

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING**

**January 17-18, 2008  
Fort Lauderdale, FL**

Executive Council Members Present:

**Nancy Mathiowetz** – President  
**Richard Kulka** – Vice President/President Elect  
**Robert P. Daves** – Past President  
**Dawn V. Nelson** – Secretary/Treasurer  
**Kate Stewart** – Associate Secretary/Treasurer  
**Frank M. Newport** – Conference Chair  
**Vince Price** – Associate Conference Chair  
**Charlotte G. Steeh** – Standards Chair  
**Mary Losch** – Associate Standards Chair  
**Carl Ramirez** – Membership and Chapter Relations Chair  
**Adam Safir** – Associate Membership and Chapter Relations Chair (via phone)  
**Mark M. Blumenthal** – Communications Chair  
**Mike Brick** – Associate Communications Chair  
**Mark A. Schulman** – Sr. Councilor-at-Large  
**Scott Keeter** – Jr. Councilor-at-Large

Staff Members Present:

**Kristin Povilonis** – Executive Coordinator  
**Monica Evans-Lombe** – Association Manager  
**Pat Lewis** – Communications Director  
**Melissa Whitaker** – Meeting Planner (Day 2, via phone)

Guest:

**Linda Dimitropoulos** – Conference Operations Committee Chair (Day 2)

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Nancy Mathiowetz, President, called day 1 of the 2-day meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. (EST) Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>.

**II. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED**

Members of the AAPOR Executive Council voted in favor of the following resolutions:

1. **RESOLVED** to adopt slate of candidates for 2008 elections for Executive Council. Rob Daves moved; Mary Losch seconded; 13 “yes” votes, 0 “no” votes and 1 abstention.
2. **RESOLVED** to authorize the three presidents to spend up to \$20,000 to retain the PR firm, PRISM, to assist AAPOR with communications. Dawn Nelson moved; Mary Losch seconded; unanimously passed.
3. **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes from the November meeting (after Strategic Marketing Committee names are inserted). Rob Daves moved; Charlotte Steeh seconded; unanimously passed
4. **RESOLVED** to officially revise the 2008 operating budget to incorporate \$10,000 for the multicultural conference in the 2008 AAPOR budget, bringing the 2008 budget deficit to \$82,000. Dawn Nelson moved; Scott Keeter seconded; unanimously passed.

5. **RESOLVED** to authorize conference operations and AMP to obtain information on three of the 4 sites being considered for the 2011 conference: Boston, San Francisco, and Phoenix Rob Daves moved; Mary Losch seconded; unanimously passed.
6. **RESOLVED** that Deborah Jay replace Frank Newport on the POQ Advisory Committee for a 4-year term (2008-2012). Mark Schulman moved; Dick Kulka seconded; unanimously passed.

The following four motions were made and voted on by the Executive Council during its December conference call. Dawn Nelson, Secretary-Treasurer, asked that they be incorporated into the January minutes as follows:

7. **RESOLVED** to authorize the Investment Committee to proceed with investing \$75,000 of endowment funds in Morgan Keegan's Full Growth Strategic Allocation Model. Kate Stewart moved; Rob Daves seconded; unanimously passed.
8. **RESOLVED** to allocate in the 2008 budget \$10,000 for Survey Practice and/or Public Opinion Pros publication support. Mike Brick moved; Mark Schulman seconded; unanimously passed.
9. **RESOLVED** to adopt the 2008 operating budget as outlined with the addition of \$10,000 for publication assistance for *Survey Practice* and/or *Public Opinion Pros*, leaving us with an approximate budget deficit of \$72,000. Dawn Nelson moved; Mary Losch seconded; unanimously passed.
10. **RESOLVED** to take no action on three formal complaints received the end of November and December. Charlotte Steeh moved; Scott Keeter seconded; unanimously passed

### III. DECISIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Decision:** Move forward working with PRISM. Committee to work with PRISM to include: Nancy Mathiowetz, Frank Newport, Mary Losch, and Kate Stewart.
2. **Decision:** Move forward on the formation of an ad hoc committee on pre-election surveys.
3. **Decision:** Move forward with conversations with the Roper Center to archive pre-election data and related materials.
4. **Decision:** On student paper awards, current students can submit papers that have been published. An individual could not win the award twice, but a student could be eligible for the award if he or she had been an honorable mention in the past.
5. **Decision:** Move forward with the capacity building on the AAPOR web site for *Survey Practice*. It was also decided to formalize in a memo of understanding between the current editors of *Survey Practice* and AAPOR specific expectations, deadlines, and process for evaluation.
6. **Decision:** Not to change the current policy that the Chair of the Standards Committee does not make formal complaints, but could, if the issues arise, contact a committee member or Executive Council member who would then make a formal complaint.

