

**American Association For Public Opinion Research  
Executive Council Teleconference Minutes  
July 8, 2010**

ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER.

Frank Newport	President	Present
Scott Keeter	Vice President	Present
Peter Miller	Past President	Present
Barbara O'Hare	Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Joseph Lenski	Associate Secretary-Treasurer	Present
Reg Baker	Standards Chair	Present
Timothy Johnson	Associate Standards Chair	Absent
Rob Santos	Conference Chair	Present
Dan Merkle	Associate Conference Chair	Present
Kelly Foster	Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Joe Murphy	Associate Membership & Chapter Relations Chair	Present
Jon Cohen	Communications Chair	Present
Rich Morin	Associate Communications Chair	Present
Roger Tourangeau	Councilor-at-Large	Present
Linda Piekarski	Councilor-at-Large	Present

**Staff**

John Waxman	Managing Partner, Sherwood Group	Present
Susan Tibbitts	Executive Director	Present
Barbara Gunderson	Administrative Director	Present
Kismet Saglam	Education Director, Sherwood Group	Present
Scott Freeman	CFO, Sherwood Group	Present
Andrew Massengill	Staff Accountant	Present
Deanna Marchetti	Communications & Marketing Manager	Present

**Guest**

Melissa Herrmann	Education Committee Chair	Present
------------------	---------------------------	---------

**I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Frank Newport called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. EDT.

**II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The draft minutes of the May 12, 2010 Executive Council meeting were reviewed. Reg Baker moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau, that the minutes be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

The draft minutes of the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Business meeting were reviewed. Minor editorial revisions were offered and accepted. Rich Morin moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau, that the Annual Business meeting minutes be approved as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **III. SECRETARY – TREASURERS REPORT**

Secretary-Treasurer Barbara O'Hare reported the draft financial report for the month ended June 30, 2010 shows net assets at \$1.59M vs. \$970K at the end of June 2009.

Membership revenue exceeded 2009 by \$40.1K with \$18.5K remaining in the 2010 budget. The Council was reminded that the 2010 budget reflects a membership goal of 5% growth. Additionally it was noted that beginning in 2010, revenue for POQ subscriptions paid with dues was moved from POQ and added to membership revenue proportionately by membership category.

Conference revenue exceeded 2009 by \$157K. Conference expenses, although ahead of 2009, are under budget by \$79K, with budgeted management fees related to the conference to be billed monthly through the end of the year.

General administration and operating expense exceeded 2009 by \$20K, but are on track for the remainder of the year.

Endowment revenue stands at \$16.6K with expenses of \$6K. Barb O'Hare reminded the Council that this year, and each year for the next four years, a total of \$75K would be released to operating revenue from the restricted Oxford University Press pledge.

#### **A. Midyear Forecast**

As requested at the May 2010 Council meeting, staff developed a midyear budget forecast to provide the Council with a picture of what can be expected for the remainder of the year. The forecast is based on actual expenses and revenue from the first six months of 2010, plus the last six months of 2009, adjusted for differences in planned programs and projects such as the website redesign. Assuming there are no significant changes to anticipated revenue or expenses as budgeted, a surplus of \$67K is projected. This solid financial position will allow AAPOR an opportunity to pursue budgeted initiatives for 2010.

#### **B. Multicultural Conference Revenue**

The Multicultural Conference was held in 2008 and AAPOR expects to receive a share of revenue from the meeting. Barb O'Hare will follow up on this item with Brad Edwards to determine when payment will be forthcoming.

#### **C. 2011 Draft Budget**

The first draft of the 2011 budget will be developed for Council review in September. To complete the budget draft, each committee will be asked to identify projects planned for 2011 and will be expected to submit their budget plans as soon as possible and no later than August 16. Committees should review the strategic plan and identify those initiatives that may impact budget planning for 2011. Additionally, committees should consider the time commitment required to accomplish the initiative, as many of the goals identified in the plan will require a multi-year effort. Committees should also identify those initiatives that appear to cut across committee lines for additional consideration and coordination.

#### **D. Chapter Dues**

AAPOR continues to hold all membership dues for the New England chapter until their officer structure is in place and a treasurer is designated. The Council was assured that current Chapter officers are aware of and supportive of the AAPOR's handling of the situation.

