

**American Association for Public Opinion Research  
Executive Council Minutes  
March 27, 2014**

Rob Santos	President	Present
Michael Link	Vice President	Present
Paul J. Lavrakas	Past President	Present
Nancy Bates	Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Mary Losch	Associate Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Courtney Kennedy	Standards Chair	Present
Frauke Kreuter	Associate Standards Chair	Present
Susan Pinkus	Conference Chair	Present
Dawn V. Nelson	Associate Conference Chair	Present
Jennifer Dykema	Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Absent
Jennifer H. Childs	Associate Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Peyton Craighill	Communications Chair	Present
Eleni Delimpaltadaki Janis	Associate Communications Chair	Absent
Dan Merkle	Councilor-at-Large	Present
Cliff Zukin	Councilor-at-Large	Present

**Staff**

John Waxman	Managing Partner	Present
Susan Tibbitts	Executive Director	Present
Heidi Diederich	Administrative Director	Present

**Guests**

David Dutwin	Survey Refusal Task Force Co-Chair	Present
John D. Loft	Survey Refusal Task Force Co-Chair	Present
Jennie Lai	ResearchHack Co-Organizer	Present
Chuck Shuttles	ResearchHack Co-Organizer	Present

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

President Rob Santos called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. EST and a quorum was established.

**Paul J. Lavrakas moved, seconded by Peyton Craighill that the minutes of the February 20, 2014 Executive Council meeting be approved as presented. The minutes were approved unanimously.**

Rob Santos reported that since the last meeting of the Executive Council, the Executive Committee approved a motion via email on February 28, 2014, to provide a \$20,000 sponsorship for the Total Survey Error 2015 Conference (TSE15).

**SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT**

February 2014 Financials

Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Bates reported that net income from operations for February was \$273,464. She reminded the council that the approved 2014 budget for net income from

operations is zero. She stated that total conference revenue is below the 2014 budget by \$510,966 and is below 2013 YTD by \$23,578 which is expected at this point in advance of the conference. She noted that membership revenue is below the 2014 budget by \$84,939 and exceeds 2013 YTD by \$38,015.

She reported that staff discovered an error with accounting for quarterly *POQ* editorial support payments that dates back to 2010. Staff worked with Oxford Press representative Laura Bannon to research and confirm the problem. The one-time adjustment necessary to fix the error has reduced total net income for 2013 to \$17,371.

Associate Secretary-Treasurer Mary Losch reported that sponsor and exhibit revenue remains 20% behind budget. She and staff meeting administrator Anthony Fiorelli are actively working to secure final commitments from existing sponsors and they are looking at exhibitors from similar conferences.

## II. CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda was presented for information.

Rob Santos noted that Membership and Chapter Relations Chair Jennifer Dykema was temporarily incapacitated by an unexpected illness and she is expected to have a long recovery. He thanked Associate Chair Jennifer Hunter Childs for her willingness to take the lead, and offered the full support of the council for whatever tasks are needed by the committee. The council offered its support for Jenny and best wishes for a strong recovery to Jen.

**Paul J. Lavrakas moved, seconded by Susan Pinkus to accept the consent agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.**

## III. OLD BUSINESS

### **ResearchHack AAPOR 2014: Update**

Jennie Lai and Chuck Shuttles provided an update of the ResearchHack. There are currently 19 registrants for seven teams signed up for the event. Other members have expressed interested in participating and they are waiting for approval from their companies. Jennie stated that a targeted email would be sent to all first-time registrants to the AAPOR conference to encourage additional participation in the ResearchHack.

Chuck Shuttles reported he was working on getting Facebook to partner with AAPOR to help ResearchHack participants on the Instagram project.

### **Revision: Document Retention and Destruction Policy for Standards Related Documents**

Courtney Kennedy presented the recommendation of the Standards Committee to revise the existing approved policy on Document Retention and Destruction for Standards Related Documents.

**Following discussion, Courtney Kennedy moved, seconded by Cliff Zukin to accept the proposed revisions to the AAPOR Document Retention and Destruction Policy for Standards Related Documents as recommended by the Standards Committee. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**Proposal: 2014 Membership and Post-Conference Survey**

Jenny Hunter Childs presented the proposal from the Membership and Chapter Relations Committee for an annual Membership and Post-Conference Survey. For 2014, the survey questions would be repeated and/or updated from the 2013 survey. Survey participants would be AAPOR members only given the expense and effort required to survey nonmembers. She added that the committee invites input and questions from other AAPOR committees by May 1.

**Participation Fees: Transparency Initiative**

Rob Santos presented the follow-up recommendation from the Transparency Coordinating Committee. The committee continues to oppose AAPOR charging an application fee for the first year of participation in the Transparency Initiative (TI). The council discussed the potential benefit of offering a 'first year free' option to organizations that apply within the first 12 months following the program launch that is expected in July 2014. There was general agreement that first year program success could be defined as double-digit enrollment, noting that there are 85 organizations listed on the website. The council expressed interest in hearing more about the marketing plan for the TI at a future meeting. There was additional agreement that close accounting for expenses, in particular for staff time associated with the TI, would be particularly important in assessing the actual cost of the program. There was general agreement that all organizations should be charged for participation following the first year.

