



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

**American Association for Public Opinion Research**

**Executive Council Minutes**

**Friday, January 27, 2023**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Council:**

Jennifer Agiesta	Vice President
Paul Beatty	President
Jennifer Hunter Childs	Associate Secretary-Treasurer
Marjorie Connelly	Standards Chair
Michael Delli Carpini	Associate Education Chair
Aleia Clark Fobia	Associate Communications Chair
Yazmín García Trejo	Communications Chair
Ana Gonzalez-Barrera	Inclusion and Equity Chair
Liz Hamel	Councilor-at-Large
Allyson Holbrook	Associate Conference Chair
Ricki Jarmon	Councilor-at-Large
Cameron McPhee	Associate Standards Chair
Patricia Moy	Past President
Heather Ridolfo	Membership and Chapter Relations Chair
Alisu Schoua-Glusberg	Councilor-at-Large
Rodney Terry	Associate Inclusion and Equity Chair
Jerry Timbrook	Associate Membership and Chapter Relations Chair
James Wagner	Education Chair
Brady West	Conference Chair
Anna Wiencrot	Secretary-Treasurer

**Staff:**

Lailah Johnson	Program Manager
Leon Spinner	Membership Manager
Tristanne Staudt	Executive Director
Jackie Weisman	Marketing and Communications Director

**I. Welcome, Call to Order, Review, and Approval of Minutes (A/R) –Beatty**

**Beatty called the meeting to order at 8:34 am EST.**

Beatty welcomed the Council and opened the session by reminding everyone that the meeting will follow Robert’s Rules of Order. He asked Councilors to self-identify before speaking so that meeting minutes could accurately capture motions, seconds, and comments.

**Executive Council Meeting Minutes**

Beatty presented minutes from the December meeting.

**MOTION: [by Moy, seconded by Holbrook] to approve the minutes from the December 2022, Executive Council meeting. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

**II. Consent Agendas (A/R) – All**

Beatty asked if any of the items from the consent agenda needed to be pulled out for further discussion. Connelly asked to remove the Standards Report for a revision and to table it until the correction can be made.

Beatty asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda, with the removal of the Standards Report, as submitted.

**MOTION: [by Wiencrot, seconded by West] to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Later in the meeting, Connelly stated that the Standards Consent report could be resubmitted without changes.

**MOTION: [by McPhee, seconded by Weincrot] to approve the Standards Consent agenda. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

**III. Appointments (A/R) – All**

Ageista presented five nominees for the Public Service Award Committee.

**MOTION: [by Holbrook, seconded by Delli Carpini] to approve the nominees for the Public Service Award Committee. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Beatty presented four nominees for the AAPOR Award Committee.

**MOTION: [by Connelly, seconded by Agiesta] to approve the nominees for the AAPOR Award Committee. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **IV. President's Report (I/O)-Beatty**

Beatty noted that this is the last in-person meeting until the conference in May and that nominations would be the primary agenda item. Beatty called attention to several items on the agenda that could position AAPOR as having a more prominent role in making a public case for the vital importance of polling and survey research. First would be Mike Traugott's proposal for research on public opinion and attitudes toward polls. Garcia Trejo would then present a proposal to launch a podcast that should appeal to both members and potential members. After lunch Frank Newport would join the meeting to talk about the proposal stemming from the 2013 Task Force on Polling and Democracy. His proposal would launch a new publication that will highlight the relevance of polling and public opinion research. The action today would be to formulate an advisory committee for such work, although ultimately additional investment would be needed. Beatty opened the floor for questions or discussion.

#### **V. Executive Director's report (A/R)**

Staudt reported that the membership drive is going well with over 900 renewals as of Tuesday.

The new website and branding is now live. The registration portal has a new skin to match the website. She presented the Councilors with a gift of a travel mug with the new AAPOR logo. Councilors applauded the new designs.

The conference schedule has been finalized and acceptance notifications were sent out last Friday. Most of the vendors have been secured and planning for social activities is ongoing. Over 94% of the sponsorship goal has been achieved with some outstanding verbal commitments.

The strong renewals and sponsorships mean that AAPOR will not need to pull from financial reserves at this time, as had been discussed in December. After we have passed the higher-income renewal and conference registration period, we will likely still need to pull from reserves in May to pay conference bills and maintain balances through the end of the year.

#### **VI. Secretary's report (A/R) - Wiencrot**

Wiencrot stated that her update would be good news, within reason. AAPOR exceeded its yearly budgeted revenue and remained under budget. Overall, the net income loss for 2022 is \$462K, largely due to investment losses. The net operating loss was \$185K, which is significantly less than the budgeted loss. A draft audit report should be available by the end of April.

#### **VII. AAPOR Publications Governance Update - Wagner**

The Publication Governance Policy was revised. Council was asked to vote on the revised policy. Given that the original vote occurred in June 2021, many of the current councilors would not have been familiar with this history. Thus, Wagner provided background on the governance of

AAPOR's publications. In January 2019, the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Future of AAPOR's Journals was developed to see if resources devoted to journals were sufficient to recruit editors. In April 2020, the committee provided recommendations around the governance of journals. The committee's report, which is available confidentially to Council, indicated that support could vary depending on the journal and the editors. The recommendations suggested the roles be clarified surrounding the journals. Based on that, the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Governance of AAPOR's Journals was developed in April 2020 to propose structure and governance around the journals. This committee's report was circulated in April 2021 to Councilors and editors-in-Chief (EICs). It was approved in June 2021 with two edits, and led to the formation of the Publications Subcommittee, the body to which all journals would report. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Governance of AAPOR's Journals deliberated whether the new Publications Subcommittee should be a full committee itself with a representative on AAPOR's Executive Council, or whether it should be a Subcommittee under the Education Committee. The former approach was selected and included in the report.

