

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

**September 7, 2007  
Washington, D.C.**

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  
**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:

**Michael P. Flanagan** – Executive Coordinator  
**Monica Evans-Lombe** – Association Manager  
**Pat Lewis** – Communications Director

Guests:

**Peter V. Miller** – *POQ* Editor (section report only)  
**Paul Lavrakas** – Cell Phone Task Force Chair (section report only)  
**Dan Merkle** – Investment Committee Chair (via phone, section report only)

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Nancy Mathiowetz, President, called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. EST.

**II. DISCUSSION NOTES**

- A. Consent Agenda – Nancy Mathiowetz provided Council with a detailed summary of items (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) to be considered for approval under the consent agenda. Council requested that item #10, Membership & Chapter Relations: Decision item - \$2300 for travel to chapter meetings, and #11, *Survey Practice* Editor Report, be pulled for further discussion. All other items under the consent agenda were accepted as presented.

**B. POQ**

1. POQ Methodology Discussion – An ad hoc committee was formed to study the possibility of expanding *Public Opinion Quarterly's* ability to publish methodological research. Chaired by Vince Price, the committee examined whether there is an empirical need for an increase in the publication of articles dealing with survey methodology, and if so, whether an expansion of *POQ* is the correct way to address that need.

Having considered a variety of issues related to its charge and consulting the editorial offices of *POQ*, the committee arrived at several general conclusions and recommendations as presented to

Council in their written report (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). Council discussed the recommendations presented by the committee and passed the following resolutions:

**RESOLVED** that AAPOR will make a commitment to support the expansion of pages of POQ by roughly an issue a volume (e.g., 160 pages: 40 pages per issue)

**RESOLVED** that AAPOR authorizes the editor of *POQ* to publish a special issue per volume; no longer requiring special approval from Executive Council for finances or content.

Council noted that currently the special editions of the *POQ* are open access to everyone and as we move forward, that feature should be maintained. Council wanted to clarify that the resolution did not mandate the editor to publish a fifth edition; rather it provided support to the editor to use his/her discretion to publish a fifth issue or not. It was also noted that in order to keep the *POQ* the mainstay of the public opinion research field, AAPOR needs to provide good editorial support by providing appropriate resources to the editorial office. Council noted that the health and vitality of *POQ* is very important and agreed that they should first determine AAPOR's vision for POQ and then (in November) think about how to fund the vision.

2. POQ Publisher Discussion – A *POQ* Contract Renewal Advisory Ad Hoc Committee was formed to recommend whether or not POQ should negotiate its publisher contract renewal exclusively with Oxford University Press (OUP); and second, to oversee the negotiation of the new contract.

Mark Schulman reported that the committee has reviewed the current contract with OUP and consulted with the editorial offices of *POQ*. The Committee provided Council with a written report (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports), detailing their discussions and recommendations. Council discussed the recommendations presented by the committee and passed the following resolution:

**RESOLVED** that AAPOR: 1) informs OUP that APPOR will defer for one year the decision to renew a long term contract; and 2) as an addendum to the current contract, negotiate with OUP financial arrangements to assist with transition to new editor and possible expansion of the Journal.

In the discussion, Council noted the need to ensure the contracts with both the editor and publisher do not expire within the same year. Council also felt it was important to involve the new editor in the decision process to renew the OUP contract or to seek a new publisher. President, Nancy Mathiowetz, will inform OUP of the resolutions passed by the Executive Council in regard to the OUP contract.

3. Update on Search for New Editor – The *POQ* Advisory Ad Hoc Committee was charged with the task of finding a new editor of the POQ. Peter Miller's term as editor will expire in January 2009 and the committee would like to have a new editor in place by the summer of 2008 to help ease the transition. Mark Schulman reported that the committee has held several conference calls to come up with a list of prospective candidates for the editor position. Bob Groves, Committee Chair, would like to contact the top four prospects to inform them of our interest in their candidacy before the names are released. There is fear that some prospects may not have institutional support. In that case Council would need to consider negotiating with OUP to help offset the costs or increase the price of the journal, which would affect membership dues. Council members requested that the meeting minutes reflect how very thankful AAPOR is to Peter Miller for all of his efforts during his years as *POQ* Editor.