#### **E. Finance Committee**

Barb O'Hare offered some historical background to the Council preparatory to offering a motion to establish an Investments Committee. In 2005, the Secretary-Treasurer appointed Dan Merkle as the chair of the Finance Committee for a term of 5 years. Consistent with the bylaws requirement, Dan stepped down due to his responsibilities as the Associate Conference Chair. Barb O'Hare stated that the Finance Committee was originally established by vote of the Executive Council to consist of two AAPOR members; a 10 year member and a 5 year member, the Secretary-Treasurer (serving as Chair), the Associate Secretary-Treasurer, AAPOR Executive Coordinator, and two at-large members. Although membership on the Finance Committee has not strictly followed the structure approved by the Council, the committee has functioned successfully with the current structure for the past 5 years.

**Motion:** Appoint a Finance Committee to replace the existing committee, to be chaired by Janet Streicher and to include Dan Merkle, Trevor Tompson, Murray Edelman, Barb O'Hare and Joe Lenski; and further the Finance Committee be renamed the Investment Committee to better reflect the purpose. Barb O'Hare moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **IV. CONFERENCE REPORT**

Conference Steering Committee Chair Rob Santos reported on the post-conference survey; currently there are 573 completed surveys from conference attendees and 370 from non-attendees. Data collection will conclude in the next week and data processing and tabulations will follow. A report will be presented to the Council at the September meeting.

The committee met a month earlier than usual. They will continue to meet monthly up to the annual conference. A revised expense matrix for VIP attendees will be provided for Council approval in the near term. The planning committee will meet July 28 in Phoenix to look over the space and discuss program plans.

#### **A. Conference Theme**

Rob Santos proposed a theme titled *Media, Public Perception and Societal Conflict*. He stated that the three concepts will be inclusive of immigration issues, as well as other topics that are affecting society and currently generating conflict. Plenary and general sessions will be planned to address survey and public opinion research and polling, and look at how media, research and society interplay and influence each other.

**Discussion:** Council members recommended dropping 'media' from the title, observing that the term might be limiting and/or confusing. Following discussion, the theme was revised to *Public*

*Perception and Societal Conflict.*

**Motion:** To accept the 2011 annual conference theme as revised. Peter Miller moved, seconded by Roger Tourangeau. The motion was passed unanimously.

**B. Conference Steering Committee Organization Chart**

The Conference Operations Committee has been renamed the Social and Volunteer Sub-Committee. Rob Santos provided an updated organizational chart detailing the responsibilities of each sub-committee for 2011, noting that these responsibilities may change in the future as needed. He recommended a list of compensatory expenses for the committee in 2011. The expense matrix for the 2011 conference will be reviewed and approved by the Council at a later date. Council members were encouraged to send comments on these documents to Rob Santos.

**C. Future Site Selection**

The Conference Steering Committee is working with staff to put together an RFP for site selection in 2013 and beyond. Several cities have been identified. Results will be reported to the Council in September for final approval.

**V. STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Standards Committee Chair Reg Baker reported that Ron Langley's document on the NIH requirements regarding Human Subject Protection Training requirements has been posted to the website in the Standards area.

**A. ISO 20252**

The Sub-Committee on ISO 20252 Standard has reconvened to determine if the Standards Committee will make a recommendation to Council on what position, if any should be taken by AAPOR.

**B. AAPOR Archives**

Stephen Blumberg will continue to work with the University of Chicago on the processes and procedures necessary to update the AAPOR archives.

**C. Code Revision Communications**

The Standards Committee will work with the Communications Committee to determine if additional action is needed to communicate the changes to the AAPOR Code to the membership and to the profession at large.

**D. ICC International Code**

The European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR) contacted AAPOR in 2009 regarding endorsing the ICC International Code. The discussion was tabled at that time while AAPOR worked on the revisions to its own Code. A sub-committee was formed to make a recommendation to Council to determine whether AAPOR should agree to the request from ESOMAR. Ron Langley is chairing the sub-committee, which plans to make a recommendation to Council in the next couple of months.

**E. Standards Definition Sub-Committee**

Tim Johnson is acting as liaison to the Standards Definition Sub-Committee, which reports to the Standards Committee. They are currently working on revisions to the response rate calculator to reflect the latest response rate calculation standards.

**F. Task Force Reports**

The Oxford University Press will publish an edited version of the Online Task Force Report in the next edition of the POQ.

Linda Piekarski reported the Cell Phone Task Force will have its full report to the committee next week and to the Standards Chair by July 19. It will be available for review by the Council at the September meeting.

Reg Baker advised the Council that appointment of a new task force is being considered to focus on the refusal conversion.