### IV. DISCUSSION NOTES

#### A. PRESIDENT'S UPDATE (DAY 1)

Nancy Mathiowetz, President, submitted a written report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). The following items were brought forth for more discussion:

1. New Hampshire Primary and AAPOR's response: Nancy Mathiowetz updated the Executive Council on the latest efforts involving the New Hampshire primary and how AAPOR is responding to the results of that primary. AAPOR is in the process of doing three things:
  - A Released a press statement about forming an ad hoc committee to review and disseminate information pertaining to the primary results
  - B. Archive data related to New Hampshire Primary (work with Roper Center)
  - C. Conduct a public form, supported by the Kaiser Foundation, at a date to be announced.
2. Nancy Mathiowetz has been talking with the public relations firm, PRISM, about helping AAPOR develop its message platform, generate one-page publications, take press calls, place press calls, provide media training, and attempt to get AAPOR's name in the media. PRISM has offered to help AAPOR for a 3-week period at a cost of \$20,000. Discussion of this issue was tabled until after the nominations for elections.

**B. NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS (Rob Daves, Past President)**

The Executive Council went into executive session at 1:33 PM to discuss nominees for the 2008 Executive Council elections.

Day 1: Executive Council adjourned at 6:02 p.m. (EST)

Day 2: Executive Council called to order at 8:30 a.m. (EST), Friday January 18

**C. PRESIDENT'S UPDATE (DAY 2)**

1. Following the adoption of the slate of candidates for the 2008 AAPOR Executive Council elections (see Resolution #1 above), Nancy Mathiowetz, President, encouraged everyone to send her feedback on this year's nomination's process. A full discussion on the nomination's process will be held at the September 2008 Executive Council meeting.
2. The Executive Council continued its discussion concerning the New Hampshire Primary and AAPOR's response. Specifically, Executive Council discussed retaining the services of a PR firm, PRISM, to assist with communications until right after Super Tuesday (February 5). Concerns were raised regarding the additional expense given EC has passed a deficit budget for 2008. After discussing the financial health of AAPOR, the benefits of contracting with the PR firm at this important time when AAPOR can contribute to the discourse around the elections and election polling prevailed (see Resolution #2 above). Nancy Mathiowetz, Frank Newport, Conference Committee Chair, Mary Losch, Associate Standards Chair, and Kate Stewart, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, will work with PRISM on AAPOR's official message.
3. Discussion also centered around exploring a "giving" campaign to help with AAPOR's communications efforts. Jennifer Rothgeb, AAPOR Endowment Chair, will be contacted about interest in launching that effort.
4. Going back to the discussion of how AAPOR is responding to the New Hampshire primary results, Dick Kulka, Vice President/President Elect, Scott Keeter, Jr. Councilor-at-Large, Vince Price, Associate Conference Chair, and Adam Safir, Associate Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, will work with Nancy Mathiowetz to identify potential candidates for the ad hoc committee, which will then be vetted to the entire Council. Nancy Mathiowetz informed the Executive Council of some potential funding for the committee and the prospect of obtaining a research assistant to help with this full effort.

**D. SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT**

Dawn Nelson, Secretary-Treasurer, submitted a written report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). The following items were brought forth for more discussion.

1. Dawn Nelson requested Council approval of the November 2007 EC meeting minutes (see Resolution #3 above).
2. Dawn Nelson requested that AAPOR council formally revise the 2008 AAPOR budget in order to document the movement of AAPOR's \$10,000 contribution to the multi-cultural conference from fiscal year 2007 to fiscal year 2008 (see Resolution #4 above). Mike Brick, Associate Communications Chair, raised the need for AAPOR to be more proactive in its arrangements with conferences to ensure AAPOR and/or POQ are inserted in the discussions about publications and other activities that may be an outgrowth of a conference.
3. Dawn Nelson presented the November 2007 financial statement and noted that AAPOR will end 2007 in the black due, in part, to the Annual Conference expenses being less than planned; sponsorships at the Annual Conference were up, receipt of much more than expected revenue from POQ, and the savings seen from the Communications Director position not being filled the full year.
4. Vince Price suggested AAPOR plan for "booms" and "busts" in its budget cycles to facilitate higher expenses during election years when AAPOR EC is most active.
5. Dawn Nelson and Kate Stewart will work with Liz Martin at AMP to develop a cross-walk that will enable comparisons between the new 2008 budget structure and the old 2007 structure.