#### C. Membership & Chapter Relations

1. Marketing plan – Carl Ramirez, Chair, reported that the Membership & Chapter Relations Committee is working to produce new marketing materials. The Committee provided Council with a written report (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) detailing the type of materials,

cost for production and distribution plans. It was suggested that a joint marketing effort between Membership and Conference might be more effective and cost efficient. Council asked that until a formal Marketing Committee is formed, the Membership and Conference Committees work together and jointly print a postcard to both generally market AAPOR and promote the 2008 Conference.

Nancy Mathiowetz informed Council that she was still in the process of forming a Marketing Committee. She asked Council to provide her with names of any AAPOR members with marketing experience who would be well suited to serve on the committee.

2. Member and lapsed member surveys – Carl Ramirez reported that he received the first round of comments, with limited response, on the two membership surveys. Survey Sciences Group (SSG) has agreed to conduct two surveys, one to current members and one to lapsed members from the past two years. While SSG has agreed to do a multi-mode survey, they also want to limit out-of-pocket costs for non-response follow up. Council discussed the recommendations presented by the committee (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) and passed the following resolution:

**RESOLVED** that AAPOR authorizes the Membership and Chapter Relations committee to spend up to \$1500 to defray SSG’s non-labor mailing costs for nonresponse follow-up mailings for the member and lapsed member surveys.

3. Discussion Item: \$2,300 for travel to chapter meetings – Council asked to pull this item (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) from the consent agenda for further discussion. Council authorized additional lodging nights for the Membership and Chapter Relations’ representative who will be traveling from the east coast to attend the PAPOR conference in San Francisco, assuming the total travel will not exceed the allotted funds approved in the 2007 Operating Budget.
4. Discussion Item: 2008 travel budget. Council authorized an expansion to three chapter conferences to the proposed 2008 committee travel budget.
5. Membership Directory – Carl brought to Council’s attention that the Membership Directory was printed late last year, resulting in all of the associated expenses being reflected in the current year’s budget. The Directory is usually printed in July/August, therefore printing now would mean incurring two years of expenses in one operating year. The committee recommended to Council that AAPOR defers printing a new directory until the 2008 budget year. Council agreed but asked that because this is a member benefit, the committee work with the Executive Office to produce a PDF version that can be posted to the website for members to download if they so choose. It was also determined that the PDF should be “locked” in some way to avoid the copying of addresses for inappropriate use.

In conclusion, the committee noted there have been discussions about revising the current format of the printed directory and asked that any input Council may have, be sent to them for further discussion. It was also suggested that the Committee modify the upcoming membership survey to include a question measuring the need and desire of a printed directory.

President Nancy Mathiowetz requested that the meeting minutes reflect AAPOR Council’s collective thanks to both Carl and Adam for their hard work and efforts.

#### D. Secretary/Treasurer

1. Financial Status –July Financial Statements – Dawn Nelson noted that AAPOR is in a better financial situation than expected, primarily due to actual expenses being less than budgeted expenses. Dawn asked if anyone had questions on the July Financial Statements (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). Hearing none, she informed Council that she has been working on

revising line items in the Operating Budget and asked that any budget requests be sent to her and Kate Stewart so they can begin preparing the 2008 budget.

2. AAPOR Investment Policy – Dan Merkle, Investment Committee Chair, joined the council meeting by telephone to provide an overview of the draft AAPOR Investment Policy Statement (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports), noting that the policy statement does not seek permission to invest funds; rather it provides guidance on how to invest. The Endowment Committee would like to invest some of their funds in order to receive a higher rate of return. Once Council approves the Investment Policy, those guidelines should be followed and it will require Council approval to make any adjustments.

After discussion it was noted that the term operating funds should be changed to accessible funds. It was also noted that AAPOR should not get into the subprime area or investment mortgages. Additionally, the asset class may be a little too aggressive and AAPOR should consider lowering the minimum weight. Finally, AAPOR will need a Money Manager and this could be Morgan Keegan or some other firm or individual. AAPOR's funds should be invested in Mutual Funds opposed to Equity funds in order to avoid any conflicts of interest or what some members might find socially unacceptable.

Council asked Dawn and Kate to relay Council's comments to the committee and circulate a new version to be voted on electronically. President Nancy Mathiowetz thanked Dan Merkle for drafting the policy statement and keeping the Investment Committee on track.

