



**American Association for Public Opinion Research  
Executive Council Minutes  
March 29, 2012**

**ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER.**

Scott Keeter	President	Present
Paul J. Lavrakas	Vice President	Present
Frank Newport	Past President	Present
Joseph Lenski	Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Rachel Caspar	Associate Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Timothy Johnson	Standards Chair	Present
David I. Cantor	Associate Standards Chair	Present
Dan Merkle	Conference Chair	Present
Paul Beatty	Associate Conference Chair	Present
Joe Murphy	Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Liz Hamel	Associate Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Rich Morin	Communications Chair	Present
Marjorie Connelly	Associate Communications Chair	Present
Linda Piekarski	Councilor-at-Large	Present
Patricia Moy	Councilor-at-Large	Present

**Guests**

Peter Miller	Chair, Journals Review Task Force	Present
Mike Mokrzycki	Governance Review Task Force	Present via phone
Mark Schulman	Heritage and Archives Committee	Present
Tom Smith	Heritage and Archives Committee	Present via phone

**Staff**

John Waxman	Managing Partner	Present via phone
Susan Tibbitts	Executive Director	Present
Donna Tieberg	Administrative Director	Present

**I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

President Scott Keeter called the meeting to order at 9:06 p.m. EST and a quorum was established.

## II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 23, 2012 Executive Council meeting were reviewed.

**Paul J. Lavrakas moved, seconded by Tim Johnson, that the minutes for the February 23, 2012 Executive Council Meeting be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.**

## III. SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

### A. January 2012 Financials and 2012 Budget Amendment

Secretary-Treasurer Joe Lenski Joe reported that January financials were on track with the budget. January revenue was within a few thousand dollars of 2011 at the same time

The council discussed several amendments needed to be made to the annual budget. To recognize the revenue and expense for the annual *Public Opinion Quarterly (POQ)* special issue, \$15K in revenue and expenses should be added. Council travel and meeting expenses need to increase by \$14,817 to cover the expenses increase for the additional Council meetings requested by Vice President Paul J. Lavrakas. Executive Director Susan Tibbitts noted that the estimated increase is based upon the pattern of council reimbursements. If all councilors were to request reimbursement, the increase would be significantly higher. She recognized councilors and their employing companies for their continued in-kind support for AAPOR.

Joe noted that minor additional changes are needed to add ad hoc task force expenses because the line was inadvertently left out of the sub-total and to remove a \$25 reduction left from the 2011 budget that was not caught on prior review. If the motion is approved the amended net operating loss would be (\$50,013).

**Joe Lenski moved, seconded by Rachel Caspar, to amend the budget to include the additional revenue and expense for the POQ special issue and the expense for additional Council meetings. The motion was unanimously approved.**

The preliminary 2011 audit shows no significant issues. The audit will be reviewed by the secretary treasurer and presented for council approval at the May meeting in Orlando.

### B. Investment Status

Joe Lenski reported that he and Associate Secretary Treasurer Rachel Caspar recently discussed AAPOR investments and plans for the Investment Committee with committee chair Janet Streicher. She intends to convene the committee to discuss a more aggressive approach as part of the overall review of the AAPOR's existing investment policy. The council expressed serious concern at the lack of activity by the committee and requested again that the committee chair convene the committee as quickly as possible. Councilor Dan Merkle stated his interest in continuing as a member of the committee.

### **C. Endowment Committee**

Rachel Caspar, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, reported that the Endowment Committee has selected eight Roper Fellow awardees. The committee also selected eight students to receive the newly-established Student Travel Awards. The committee is considering revisions to the language for award applications next year in order to improve the process.

## **IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **A. *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology (JSSM)***

Peter Miller, Chair of the Journals Review Task Force provided an update on the negotiations with Oxford University Press (OUP) as AAPOR and the American Statistical Association (ASA) seek a publisher for the new *JSSM*. OUP is specifically interested in options for bundling *JSSM* for institutional purchase with *Public Opinion Quarterly* and helping *JSSM* to establish an audience and rankings.