#### **E. CONFERENCE PROGRAM AND CONFERENCE OPERATIONS REPORT**

1. Frank Newport, Conference Chair, updated the Executive Council on conference activities. The abstract review committee (comprised of Janice Ballou, Larry Hugick, Dan Merkle, Patricia Moy, and Frank Newport and Vince Price) met in December to review the abstract and compile the 2008 conference sessions. This year, 441 abstracts were submitted, with 397 being accepted. The Plenary Session is being co-sponsored with Tulane University and will focus on post-Katrina recovery efforts and public opinion concerning those efforts. The session will include Tulane University's President Scott Cohen, Xavier's Norman Francis, as well as local, state, and federal officials who have been instrumental in post-Katrina recovery efforts. Pat Lewis, Communications Director, will work with public relations department at Tulane to send out press releases as we move closer to conference dates. It was agreed to produce a high quality tape of the session.
2. The Executive Council discussed the process of selecting award winners for the Sudman Student Paper Award and the possibility that someone could win an award twice. Vince Price brought the issue before to the Executive Council and asked for clarification about the eligibility of previously published papers and past award winners. The Executive Council decided that papers previously published could be considered for the award. It was also decided that an individual could not win the award twice, but could be eligible for the award if he or she had been an honorable mention in the past. Vince Price will compose some clarifying language in the 2009 Call for Papers as well as update the compensation for winners of the Sudman Student Paper Award, again for the 2009 conference. Carl Ramirez, Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, and Adam Safir will also explore putting in place a mechanism for inclusion of the chapter award winner papers in future Annual AAPOR Conferences.
3. The issue of adding more special interest sessions or panels to the Annual Conference was discussed. Possible ways to encourage the participation of special interest groups at conferences will be researched by Frank Newport and Carl Ramirez.
4. Linda Dimitropoulos, Conference Operations Committee Chair, presented an overview on plans for the 2008 Annual Conference in New Orleans.

Sponsorships for the Annual Conference are down at this time (have \$50,000 of \$120,000 goal). A push to garner more sponsorships will be done in the next week to remind companies about the sponsorship opportunities available at the upcoming meeting. Linda Dimitropoulos informed the Executive Council that the RFPs were sent out in an effort to provide music for the receptions to help support local musicians affected by Hurricane Katrina. The Executive Council asked that this effort of using local musicians be emphasized in marketing and conference materials.

The Executive Council discussed various opportunities that AAPOR conference attendees could participate in helping to rebuild New Orleans. It was decided that those opportunities will be posted on the AAPOR web site and listed in the AAPOR newsletter. The Executive Council asked Melissa Whitaker, AAPOR Meeting Planner, and Linda Dimitropoulos to explore a tour of New Orleans with the “Women of the Storm” group as an official conference activity. The Executive Council would also like AMP Staff to explore how monetary donations could be collected at the Annual Conference for a charitable organization in New Orleans.

5. 2009 Conference: Concern over available hotel meeting space at the Harbor Beach Marriott was discussed after seeing that construction on a planned 10,000 square foot ballroom, which AAPOR needs for its 2009 conference, had not been started. Executive Council members will be touring the property later in the afternoon and can address further concerns then.
6. Site Selection for 2011 Annual Conference: The Executive Council reviewed a listing of potential cities (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) to host the 2011 Annual Conference and passed a resolution to explore four sites: Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco and Phoenix (see Resolution #5 above). Information previously obtained for Philadelphia is still current so there is no need to send an RFP to Philadelphia.

## **F. COMMUNICATIONS**

Mark Blumenthal, Communications Chair, and Mike Brick, Associate Communications Chair, submitted written reports in advance of the meeting (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). The following items were brought forth for more discussion.

1. AAPOR Newsletter: Mark Blumenthal informed the Executive Council that the new electronic AAPOR newsletter is almost ready to be released to members. A postcard will be sent to members announcing the electronic newsletter. A protocol will be developed to determine tasks needed from AMP staff and committee members to produce the newsletter in the future.
2. Web site Development: Mark Blumenthal discussed ideas of cleaning up the functions of the AAPOR web site to make it more seamless to members. Some of the features the Communication Committee wants to develop regarding the web site are the same as what the Membership Committee would like to see. These two groups along with AMP staff will discuss the current web site, hosting the membership database, membership directory, and e-commerce options. This issue will be further discussed at the March Executive Council meeting.
3. *Survey Practice*: Mike Brick informed the Council on the status of *Survey Practice*. Following-up on discussions on *Survey Practice* in December and the decision of Lisa Parmalee to put out the final edition of *Public Opinion Pros*, the Executive Council decided to move forward with the currently submitted articles as well as funding the capacity building on the AAPOR web site for *Survey Practice*. It was also decided to formalize in a memo of understanding between the current editors of *Survey Practice* and AAPOR specific expectations, deadlines, and a process for evaluation.
4. AAPOR Statement on Opt-In Surveys and Measurement of Error: A committee was established to review the issue of opt-in surveys and margin of error statement.

Committee members Mike Brick, Colm O'Muircheartaigh, and Richard Morin continue to meet on this project.

5. NewsU Course: Pat Lewis informed the Executive Council that the newest course "How Elections Work" is available from the Poynter Institute.

## **G. MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER RELATIONS**

Carl Ramirez, Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, and Adam Safir, Associate Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, submitted a written report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). The following items were brought forth for more discussion.