#### E. Standards

1. Cell Phone Task Force Draft Report – Paul Lavrakas, Chair of the Cell Phone Task Force, joined Council to get feedback and answer questions regarding the written draft report submitted (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports). The Task Force was established, under the Standards Committee, to begin a draft document that eventually would provide survey researchers with information that should be considered when planning and implementing telephone surveys with respondents who are reached via cell phone numbers in the United States. Paul noted that the task force members did not feel comfortable calling this document standards or best practices but were comfortable with guidelines. Paul also noted that this is a working document and would likely need to be updated annually.

Council discussed with Paul their desire to make the document a broadly valuable resource that reaches many different audiences and suggested the committee consider adding a layer of people to help create separate documents for different audiences. Council provided Paul with a few suggestions to take back to the committee, such as an Executive Summary with embedded links to *POQ* with more illustrative examples that would follow through on key points; a glossary of terms, weighting issues, and technical appendices. Paul asked that any other edits or suggestions be sent to him via email or hard copy next week. He also requested names of "operational" individuals who might be good reviewers for the next draft of the report. In order to keep up with the *POQ* publication deadlines, Council asked that the report be completed by the Thanksgiving holiday. Council also requested that Paul work with Pat Lewis to develop something for the FAQ section of the new AAPOR website. Council thanked Paul for all of the work he and the task force have done.

2. Conflict of Interest statement – Mary Losch provided Council with proposed language (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) for the Conflict of Interest statement for presenters at the conference. The implementation would involve collecting this information at the time their abstract is submitted and require the presenter to have a slide in their presentation (a template slide would be provided) disclosing any conflicts. After further discussion, Council felt the proposed language was too specific and could create multiple questions and possibly discourage submissions. They asked that Mary simplify the language and list examples of specific conflicts.

Mary reminded Council this would require fast turn around approval since it is to be included in the abstract submission site.

3. Friend of the Court (FOC) Brief with CASRO – Mary Losch updated Council on discussions she has had with CASRO to update their existing FOC brief so that it can be used both individually by each organization and/or jointly if needed. Mary informed council of legal fees associated with updating this document and that CASRO would be willing to share these costs. After further Council discussion, the following resolution was passed:

**RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure of \$2,500 for AAPOR's share of the \$5,000 total lawyer fee for updating the CASRO's existing friend of the court brief on disclosure of respondent identity for joint or individual use by AAPOR and CASRO.

#### F. Conference

1. Member Involvement for New Orleans Conference – Frank Newport submitted a written proposal (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) he received from the University of New Orleans Survey Research Center regarding a project AAPOR could explore for volunteer opportunities prior to the 2008 conference in New Orleans. While Council thinks it could be a great opportunity, they are concerned about a number of areas including management of the project and completion of the project by volunteers.. Council was also concerned that other organizations in New Orleans have not had the opportunity to request assistance from AAPOR. Council asked that Frank work with his Conference Advisory Committee and present revised suggestions on the October Executive Council conference call.
2. Proposed cover for New Orleans Conference – Frank Newport provided Council with four cover art options. All agreed cover *number one* was preferable with the following modifications: 1) remove the theme text from the picture and replace it with the city and state 2) place the theme text below the picture 3) try to remove the microphone image on the picture. After discussion, council passed the following resolution:

**RESOLVED** to approve the saxophone cover (Cover #1) for the AAPOR conference program with the modifications as discussed at meeting.

3. Proposal to cut the mailed-out, printed Preliminary Program in half, with the full content available on line – Frank Newport submitted two documents for review prior to the Council meeting (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) containing examples of a condensed Preliminary Program and an online searchable program. Frank noted that by eliminating the paper titles and authors from the printed program it would reduce the size by roughly half, resulting in a significant cost savings of approximately \$3000 primarily because it removes the typesetting from preliminary program to final problem (which was very problematic last year). The detailed information would be made available online using software already available to AAPOR, at no cost, through our abstract vendor. The printed program would contain detailed information regarding social activities, short courses and registration with a condensed schedule of events containing only session titles. Council agreed and directed Frank to proceed with his proposed revision of the program.

#### G. Communications –

1. Website - Mark Blumenthal announced that the public launch of the new website will be Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.. The new member's only area will contain a single log in feature and President Nancy Mathiowetz will be sending an e-mail to all members listing their User IDs and Password on Monday morning, September 10. This website was designed by a professional firm and Pat Lewis, our Communications Director. Mark Blumenthal requested that the minutes reflect Council's appreciation to Steve Everett who built the original AAPOR website all by himself.

