Membership and Chapter Relations Chair. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau.

Council discussion ensued. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

Election Process Discussion for March Meeting

At the conclusion of voting on the 2011 candidate slate, Councilors were encouraged to offer their reaction to the new process and to make recommendations for next year. There was agreement to add a discussion about the election process to the Council agenda for March.

2011 Election Calendar

Consistent with the bylaws, the candidates will be announced on February 15 and their biographies will be posted to the website for consideration by the membership. Voting will begin on March 9 and close on April 4. The Communication Committee will develop additional options for publicizing the candidates prior to the election. Among the suggestions; written candidate Q&A, a 'town hall' style call in with the candidates and/or self-produced videos.

VIII. TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Transparency Initiative (TI) Steering Committee provided Council with an interim report for review and comment. Chair Scott Keeter reported on the work of the Standards Subcommittees, the Advisory Committee and the TI Steering Committee in shaping the program.

1. Transparency Initiative Membership

Membership is open to any survey organization or consultant willing to abide by the guidelines for disclosure set forth in the current AAPOR Code of Standards, specifically Section III. Membership will not be limited to AAPOR members.

2. Archiving Mechanism

The committee recommended looking more closely at the implications of archiving collected disclosure material in an existing system like the ‘Dataverse,’ an open-source application for cataloging and storing research data. Dataverse systems rely on a standardized set of elements that are linked to archives around the world including the Odum Institute at the University of North Carolina, the Roper Center at the University of Connecticut, ISPSR and the National Archives. Cost estimates are still under development. The necessary software set-up could be several thousand dollars initially, with an ongoing maintenance cost. Data capture in whatever system is selected should be relatively easy for survey organizations and will be a useful resource for those needing to look up the disclosure information. It may also be possible to have the Dataverse system generate a document that could serve as a disclosure statement. The committee has learned that timing could prove difficult for some organizations, because information must be released and available for Dataverse when the report is made public.

3. Enforcement

Enforcement may prove to be the most difficult aspect of the process. Volunteers could be recruited to monitor and spot check participating organizations and the material they submit. In time and as justified by workload, a part-time paid position may be necessary. Participating organizations will need to be made aware of the enforcement process upfront. The mechanisms by which AAPOR qualifies Initiative members, monitors compliance, and resolves possible failures to comply will contribute to the credibility of the Initiative and as well as drive resource requirements. There was discussion of the “Safe Harbor program” and the “ISO Model” as two existing programs that could be viewed as the endpoints on a continuum where the Transparency Initiative will reside.

4. Recognition and Acknowledgement

The committee’s vision is to create a page on the AAPOR website where participating organizations will be recognized. The web page will link to the disclosure information in the archive. The webpage will also be a useful resource for journalists seeking to confirm the methodology employed in a survey. A logo, affirming an organization’s participation in the initiative is being considered for participants to post on their own websites. Council will need to consider how this approach will impact the sale of the Blue Book listings.

IX. RECOMMENDED UPDATE TO STANDARDS DEFINITIONS

Reg Baker reported on the AAPOR Standards Definitions document, currently in its 6th edition.

The document is routinely updated every two years and exists to establish a formal, standardized process to calculate response rates and outcomes. Sarah Zuckerman helped to add an establishment survey chapter and substantially updated the online section of the document.

Motion: To accept the revised 7th Edition Standards Definitions document as submitted. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Barbara O’Hare. The motion passed unanimously.

X. WEBSITE REDESIGN: INTERIM RECOMMENDATION

Jon Cohen reported the Communications Committee has been working with AAPOR staff over several months to redesign the AAPOR website. This project will eventually encompass the migration of AAPORnet, Survey Practice and the Heritage Interview Series under the AAPOR umbrella. Significant assistance from volunteers will be needed to evaluate all the content that currently exists on the site, identifying content that should be updated, dropped or added. The new site is scheduled to launch prior to the annual conference, with content review continuing thereafter. Additional software selection (as needed) and migration of AAPORnet will occur before Shap Wolf leaves his position at Arizona State University.

Motion: To accept the recommendations of the Communication Committee regarding the framework, basic design and color scheme of the redesigned AAPOR website. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Linda Piekarski. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Recent AAPOR-Related News and Controversies

Frank Newport reported there have been no controversies since the last Executive Council meeting.

B. Update: Public Opinion and Leadership Task Force

Committee members are comprised of AAPOR and non-AAPOR members including several from the academic community in an effort to create a balanced view on the role of public opinion and leadership. The committee will be discussing the challenges that exist and practical implications. Input from the Council members is encouraged and comments can be sent to Frank Newport. A session on the findings from the committee will be presented at the annual conference.

C. Survey Practice

Frank Newport, Bob Shapiro and Rich Morin will be examining the structure of Survey Practice and making recommendations for necessary changes. Their findings will be reported to the Council in the coming months.

D. New Journal – Survey Methodology

Peter Miller and Roger Tourangeau are continuing to meet with members of American Statistical Association and the Royal Statistical Society to discuss the joint venture of a new journal for survey methodology content. They will determine the mission of the new journal, the sections to

include, issue frequency and the types of papers that will be accepted. The committee is working on a proposal for Council review and approval.

E. Future Meeting Schedule

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, March 24 in Washington, DC at Gallup headquarters. Council members should plan for a full day meeting. Frank Newport encouraged all members to plan to attend a Council dinner on Wednesday evening, March 23.

F. Census Bureau – American Community Survey

Bob Groves informed AAPOR that legislation may be introduced in Congress to discontinue the American Community Survey (ACS). Peter Miller recommended that Frank Newport write an editorial representing AAPOR's view on the ruling.

G. Member Recognition

It was recommended that AAPOR formally recognize AAPOR member Clyde Tucker on his retirement at the end of the month.

Motion: To commend AAPOR member Clyde Tucker on his long and distinguished career in a formal letter from AAPOR. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Joe Lenski. The motion passed unanimously.

H. Privacy Tracking

Diane Bowers has asked AAPOR to join CASRO in a response to proposed legislation on privacy tracking. The response is due by January 31. Diane Bowers will draft a written response and submit it to AAPOR for Council review. If Council is in agreement with the letter, it will be signed and sent to CASRO.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. Roger Tourangeau moved, seconded by Peter Miller.