Peter confirmed that the ASA has asked AAPOR to take the lead for the business side of the new journal, including negotiations with potential publishers, pricing and contracting. In turn, AAPOR would receive whatever revenue produced. He noted that OUP has advised the task force that it will take a minimum of seven years to recoup expenses on the *JSSM*, and that it might take 10 years to establish the “brand” for the journal. If the task force is able to work out the details and obtain council approval, it is possible that the initial issue of *JSSM* could be published in 2013. The plan is to present a contract for the *JSSM* for approval at the May council meeting.

The council discussed a series of issues currently under consideration by the committee including the subscription price of the journals, royalty payments, editorial expense, and the implications of a decision about “bundled” pricing. Several councilors expressed concern about a request by OUP for a 10-year contract. The council expressed general support for the importance of maintaining a guaranteed minimum for royalties. Peter Miller thanked the council for their questions and agreed to keep them informed as the task force moved forward.

### **B. Conference Committee**

Conference Steering Committee Chair Dan Merkle reported that conference planning is progressing very well. The program currently has 91 formal paper sessions, three demonstration sessions, and includes 420 papers/panels and approximately 150 poster presentations. Eleven of the sessions will be theme-related. In comparison, the 2011 conference had approximately 400 papers. Associate Chair Paul Beatty reported that there were 17 submissions total for the Seymour Sudman Student Paper awards and two winners were chosen. The DCAAPOR chapter winner will be recognized in the final conference program.

Early registration numbers are strong. As of last week 311 persons were registered for the conference, compared with 297 at the same time last year, and 267 for the 2010 conference in Chicago.

Revenue from exhibitors and sponsors is currently above budget. Shalini D'Souza, Conference Administrator, was commended for her work in recruiting exhibitors and sponsors. She is currently attempting to secure additional exhibit space. Rachel Caspar will be contacting current Blue Book subscribers to encourage them to exhibit at the conference.

### **C. Transparency Initiative Steering Committee**

Committee Chair and Vice President Paul J. Lavrakas gave an update on the Transparency Initiative (TI) pilot test. He reconfirmed that information received from the test group has been helpful to the Steering Committee and that it will take three to six months to assess additional resources that may be needed for the TI. The costs and scale of TI are still under consideration and the timing for a full roll-out of the program needs to be determined. He recommended that the TI Coordinating Committee that will replace the current Steering Committee should propose a staffing budget for the TI.

**Scott Keeter moved, seconded by Rachel Caspar, to approve the appointment of Tim Johnson as chair of the Transparency Initiative Coordinating Committee. The motion was approved with a vote of 14-0, with Tim Johnson abstaining.**

## **V. PRIORITY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

### **A. Governance Review Task Force (Strategic Plan Initiatives 1 and 8)**

Mark Schulman and Patricia Moy, co-chairs of the Governance Review Task Force discussed the interim report of the task force. They stated that the task force had looked carefully at the task force charge contained in the strategic plan and organized its recommendations in 13 sections in the interim report. Discussion followed with council members commenting on the recommendations, which include elimination of one of the two councilor-at-large positions, leaving undecided a proposal to lengthen the term of the secretary treasurer, looking more closely at committee appointment and effectiveness, increasing organizational flexibility by possible amendment of the bylaws and improving leadership development by improving the mechanism for committee appointment. Councilors were invited to contact the task force if they had specific concerns or suggestions about anything outlined in the document. The task force will meet again to consider comments offered during the council discussion. Scott Keeter advised that the Governance Review Task Force would need to be reappointed in May if additional work was required to complete the task force charge.

#### **A. Executive Council Self-Assessment**

Paul J. Lavrakas reviewed the results of the council self-assessment exercise completed by council members following the session with Tecker consultant Paul D. Meyer at the January council meeting. He thanked Rob Daves for collecting and providing council with summaries of the results. Council discussion followed, focusing on oversight and direction setting and relationship with the executive director, the two areas where the greatest variance was noted. Council agreed on the importance and value of providing regular feedback to the executive director and managing partner.