Two areas of the website that will require additional funding to customize would be the Blue Book and Directory. Mark noted that Council should consider this when the budget process begins for next year. Mark also asked Council to help identify volunteers to draft 200-300 word entries for the FAQ section of the website.

2. *Survey Practice* – Council asked to pull this report (see Appendix of Executive Council Reports) from the consent agenda for further discussion. To date (month 16 of 24 months), *Survey Practice* has not spent any of its funds; it is important to remember that AAPOR budgets do not carry over from year to year. In addition, there was concern expressed that *Survey Practice* is moving away from its original mission. Mike Brick will talk with John Kennedy about the goals of the *Survey Practice* and the schedule for launching.

- H. President's Discussion Item: AAPOR's Public Voice - Nancy Mathiowetz asked the Executive Council: What do we want our public voice to be? How do we position ourselves both proactively and reactively? Further, when an AAPOR President expresses his/her personal opinions on an issue, the public often attributes these comments to the collective Association rather than to the individual - -what does Council think of this? Council members had several comments and advice. For example, while commenting on certain issues may give AAPOR publicity, Council noted that we do not want to make a news story out of an issue that is of no importance to the members. Further, caution should be taken to not always point out negative issues but also promote positive ones. Council advised those who respond to the press should reference the AAPOR mission statement when in question and speak to specific standards or best practices that AAPOR has in place. Finally, the Council noted that one can refer a reporter to an AAPOR member who an expert in the field.
- I. New Business - Nancy Mathiowetz thanked everyone attending the monthly conference calls. After discussion it was decided to continue with the October Executive Council conference call and keep the November meeting down to one day, Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Council would like to explore the option of holding the January meeting in Florida or New Orleans instead of Washington, D.C.

Kate Stewart requested that there be a folder for each committee within the Council meeting folder for ease of use and organization.

Charlotte was asked to contact Tom Smith regarding standards definition issues 1) start thinking about cell phones; 2) how response rate calculator can be adapted for listed samples; and 3) developing other response rate calculators for other types of samples.

Scott noted he will talk with Tom Smith regarding the book awards committee and present a query to EC in October to clarify who is eligible for the award.

### **III. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED**

While considering the agenda, a majority of the members of the AAPOR Executive Council voted in favor of the following resolutions:

1. RESOLVED to pass all items in the consent agenda after removing the Membership & Chapter Relations decision item - \$2300 for travel to chapter meetings and the *Survey Practice* Editor's report. Vince moved; Scott seconded; passed unanimously.
2. RESOLVED that AAPOR will make a commitment to support the expansion of pages of POQ by roughly an issue a volume (e.g., 160 pages: 40 pages per issue) – Vince moved; Rob seconded; passed unanimously.

3. RESOLVED that AAPOR authorizes the editor of POQ to publish a special issue per volume; no longer requiring special approval from Executive Council for finances or content. Vince moved; Mike seconded; passed unanimously.
4. RESOLVED that AAPOR: 1) informs OUP that APPOR will defer for one year the decision to renew a long term contract; and 2) as an addendum to the current contract, negotiate with OUP financial arrangements to assist with transition to new editor and possible expansion of the Journal. Dick moved; Dawn seconded; passed unanimously.
5. RESOLVED that AAPOR authorizes the Membership and Chapter Relations committee to spend up to \$1500 to defray SSG' non-labor mailing costs for nonresponse follow-up mailing for the member and lapsed member surveys. Dawn moved; Mark S. seconded; passed unanimously.
6. RESOLVED to approve the expenditure of \$2,500 for AAPOR's share of the \$5,000 total lawyer fee to share the cost of updating the CASRO friend of the court brief on disclosure of respondent identity for joint or individual use. Mary moved; Mark S. seconded; passed unanimously.
7. RESOLVED to approve the saxophone (COVER #1) for the AAPOR conference program with the modifications as discussed at meeting. Frank moved; Charlotte seconded; passed unanimously.

#### **IV. NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Executive Council will be held on Friday, November 2, 2007, at the Gallup Organization in Washington, D.C.

#### **V. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m. EDST

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn V. Nelson  
Secretary

As prepared by Monica Evans-Lombe