1. Membership Outreach to Students: The Membership Committee continues to focus efforts on student membership. AAPOR information was circulated to 13 graduate school outreach programs. Carl Ramirez and Adam Safir requested Council's help in recruiting someone to serve as a student liaison who would work with student members to provide services or act as a focal point for students.
2. While serving as Membership and Chapter Relations Chair, Katherine (Kat) Draughon revitalized/created the Docent Program. Because Kat also served as advisor/member of the Conference Operations Committee during her term on AAPOR Council, the Docent Program became attached to the conference. Consequently, both Membership (Carl Ramirez/Adam Safir) and Conference Operations (Linda Dimitropoulos/David DesRoches, Associate Conference Operations Chair) were uncertain who was responsible for organizing this year's Docent Program. The feeling of the Executive Council was that the Membership Committee should oversee the Docent program while the Conference Operations committee oversaw the conference volunteers' program.
3. Membership Survey: Carl Ramirez informed the Executive Council that the membership survey closed on January 11, 2008. Carl Ramirez and Adam Safir will analyze the survey data after it's cleaned and linked with AMP's IMIS database and then work with Pat Lewis to publicize the results. Carl Ramirez and Adam Safir will investigate ways to put the dataset on the web site to make it available to members while protecting the identity of respondents. Abbreviated results of the survey will be discussed at the Business Meeting of the Annual Conference. The Strategic Marketing Committee will also be reviewing the survey data to garner marketing initiatives. Mike Brick suggested that a comparison of the data and non-response would be a good article for *Survey Practice*. Based on a quick examination of the preliminary results, the Executive Council felt it was heading in the right direction with changes it had instituted and initiatives it had started this year.

## **H. STANDARDS REPORT**

Charlotte Steeh, Chair of the Standards Committee, submitted a written report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). The following items were brought forth for more discussion.

1. Amicus Brief Update: The Amicus Brief has been turned over to AAPOR's attorney, Duane Berlin, for review.
2. Duane Berlin reviewed the Conflict of Interest policy and had some minor comments but nothing substantive.
3. Cell Phone Task Force: Charlotte Steeh informed the Executive Council that the Statement on Cell Phone Use from the Cell Phone Task Force was revised and awaiting another round of comments. The Executive Council requested to see the recommendations section of the report and to post at least this section on the web site as soon as possible. Charlotte Steeh will circulate a revised statement to Executive Council for an electronic vote.

4. Violations: Executive Council discussed whether members of the Standards Committee could file formal complaints if they become aware of them or if people submitting complaints refuse to file a formal complaint. The Executive Council discussed this issue and felt it was best not to change the current policy that the Chair of the Standards Committee not make a formal complaint, but could contact a committee member or Executive Council member who would then make a formal complaint.
5. Proactive Steps: Brief discussion on taking proactive steps by informing Pat Lewis of the location of a push poll so we can get a press release on push polls out to our media contacts in that area.
6. Internet Survey Task Force: Council suggested that Mike Brick and Reginald (Reg) Baker discuss the possibility of combining efforts (Mike Brick's Opt-in Surveys and Reg Baker's Internet Survey Task Force request).

#### **I. COUNCILORS-AT-LARGE**

1. Scott Keeter, Jr. Councilor-at-Large, discussed the selection of the new POQ editor(s) and updated Executive Council on the January conference call in which Executive Council members unanimously endorsed the POQ Advisory Committee's recommendation of Jamie Drucker and Nancy Mathiowetz as co-editors of POQ.
2. POQ Advisory Committee Update: Council proposed that Deborah Jay (from Field Research Corporation) replace Frank Newport on the POQ Advisory Committee since Frank Newport's term has ended (see Resolution #6 above).
3. Awards: Mark Schulman, Sr. Councilor-at-Large, informed the Executive Council that there were currently four nominations for the Innovation Award and the committee (comprised of Don Dillman, Mick Couper, Patricia Moy and Fran Featherstone) would have a conference call at the end of the month. Mark Schulman said the description of this award needs to be updated on the AAPOR web site. On other awards, additional nominations are sought for the Policy Impact Award (Rob Daves, Past-President chairing) while the AAPOR Award has a full slate of considerations (Nancy Mathiowetz chairing).

#### **J. NEW BUSINESS/OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A conflict of interest issue concerning POQ associate editors and their ability to publish in the journal was discussed briefly. It was decided this is an issue for the POQ Advisory Committee to take up and investigate.

The next scheduled meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Executive Council will be held on March 14, 2008, in Washington, DC, at the Pew Research Center.

#### **K. ADJOURN**

Day 2 of the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m. (EST), Friday January 18<sup>th</sup>.

The Executive Council toured the hotel property at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn V. Nelson  
Secretary

As prepared by Kristin Povilonis