Proposal for Standards Committee role in the establishment of AAPOR Task Forces

The Standards Committee proposed procedures to give the Standards Committee a direct role in the establishment of new task forces. The proposal applies to the creation of all task forces, including those specific to the standards area. The criteria necessary to establish task forces includes the existence of established research on the subject matter and a research record available that can be used as a basis for task force conclusions and recommendations. The proposed plan also describes the process for organizing a task force from origination through conclusion. As proposed, the Standards Committee will support the task force through the formation and the research process, but will have no formal responsibility to approve the conclusions of the task force. Council members were asked to review the proposal and to send comments to Reg Baker. The Council will review and vote on the proposal during the September meeting.

**G. Transparency Initiative**

Reg Baker stated that several volunteers have stepped forward to help develop the initiative and a number of organizations have signed up to participate. This initiative cuts across a number of areas and should be an important consideration in the budget process. Peter Miller, Scott Keeter and the Steering Committee will work on a plan to detail the budgetary implications for the draft budget due in September. Fundraising issues will also need to be considered.

The steering committee met for the first time June 22. It was a productive meeting focused on what the initiative will look like and next steps. There is some concern about the burden on the Standards Committee early on in the process. The Steering Committee will continue to meet monthly through the summer and will report to the Council in the fall to detail what resources will be needed and what the timetable will be.

Two sub-committees will be developed, the first to determine what material should be disclosed and the second to focus on the disclosure mechanism and the identification of potential organization partners to house the information.

Additionally, the Communication Committee will clarify the initiative for those who may be interested in participating but who want more information before joining.

## **VI. COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **A. Website Redesign**

Communications Chair Jon Cohen reported on work underway to redesign the AAPOR website for appearance, navigation and functionality. There is currently \$9K budgeted for the project, and there should be additional resources available as required. Staff is assembling information on website templates and functionality. The project encompasses other projects under discussion including but not limited to a new platform for *Survey Practice*, the eventual migration of AAPORnet to new hosting, relocation of the Heritage interview series, enhanced opportunity for member networking, and promotion of revenue generating products and services. A working sub-committee will be formed to guide functionality and strategy with a soft launch of the new site later this year and a formal launch early in 2011. To meet this aggressive schedule, detailed plans, features and cost expectations will be determined over the summer for Council discussion at the September 2010 meeting. The Sub-Committee on the Future of AAPORnet has developed a preliminary report, which the Communication Committee chairs are reviewing.

### **B. Blue Book**

Jon Cohen stated that the Committee is recommending moving the Blue Book to a fully dynamic online format from the current static PDF format. Currently, printed copies are mailed to members and a supply is provided to WAPOR, at an annual expense of \$9,600. Revenue from ad sales in 2009 was \$17.2K, and \$17.5K is budgeted for 2010.

The Committee has received a proposal from Sherwood for \$5,100 to convert the Blue Book to an online product, which will be an enhancement for member advertisers as well as consumers. There will be cost savings in future years by eliminating printing and distribution costs (and related labor) for the current hard copy version. This project would provide improved functionality for users and member advertisers, allowing the Blue Book to be downloaded on the fly, the addition of search functions, year-round ad sales, and regular updating of content. Some additional expense is forecast for related graphic design and for expanded marketing. Following discussion, there were no objections to moving the Blue Book to an online format.

### **C. Newsletter**

The Committee is planning a post-Labor Day issue. Council members will be contacted in August for updates from their committees.

**D. Social Networking**

The Committee is interested in creating a process to measure how AAPOR's social networking efforts translate into membership.

**E. Job Bank**

To date, 25 employers have registered and there are 13 job postings. AAPOR has received \$1,200 as a result of Job Bank activity to date

**F. Heritage Committee**

The Committee is now chaired by Adam Safir. Committee members met on June 16 and received assignments. They are also considering hosting the existing interviews on the Sherwood server. The interviews are currently hosted through the Kaiser Family Foundation.

**VII. MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Membership and Chapter Relations Chair Kelly Foster reported that AAPOR membership was 2,158 as of June 30, 2010, historically the highest membership as of this date in AAPOR's history. We are on track to achieve our membership goals for 2010, though the mix of membership types may be different than anticipated.

**A. Complimentary Membership**

Kelly Foster reported that 288 non-members attended the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference with only 68 signing the Code and accepting complimentary membership. It is unclear why so few non-member attendees accepted complimentary membership. The committee intends to reach out to those who were eligible to secure their membership. If the effort is successful, the committee is confident they will meet their budgeted goal of a 5% increase in membership.

**B. Membership Committee Goals for the Remainder of 2010**

The newly formed membership committee met recently and members were assigned to 7 sub-committees. The Committee Chairs are currently developing the charge for each committee. The committee has successfully completed their courtesy calls to first-time attendees to the conference. The committee chairs are working with staff to determine the most efficient division of responsibilities. A membership drive is planned for members who have not renewed for 2010.