**Paul J. Lavrakas moved, seconded by Tim Johnson, that the Council provide constructive feedback to the Managing Partner and Executive Director annually by the time of the annual meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **VI. STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES: PROGRESS REPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **A. Initiative 2: Development and Fundraising Issues**

Rachel Casper reported that she is hoping to develop a long-term fundraising plan for the conference in the upcoming year. This activity would be separate from the work of the Endowment Committee. The Council discussed the possibility of a planned giving campaign and crafting a message to accompany this type of donation.

#### **B. Initiative 3: Communications**

Marjorie Connelly, Associate Communications Chair, reported on committee discussion underway, including the establishment of a speaker's bureau, posting conference content to the website, dissemination of the information on the Transparency Initiative (TI) and dissemination of committee, task force and new research. It was noted that Lindsay Arends Communications Manager, promotes AAPOR activities using social network channels. The committee will be addressing "emerging issues," what topics should be included, and how this information should be disseminated to the public.

#### **C. Initiative 4: Cross-Organizational Relationships**

Scott Keeter noted that a motion passed by a prior council had assigned to the councilor-at-large the duty of acting as a liaison to outside organizations. Susan will amend the current position description to reflect this responsibility to be assumed by the newly elected councilor-at-large.

**Paul J. Lavrakas moved, seconded by Linda Piekarski, that one of the duties of the newly elected councilor-at-large should continue to include acting as a liaison to outside organizations on behalf of AAPOR. The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### **D. Initiative 5 and 6: Member and Non-member Surveys**

Liz Hamel, Associate Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, reported that the current member survey process has been completed, and that it was not necessary to repeat the full survey again each year. Discussion followed on the benefits of conducting regular surveys, including conference evaluation surveys.

#### **E. Initiative 7: Education Programs**

Chuck Shuttles, Education Committee co-chair, has suggested revising the Education Committee structure to include online education. He has also suggested that AAPOR explore the possibility of a certification program. Council members discussed the implementing an educational needs assessment before making a decision about a certification program. It was decided that this topic would be revisited at the next council meeting.

#### **F. Initiative 9: Enforcing the Code**

Paul J. Lavrakas stated that AAPOR should continue to enforce the Code of Ethics through the work of the Standards Committee. The results of the recent member survey suggest that members agree that promoting transparency should be a regular part of the association's work.

#### **G. Initiative 9: Task Force and White Papers Report**

David Cantor, Associate Standards Chair, reported that five of seven initiatives in the strategic plan related to task forces and white papers have been completed. He recommended that the council actively look for new topics. The council agreed that a more systematic way of disseminating information gathered from task forces be established. There was also a discussion of the value of updating existing white papers or their bibliographies to assure that the information remains current and valuable for researchers.

### **VII. BLUE SKY BRAINSTORMING SESSION**

Council members initiated a brain-storming session, highlights of which included the need to focus on the emerging issues of non-survey modes of research, such as "data-scraping," organic data, "big data," and social networking. Council members discussed how AAPOR could remain relevant to members as an association. There was interest in making the 2013 conference theme revolve around emerging issues topics. Possible new white paper and/or task forces could address the topics of "robo polls" and "total survey error."

### **VIII. ADDITIONAL REPORTS**

#### **B. Heritage and Archives Committee Report**

Tom Smith and Mike Mokrzycki of the Heritage and Archives Committee joined the meeting by teleconference. The committee has discussed how best to update and present AAPOR's history. Council members discussed whether there would be enough interest in AAPOR's history to support publishing a hard-copy volume. The

Heritage and Archives Committee has created a proposal for 2013 to capture AAPOR history in the period since *A Meeting Place* was published and included plans for the next round of heritage interviews. There was general agreement that the proposal needs additional discussion and close examination of the projected project expenses. Follow-up discussion is planned for the May council meeting.

#### **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

The June 2012 council meeting will be rescheduled to June 20, 2012 from noon to 2:00 p.m. EST.

#### **X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The recording was stopped, staff was excused and council convened in executive session at 3:35 p.m. EST.

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Rich Morin moved, seconded by Joe Lenski to adjourn the executive session and the regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m. EST