**Nancy Bates moved, seconded by Rob Santos to amend the 2014 budget to eliminate revenue expected from TI application fees for the 12 months following the launch of the program; with the amount of the future fee to be determined. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**Conference Steering Committee Update**

Conference Chair Susan Pinkus reported that she had worked with staff marketing communications manager Lisa Kamen on conference marketing to include e-blasts, AAPORnet and Twitter. Susan Pinkus reported that Rich Morin, past councilor, had organized a civil rights panel for the conference and requested that council agree to approve complimentary one-day registration for the non-member panelists. Executive Director Susan Tibbitts noted that one-day complimentary registration had been extended to non-member non-plenary speakers on a limited basis in the past. She stated that active participation by high profile, non-member guests offered a benefit to conference attendees. The council had no objection.

**2014 Election Schedule**

Paul J. Lavrakas provided an update on the 2014 election.

**Consent Reports**

Cliff Zukin stated his recommendation that time be set aside during in-person council meetings for committee chairs to offer verbal reports highlighting their committee activities. He expressed the concern that the requirement of the consent agenda for written reports without discussion, might be limiting an important exchange of information. There was no objection.

**Survey Practice Workshop ad hoc Task Force**

Paul J. Lavrakas encouraged the council to actively explore the option of offering a workshop on survey practice in 2015 or 2016. Michael Link indicated his intent to create a committee to examine the recommendation.

**Michael Link moved, seconded by Paul J. Lavrakas to establish an ad hoc task force to study the viability of a holding a survey practice workshop in 2015 or 2016. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Council Discussion: Report of the Survey Refusal Task Force**

Task Force co-chairs David Dutwin and John Loft provided an overview of the task force report and responded to questions from the council. Councilors acknowledged the excellent effort by the task force. The co-chairs noted that the task force was developed from a subcommittee of the Standards Committee on survey refusal. The co-chairs commented that report was telephone-centric and efforts were made to keep it short. Ninety percent of the literature reviewed by the task force was on nonresponse rather than survey refusal. The task force wanted to get the rights of respondents 'up front' in the paper. AAPOR has always stood up for respondents as people, not commodities.

Council discussion with the co-chairs followed. Among the issues discussed and questions raised: what is assumed when something is described as 'expert judgment'; should the scope include all the broader nonresponse issues instead of restricting itself only to refusals; what is the level of rigor needed in order to publish the paper; does the paper suggest that refusal conversions aren't worthwhile; what is the applicability to a variety of survey situations when one size doesn't fit all; consistency is an issue in report refusal and non-contact, most of the research doesn't distinguish between refusal and non-contact; does the paper prompt consideration for recommendations from the Standards Committee; should future drafts include information (discussion) on temporary disposition codes.

**Council Discussion: Report of the Survey Refusal Task Force**

There was general agreement to the following points:

- A. Reports from committees and task forces must include a concise executive summary that contains enough key detail that the summary can stand (be understood) on its own. The summary should include the key points and recommendations from each chapter or section. This requirement is absolutely necessary for non-technical audiences.
- B. AAPOR should develop a reasonable style guide or template with the assistance of one of the journal editors. Style guidance could address inclusion of a cover page, title, order of authors, font and font size, use of the AAPOR logo, page numbering, consistency in indexing, archiving and citations etc.
- C. The increase in reports and their complexity may support the use of an outside technical editor. The cost should be anticipated and included as part of initial approval of the committee or task force. Editorial services can be recommended by the task force chair for approval by AAPOR.
- D. When reports refer to or rely on unpublished work, the report should provide links to the work.

The council agreed to give the task force chairs the choice to find their own editor or to have AAPOR research cost and availability.

The council discussed, but did not come to agreement on a reasonable length for reports or whether a recommendation that the length be limited to a certain range, was an appropriate charge from the association to the authoring committee or task force.

Responding to a question, Susan Tibbitts offered to report on the differences between committees, task forces and ad hoc task forces at a future Executive Council meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Address-Based Sampling Task Force**

Standards Chair Courtney Kennedy and Associate Chair Frauke Kreuter discussed the committee's proposal to create a new Address-Based Sampling (ABS) Task Force that would report to the Standards Committee. A task force chair would need to be identified. Rob Santos indicated that Rachel Harter and/or Joe Murphy would be willing to take the lead. Paul J. Lavrakas offered to serve as a task force member.

### **General Population Telephone Survey Task Force**

Paul J. Lavrakas proposed the creation of a General Population Telephone Survey Task Force to follow on the work of the Cell Phone Surveying Task Force that completed its work in 2010. There was agreement that Paul J. Lavrakas would write a motion containing a task force charge for consideration at the council meeting the following day.

### **Auto-Dialer Regulations**

Paul J. Lavrakas recommended that AAPOR approach ASA, CASRO and other interested professional associations to discuss the FCC position on auto-dialing regulations. Rob Santos indicated he would contact Howard Feinberg at the Market Research Association and Kitty Smith at the Council for Professional Associations on Federal Statistics.

## **IV. EXECUTIVE COUNCILOR RECOGNITION**

Rob Santos presented the Executive Council with a gift to thank them for their service the past year. He offered a special thank you to AAPOR Administrator Abra Alscher for her help in ordering the gift.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Rob Santos stated that the meeting of the Executive Council was adjourned at 3:51 p.m. EST.

**Paul J. Lavrakas moved, seconded by Jennifer Hunter Childs to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.**