The Committee plans to update the membership brochure. The Committee also recommends shifting approximately \$2,500 budgeted for membership activities to add to the \$1,600 budgeted to upgrade the membership booth. A new booth will be designed to better represent AAPOR. The technology currently available for booth construction allows for simple set-up and greatly decreased weight that will save money and labor on shipping and handling. There were no objections to this plan.

**VIII. STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE REPORT**

Strategic Planning Task Force Chair Roger Tourangeau outlined the procedures recommended for

bringing the strategic planning process to a conclusion. As proposed, the Council will review the plan during the meeting, and a few more days will be allowed for additional comments. From mid-July through August the membership will have an opportunity to comment on the plan. At the September meeting, the Council will review the revised plan for adoption.

**A. Initiative 2: Fundraising**

Initiative 2 of the plan proposed establishing a committee on fundraising. It is unclear if this will be a duplication of efforts with the Endowment Committee. The Endowment Committee is a standing committee of the association and is tasked with fundraising and disbursement of the endowment funds. This initiative has a broader scope than endowment fundraising. Dan Merkle will provide wording to clarify the distinction between the two committees.

**B. Mission Statement**

Following discussion, it was recommended that the wording of the proposed AAPOR mission statement be changed to the following:

*AAPOR is a professional organization dedicated to improving society by advancing the science and practice of survey and opinion research to give people a voice in the decisions that affect their daily lives.*

**Motion:** To accept the mission statement as revised. Peter Miller moved, Rob Santos seconded the motion. The motion was accepted unanimously. No changes were made to the bulleted sentences of the mission statement following, ‘We strive to’.

**Motion:** The council approves the version of the Strategic Plan put forth for member review. The plan will be revised as necessary for final review and approval in September by the Council. Roger Tourangeau moved, seconded by Rich Morin. The motion passed unanimously.

**IX. COUNCILOR-AT-LARGE REPORT**

The Survey-Based Legal Task Force met with AAPOR attorney Duane Berlin, who has recommended AAPOR join CASRO in support of the amicus brief on survey data. The draft brief is being prepared at no cost to AAPOR by an attorney for the plaintiff in a Federal appeals case. The Task Force will review the brief and will make a recommendation to Council. The brief deals with a dispute over the admissibility of survey data as evidence under certain circumstances. The case has potentially far-reaching consequences as precedent for the use of survey research as viable evidence in a trial.

**X. EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

**A. Conference Short Courses**

Education Committee Chair Melissa Herrmann reported the Education Committee is reviewing the evaluations for the short courses offered during the annual conference. The committee plans



to provide the feedback to the course instructors for the first time this year. A report will also be presented to Council. The short courses were well attended and well received. Based on turnout, the two-part courses, offered for the first time this year; and the strong course offered for the Sunday session were both successful.

#### **B. Online Education**

Active discussion is underway for AAPOR to develop the means to deliver webinars and other online or distance education directly. The development of new educational opportunities for members is among the initiatives in the strategic plan. AAPOR currently has a relationship with ASA for the delivery of content and course through the end of 2010. AAPOR members receive discounted registration and AAPOR is providing content and instructors, but the association doesn't receive any course revenue.

Kismet Saglam, Director of Education at Sherwood and other AAPOR staff have met several times with Chuck Shuttles, Chair of the Online Sub-Committee and have provided information on several aspects of the development process. The committee plans to make a recommendation to the Council after completing their review. There was discussion of the value of an educational needs assessment that could be accomplished in partnership with the member survey. Melissa Herrmann will prepare a recommendation on an educational needs assessment for Council review.

### **XI. OTHER BUSINESS**

Oxford University Press notified AAPOR there will be an increase of 4% for POQ. The contract specifies a 7% increase. President Frank Newport stated that he, Scott Keeter and Peter Miller approved the price increase subject to notification of the Executive Council.

The Council will be reviewing the contractual management agreement with the Sherwood Group. John Waxman informed the Council that staff time should be used wisely and efficiently to reduce the need for increases to the management fee. Staff will continue to work with the Council and committees to identify and address efficiencies.

It was noted that the Executive Council had decided not to make an official statement on the issues raised by the Daily Kos.com vs. Research 2000 controversy discussed at length on AAPORnet.

Frank Newport noted that the next meeting of the Executive Council will be held in Deerfield, IL at Sherwood offices on Thursday, September 16. To accomplish a busy agenda, Frank Newport requested that Council members plan to arrive on Wednesday night for a full day meeting on Thursday.

### **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting. Roger Tourangeau moved, seconded by Rob Santos. The motion passed unanimously.