



**American Association for Public Opinion Research  
Executive Council Teleconference Minutes  
October 13, 2011**

**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 Cantor	Associate Standards Chair	Absent
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
<b>Staff</b>		
Susan Tibbitts	Executive Director	Present
Donna Tieberg	Administrative Director	Present
Lindsay Arends	Marketing Communications Manager	Present
<b>Guests</b>		
Melissa Herrmann	Education Co-Chair	Present
Chuck Shuttles	Education Co-Chair	Present

**I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Scott Keeter called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m. EDT.

**II. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

The Council was asked to defer approval of the draft minutes of the September 15, 2011 meeting until the November 10 meeting. The recent addition of Administrative Director Donna Tieberg to the AAPOR staff team required additional time to prepare and review

the minutes. The Council was encouraged to send edits or comments to staff in advance of final review and approval.

### **III. SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT**

#### **A. Current Financial Status**

Secretary-Treasurer Joe Lenski stated that as expected, fewer financial transactions were recorded in August, with the exception of revenue from webinars. Webinar revenue is well ahead of schedule for the year, and Blue Book revenue is increasing. Net income of slightly less than \$100,000 is forecast by the end of the year, which is ahead of budget.

#### **B. Investment Status**

Joe Lenski has contacted Investment Committee Chair Janet Streicher and plans to give an investment update for the November Council meeting.

#### **C. Endowment Committee**

Rachel Caspar, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, reported that the committee has been very productive.

##### **1. Endowment Letter**

The Committee is working on a final draft of the end-of-year fundraising appeal letter that targets unrestricted gifts for a new Annual Conference Student Travel Award, general support for the Transparency Initiative and a move away from restricted support (Heritage Fund) and toward general fund support for activities to preserve AAPOR's legacy. The committee has made a clear move away from restricted funds and toward the Council-advised use of general fund donations for program support. Staff will review the letter to assure consistency with terminology as previously addressed in audit comments. The end-of-year appeal is intended to be sent in November. Joe and Scott Keeter commended Chair Barb O'Hare and the committee members. Staff will work with the committee on webpage updates that may be required.

##### **2. Annual Conference Student Travel Award**

The Committee is proposing a new Annual Conference Student Travel Award that would provide \$500 each for eight graduate students to attend the annual conference. Unlike the Roper Award and the Sudman Student Paper Award, this new program would be supported from the general fund. There has been significant Council discussion about the importance of extending support for students to attend the annual conference, and this award is intended to fulfill that goal. This item will be ready for Council approval at the November meeting.

**3. Creation of a Long-Term Fundraising Plan**

Consistent with the recommendation in AAPOR's Strategic Plan, the committee is discussing the establishment of a long-term fundraising plan that encompasses multi-year donations, and considers the role of significant donors. The committee intends to work on these issues after the first of the year.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. 2012 Management Fee Update**

Scott Keeter briefly outlined the AAPOR Executive Committee meeting held October 12 with Sherwood President and AAPOR Managing Director John Waxman and Executive Director Susan Tibbitts to discuss the proposed staffing increase.

A cost of living increase and an increase of \$15,000 for expansion of the webinar program in 2012 were proposed by staff to be added to the management fee. Additional support for marketing communications to support the transparency initiative (TI) may be required, along with an increase in administrative services for the TI, the archiving project and a general increase in committee activity. The proposal recommends shifting a percentage of member and customer support services from administrative director Donna Tieberg to the member services department. Donna would retain oversight for all administrative services.

The proposal also includes a recommendation that AAPOR increase the Executive Director's time by 5% to 45% in total to provide executive oversight for the TI and archive projects. Scott stated that the Executive Council recognized the need for more staff support, and that he recommended that funding for TI and archive projects appropriately could come from reserves. The Committee is continuing to discuss the proposal and plans to make a recommendation to the Council at the November meeting.

**B. 2012-2013 Nominations Committee**

Nominations Committee Chair Frank Newport has invited Scott Keeter to serve on the committee along with four other members. He is waiting for responses. To allow the committee to get underway before the next schedule Council meeting, he expects to seek approval of the committee appointment from the Executive Committee.

