



**American Association for Public Opinion Research
Executive Council Minutes
October 23, 2014**

Michael Link	President	Present
Mollyann Brodie	Vice President	Present
Rob Santos	Past President	Present
Mary Losch	Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Dan Merkle	Associate Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Frauke Kreuter	Standards Chair	Present
Ron Langley	Associate Standards Chair	Present
Dawn V. Nelson	Conference Chair	Present
David Dutwin	Associate Conference Chair	Present
Jennifer H. Childs	Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Kristen Olson	Associate Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Eleni Delimpaltadaki Janis	Communications Chair	Present
Jordon Peugh	Associate Communications Chair	Present
Cliff Zukin	Councilor-at-Large	Present
Joe Lenski	Councilor-at-Large	Present

Staff

Susan Tibbitts	Executive Director	Present
Heidi Diederich	Administrative Director	Present
Abra Alscher	Administrator	Present
Ashley Hicks	Accountant	Present
John Herfkens	Accountant	Present
Lisa Kamen	Marketing Communications Manager	Present

Guests

Anna Wiencrot	Education Committee Chair	Present
---------------	---------------------------	---------

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

President Michael Link called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. EST and a quorum was established.

Mary Losch moved, seconded by Jordon Peugh to approve the minutes of the September 18 and 19, 2014, Executive Council meetings as presented. The minutes were approved unanimously.

On October 13, 2014, the Executive Committee approved the following appointments to the Task Force on the Future of General Population Telephone Surveys: Ismael Flores Cervantes (Westat) and Grant Benson (University of Michigan).

On October 17, 2014, the Executive Committee approved the proposed DC-AAPOR by-laws as consistent with AAPOR's goals and objectives. The committee also approved the following appointments to the 2015 Seymour Sudman Award Committee: David Dutwin, Chair; Trent Buskirk (MSG); Mario Callegaro (Google); Jennifer Dineen (Graduate Program in Survey Research, University of Connecticut); Kyle McGeeney (Pew); Vicki Pineau (NORC); Gillian Steelfisher (Harvard University, School of Public Health).

Jenny Hunter Childs moved, seconded by Rob Santos to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2014, and October 17, 2014 Executive Committee meetings as presented. The minutes were approved unanimously.

II. Secretary-Treasurer Report

August and September 2014 Financials

Secretary-Treasurer Mary Losch noted that council had previously discussed financials for August and therefore she planned to focus on the September 2014 financials. As of September 30, 2014, year-to-date net income was \$50,690 and net income from operations was \$41,254. She reminded the council that 2014 budgeted net income from operations was zero. Legal fees for bylaws review stood at nearly \$7,000 and additional legal expense for the amendment process was expected before the end of the year. Revenue from webinars was ahead of budget. She stated that there was an unexpected \$800 expense for the Sudman Award in September that resulted from a previous void and new wire transfer for payment to an international awardee. She reminded council that fees for management, credit card transactions and technology that are allocated to the conference and award budget program area will continue to appear on the financials through year-end.

Investment Status and Investment Committee Update

Mary advised the council that the Investment Committee had met and the new members had participated. Associate Secretary-Treasurer Dan Merkle added that a subgroup of the committee planned to do a complete review of AAPOR asset allocations that should be completed before the end of the year.

Sustaining Sponsorship Update

Michael Link stated that he had asked Executive Director Susan Tibbitts to take the lead to prepare a draft proposal for a sustaining sponsor program working with Dan Merkle, Joe Lenski and Mary Losch. Susan is expected to share the draft with Dan within the next few days.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Consent reports were received from the Addressed-Based Survey Task Force, Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaws Review, Communications Committee, Conference Steering Committee, Education Committee, JSSAM Oversight Committee, Membership and Chapter Relations Committee, Task Force on Reassessing Today's Survey Methods, Standards Committee, Transparency Initiative Coordinating Committee and Future of Telephone Survey Research Task Force and were presented for information. There was no discussion.

Jenny Hunter Childs moved, seconded by Ron Langley to accept the consent reports as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

Development Committee

Dawn V. Nelson asked for clarification on the proposal made to begin providing two Sudman Awards, one methodological and one substantive. Following discussion, there was agreement to revisit the proposal for 2016. Discussion followed on the role of the Development Committee. Susan Tibbitts noted the committee description stated in the bylaws that assigns the Development Committee the responsibility for advising the council on all "endowment funds".

She stated that AAPOR has temporarily restricted accounts, rather than endowed funds, that fund the Roper and Sudman award. Concern was expressed about the level of attention given to fundraising by the Development Committee. Michael Link noted that the committee was planning an end of year appeal and working on a more aggressive plan for fundraising.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Nominations Committee: Appointments; 2015 – 2016 Council Election

Rob Santos, 2015 Nominations Committee Chair offered his committee recommendations for council approval: Peyton Craighill (media and polling sectors), Claudia Deane (non-profit and political science sectors), Adam Safir (government sector), Nancy Mathiowetz (academic sector) and Michael Link (commercial and government sectors).

Concern was expressed that the committee does not have representation from the west coast. Mollyann Brodie agreed to contact PAPOR officers to encourage them to offer nominations.

Cliff Zukin moved, seconded by Dan Merkle to approve the appointments to the 2015 Nominations Committee as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Communications Committee: 2014-2015 Program Plan

Jordon Peugh reported that she and committee chair Eleni Delimpaltadaki Janis had met with AAPOR marketing and communications manager Lisa Kamen for a one-day meeting in New York. The 2014-15 Communications Plan posted for council review was the product of that meeting.

The plan outlines the responsibilities of the committee and proposes a structure for committee business that will support an overall communications strategy. Committee responsibilities referred to as “pillars” include: Publications & Online Content, Breaking Events Dissemination and Communication of News and Activities; Communications Strategy.

The plan includes recommended guidelines for AAPOR committees to use to help promote their projects to the membership or larger audiences. The Associate Communications Chair will act as liaison to AAPOR committees. Discussion followed. Councilors were encouraged to review the plan and to offer their feedback to Eleni and Jordon.

AAPOR 2015 Revised Proposed Budget: Discussion and Approval

Mary Losch presented the revised proposed budget for 2015. She reminded the council that the initial budget presented in September included all of the requests made by committee chairs without edit, and resulted in a deficit of \$183,105. In follow-up to the meeting, the treasurers and Executive Director Susan Tibbitts made the changes recommended during the council meeting and worked closely with several committee chairs to significantly reduce the anticipated deficit for 2015. The revised proposal for 2015 results in a deficit of \$39,614. Mary stated her goal of reducing the 2015 reliance on reserves to no more than \$50,000, or roughly \$8,000 less than expected for 2014.

Referring to the 2015 budget memo and summary of changes, Mary Losch stated that AAPOR will need an additional \$200,000 - \$250,000 annually in net revenue to fully fund its operations and current and requested initiatives. To achieve a revenue increase of that size, and to do so in a timeframe of 3-5 years, requires a focus on changes that will produce the highest revenue; revenue increases that can be accomplished fairly quickly; and revenue that requires the lowest cost to produce. She added that activities that most closely meet the three requirements are member recruitment, sponsorship and strategic partnering and the Transparency Initiative.

Longer-term activities that hold the potential to significantly increase revenue include changes/additions to annual conference; creation of education products and joint ventures; and a significant expansion of fundraising to include an active planned giving program.