**C. AAPOR Staff Descriptions**

Susan Tibbitts has shared AAPOR-specific job descriptions for the staff team with Executive Committee. The descriptions will be posted to SharePoint for review by interested Council members.

## V. CONSENT AGENDA - COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Education Committee

#### 1. Mentoring Program

Education Committee Co-Chairs, Melissa Hermann and Chuck Shuttles, reported on a proposal for a Mentoring Pilot Program as discussed during the committee's report at the September 15 Executive Council meeting. The goals of the program include helping new AAPOR members become familiar with the association and creation of a knowledge-sharing environment. It is hoped that the program would also improve member retention. The 2012 budget proposal includes \$500 for the pilot program, including a focus group of mentoring program participants at the annual conference in Orlando. The timeline includes a pilot test that begins with a kick-off meeting at the end of October 2011. The committee will evaluate the program following the annual meeting to determine whether the program should continue and if so, in what form.

**There was a motion by Paul Lavrakas, seconded by Joe Lenski, to move forward with the Mentoring Pilot Program. The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### 2. Webinar Instructor Compensation

In follow-up to discussion during the committee's report at the September 15 Executive Council meeting, Chuck reported that the Education Committee looked again at compensation for webinar instructors. The 2012 budget currently reflects the initial committee request for \$100 gift cards for each webinar instructor.

The committee believes that compensation should be increased and recommends that webinar compensation should reflect the time commitment required and particularly in comparison to compensation provided to conference short course instructors. The committee recommends \$375 per instructor. Discussion followed.

The committee is concerned about attracting quality instructors, particularly non-members. Staff noted that we have not had difficulty attracting webinar presenters thus far and agreed that an increase in compensation for webinar presenters should be considered if the committee experiences difficulty with recruitment, particularly if an instructor is not a member. Scott Keeter requested that Council delay a decision, and encouraged additional discussion prior to the next Council meeting. Chuck added that the committee planned to begin contacting instructors for 2012 webinars in November.

## **B. Conference Committee**

Conference Chair Dan Merkle, and Associate Chair Paul Beatty reported that conference planning is progressing on schedule.

The Social and Volunteer Subcommittee has requested that the subcommittee name be changed to Conference Support Subcommittee. Dan Merkle, and Subcommittee Chair, Debbie Rexrode agree the name change would better reflect the duties of the subcommittee members and encourage greater volunteer participation.

**There was a motion by Dan Merkle, seconded by Paul Beatty, to change the name of the Social and Volunteer Sub-Committee to the Conference Support Sub-Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **C. Communications Committee**

Communications Chair Rich Morin thanked Marketing Communications Manager Lindsay Arends for reinvigorating the newsletter and observed that the September newsletter had drawn a fan letter from a past president who had encouraged greater communication with members.

Rich reported that Associate Communications Chair Marjorie Connelly is working with Lindsay on options for advertising the Blue Book using 2011 budgeted and unspent funds for general marketing activities. It is currently anticipated that an ad will be placed in the publication *Campaigns and Elections* at a cost of approximately \$3,500.

## **D. Membership and Chapter Relations Committee**

### **1. Membership Report**

Membership and Chapter Relations Chair Joe Murphy reported that the membership count is currently 2,260, up by 150 from two years ago, but down by 50 compared to last year. He stated that the overall trend in membership growth is positive.

The committee plans to release a report summarizing the results of the survey and the insights gained from the quantitative and qualitative data. The report and a de-identified data set will be posted on [www.aapor.org](http://www.aapor.org) once it is complete. An e-blast thanking survey participants will be sent before the end of the month.

The AAPOR membership booth was presented at the SAPOR conference and will travel to the American Public Health Association (APHA) annual conference at the end of October. The booth will be staffed by AAPOR members planning to

attend the meetings. The committee considers the APHA meeting a test of outreach effectiveness at a non-member event and will evaluate the effectiveness. The booth will also travel to the MAPOR and PAPOR meeting this fall.

Joe and Associate Chair Liz Hamel are working with the Education Committee on the Mentoring Pilot Program, the TI initiative and are planning a webcast for new members to the organization after the renewal drive is over.