Mary reviewed the summary of changes from the proposed September budget to the proposed October budget:

- a. **Management Fee:** The increase in the management fee for 2015 was reduced to reflect a cost of living increase of two (2) rather than three (3) percent, and a further discount of \$7,500 offered by Sherwood for a technical error. The 2014 management fee was reduced by \$15,725 as partial restitution for the shortfall in exhibit, sponsorship and advertising sales for 2014.
- b. **Membership and Administration:** The initial proposed budget assumed that membership would maintain status quo for 2015, with member joins equaling quits. In the revised budget the assumption for revenue from member recruitment was increased modestly +\$8,048. Leadership and Committee expenses were reduced by \$7,500 by a one-time elimination of the CEOs leadership symposium. Molly and Dan attended with Susan in 2014, providing the necessary continuity. Shortening the March in-person council meeting from 1.5 days to 1 day reduced expenses by \$1,700.
- c. **Distance Education/Webinars:** Revenue was increased by \$2,760 by charging non-members for access to recorded task force webinars. Expenses were decreased by a total of \$19,000 on the basis of an analysis of two years of actual webinar expenses and by re-coding and reducing marketing expenses. For 2015, webinar marketing will rely solely on graphic design for the journal and barter ads plus a single page insert for the JSM meeting.
- d. **Transparency Initiative:** The expectation for 2015 revenue from the Initiative was increased to \$200 for first year charter members who will be eligible to renew beginning in October 2015.
- e. **Conference Revenue:** Registration fees for all categories but students were increased resulting in an overall increase of \$72,235. The increases followed an analysis of conference expenses for the last five (5) years that excluded the cost of staff support. The actual per person cost of the meeting is significantly higher than what we are charging members; however we are not making up the gap with increases in late and non-member fees. We expect late and non-member registration to help subsidize the lower price offered to members, but the registration prices are not keeping pace with the actual cost of the meeting. Conference fees for members were last increased in 2009 by \$30. Increasing the member registration rate by 20%, from \$455 this year to \$546 in 2015, gets us much closer to our actual cost per person, while still preserving a price break for members.

- f. Conference Expenses: Expenses have been reduced by eliminating web upload of speaker presentations and returning to the tradition of speakers loading their own presentations at the start of sessions (\$16,000 reduction). Changing the size of the final program to 8-1/2 x 11 inches, with black and white printing and saddle stitch binding results in a \$6,265 saving. ResearchHack expenses have also been reduced by \$7,900 to a not-to-exceed amount of \$5,000. The expectation of \$10,000 in sponsor support is unchanged. A casino night theme was proposed for the Saturday night post-banquet party and the conference committee has agreed to hold expenses to no more than \$5,000.

Council discussion followed.

There was agreement to make three changes to the revised budget proposed for 2015.

1. Retain the day and a half, in-person March 2015 council meeting. There was consensus that the very small savings was not worth the trade-off of productive council time spent focused on significant issues and activity underway.
2. Reduce the number of paid webinars from nine (9) to seven (7) for a total of 12 webinars in 2015 (seven paid, one professional development free to AAPOR members, and four task force webinars also free to AAPOR members). Education Chair Anna Weincrot had expressed concern about overload the potential audience.
3. Eliminate the book sale. Conference Chair Dawn V. Nelson confirmed that student volunteer effort could be put to more productive use and member interest in the sale had declined as measured by responses to the conference survey and the decline in sales revenue.

Dawn noted that the committee is continuing to work on plans for the Saturday night casino event and there is an expectation of revenue from the advanced poker course with Lee Childs and sales of poker chips. The details are still under discussion. The revenue is expected to result in revenue to support student activities.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Michael Link stated that the regular meeting of the Executive Council would adjourn at 1:30 p.m. EST to permit the council to reconvene in Executive Session.

Dan Merkle moved, seconded by Rob Santos to adjourn the Executive Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Session was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Michael Link advised Susan Tibbitts that the council requested that she prepare a regular update for each council meeting on staff activities.

During the Executive Session a motion was offered by Rob Santos, seconded by Cliff Zukin to approve the 2015 revised budget as presented with the three changes agreed to in council discussion during the regular meeting. The motion carried unanimously.