## **2. New England Chapter By-Laws**

Joe Murphy and Liz Hamel have reviewed the revised New England AAPOR chapter (NEAAPOR) bylaws and found that the proposed bylaws are reasonably consistent with AAPOR's bylaws. Legal review will take place as NEAAPOR moves forward with incorporation. Council approval is recommended.

**There was a motion by Joe Murphy, seconded by Frank Newport, to approve the draft New England AAPOR chapter bylaws as presented, as reasonably consistent with AAPOR's bylaws. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **E. Standards Committee**

Standards Committee Chair Tim Johnson reported on a code violation complaint received about a survey conducted by a university. The committee contacted the university and the university agreed to disclose its methodology. No violation of the code was found.

**There was a motion by Paul Lavrakas, seconded by David Cantor, to approve the report of no action concerning the university survey. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Tim reported that the committee was advised that a company had language on its website claiming that the organization was a member of AAPOR and that it supported the terms of the transparency initiative. The committee asked, and the owner agreed, to remove the reference to AAPOR membership as AAPOR membership is restricted to individual members only, and the details of the transparency initiative are still being determined.

## **F. Transparency Initiative**

Vice President Paul Lavrakas reported that the full TI Steering Committee has recommended that a pilot or test phase of the program be implemented in early 2012. The program would be opened to more organizations once any problems had been discovered and resolved. Certification will not be offered during the test phase, and the exact details of the pilot have not been finalized yet. Following approval by the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee has requested that AAPOR attorney Duane Berlin conduct a legal review of TI concepts, especially in regards to certification. The review is estimated to

take 30 days at a cost of between \$7,500 and \$12,000. This review would be a one-time cost for 2011, but the TI will have some ongoing legal expenses.

**There was a motion by Joe Lenski, seconded by Patricia Moy, to approve a one-time expenditure of up to \$12,000 for the legal services of attorney Duane Berlin for the legal review of TI concepts and certification. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Paul reported that he is working on a TI article for the next issue of the newsletter. He requested that Council keep in mind the associated expense of the TI program, especially involving archiving large amounts of material. He suggested that there may be a foundation interested in championing the TI and underwriting these expenses. Still to be decided is whether applicants should be charged an application fee, and if so, what amount.

## **VI. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION ISSUES**

### **A. AAPOR Contributed Session to the WAPOR Conference**

Paul Beatty reported on an AAPOR contributed session for the WAPOR conference being held in Hong Kong in June of 2012. The theme of the conference will be “The World of Public Opinion Research.” It was suggested that a joint panel might be possible. Paul specified that the deadline for session proposals is January 1, 2012. Paul asked that councilors forward the names of AAPOR members planning to attend the WAPOR conference who might be agree to be panelists.

### **B. Proposed Revisions to the Federal Code for Human Subjects Protection Regulations**

Tim Johnson reported that the committee, in particular Ron Langley, has been working since late August on AAPOR’s response to the proposed changes to the Federal Code for Human Subjects Review. AAPOR was given an extension to October, 26, 2011 to submit comments. This is a consensus document, and responses need to be vetted by the Council. Tim encouraged comments and suggestions for revisions are welcome, but review needs to proceed immediately to ensure that AAPOR meets the deadline extension. Following discussion, it was agreed that revisions can be made over the next week with Council vote via email to follow immediately. Scott thanked all involved with the preparation of this document.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. January 2012 Council Meeting**

Council discussed moving the date and/or location of the upcoming January 13-14 Council meeting, or moving the location of the meeting to accommodate three councilors who have developed unavoidable conflicts and will not be able to attend. Full participation at the January meeting is of particular concern given the Council's annual approval of the Council candidate slate. Following discussion it was agreed to retain the date and location as planned and council members were encouraged to participate in the meeting via teleconference when possible.

### **B. Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will be held on by teleconference Thursday, November 10 at Noon EST. The primary agenda issue will be approval of the 2012 budget.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**There was a motion by Paul Lavrakas, seconded by Frank Newport, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06 p.m. EST.