In discussing where the Publications Subcommittee would be housed, the Committee on the Governance of AAPOR's Journals discussed whether it should be a full committee itself or whether it should continue to be a subcommittee of Education, as it is.

In meetings with the Education Committee Chair and Associate Chair, the journal editors had expressed some concerns, including regarding the appointment process for associate editors. This resulted in separate meetings with EICs and some revisions to the proposed governance structure. Among these were grandfathering in current editors to the changes in term limits and that Advisory Committees no longer have consent authority over the appointment of associate editors. The editors also were concerned that term limits could create undue difficulties finding appropriate associate editors. The revised policy also addresses some concerns with the budget process, which falls under the oversight of the Executive Council.

Councilors asked that the policy be revised to clarify what should be included in applications for an EIC position, suggested a wording change on concurrent searches, and asked for clarification on how complaints against the journals are handled. On the latter point, "journal feedback" is addressed in the policy as being directed to the Advisory Committee. Exactly how the "feedback" or complaint gets lodged is not addressed in the policy. Historically, complaints have been directed to the Editors.

Wagner will take these requests for clarification back to the Publications Subcommittee for revision and vote on a final document in March.

### **VIII. Nominations Committee (A/R) - Moy**

Moy presented the process of Nominations to the Executive Council, the Council discussed them and voted on candidates for the ballot.

## **IX. Conference update (A/R) - West**

West reviewed the details in the Conference Consent Agenda. He emphasized the need to comply with acceptance and registration deadlines.

West opened the floor to questions or discussions.

## **X. Committee on Public Opinion and Democracy (A/R) - Newport**

Frank Newport joined the meeting and provided background on the Working Group on Polling and Democracy, which was charged with reviewing the recommendations of the 2013 report issued by the Task Force on Polling and Democracy. Their work derives directly from AAPOR's mission and strategic plans, and is based on two assumptions - 1) Public opinion should be an important and key element of American society and information for elected leaders; and 2) It is difficult for leaders to incorporate public opinion into decision making. One goal of the working group and AAPOR is to make reliable information about public opinion available to interested parties. This renewed emphasis on making public opinion readily available fulfills AAPOR's mission, helps democracy, and AAPOR would benefit from having greater public identification with this work. Expanded branding could also increase membership, revenue, and the overall vitality of the association.

The medical field offers analogous procedures that might guide how AAPOR could accomplish this. For instance, medical associations provide guidelines and summaries of current literature for members. In addition, government task forces pull together medical recommendations based on existing literature.

The working group's major recommendation is that AAPOR sponsor a new e-journal, named The Public Pulse, which would summarize data on public policy and public opinion. Articles or summaries on currently relevant topics would be published on a flow basis. This journal would publish reviews and syntheses rather than original research. Articles could be revised as needed over time.

The proposal to Council provides an outline of the format for a synthesis article as well as details on oversight and budget. Three areas would need to be budgeted - 1) Associate Editors; 2) Survey Practice-like tech support - setting up a website, etc.; and 3) promotion activities. The task force views this effort as work as a vital contribution to AAPOR's mission.

Beatty opened to the Executive Council for questions or discussions with a suggestion that the next step for Council would be to vote on how to proceed, including appointing an advisory group to identify the next steps.

Many clarifying questions were asked, including how The Public Pulse aligns with Poll Trends in POQ and what the scope of the articles would be. Some concern was expressed about the feasibility of updating articles, and their value if that could not be achieved. Questions were raised about who would be invited to contribute to the publication, and compensation to contributors. There were also questions about the intended audience of the publication. Public Perspectives by the Roper Center, which no longer exists, was raised as a similar concept.

Members of Council asked if this proposal had been reviewed by the Publications Subcommittee. There was concern that there hasn't been a discussion with POQ about how this project would affect Poll Trends.

**MOTION: [by Beatty, seconded by Moy] to send the proposal to the Publications Subcommittee for discussion (noting that the Council has not yet approved it). The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **XI. Conduct Policy Update (A/R) - Connelly**

The Conduct Policy requires an update, per legal advice, including removing Chapter events from the policy's scope. The revised policy will need to be voted on by AAPOR's membership and the most efficient way of doing this is to pair the vote with the Executive Council election in the spring.

Many Chapters have adopted the national AAPOR policy, and would need to update this to specifically cover Chapter events. Three Chapters have no conduct policy in place. For insurance, AAPOR policy covers D/O for Chapters but not General Liability. Staudt is looking into having General Liability insurance to include the Chapters as well.

Councilors noted that it may be helpful to remind members of the Conduct Policy but also make members aware of the consequences of misbehavior.

AAPOR received a Conduct Code violation earlier this month. It is under investigation according to the existing policy. The outcome will be shared with Council at the next meeting.

The question was raised as to whether there is coordination between Chapter and National about Conduct violations. The policy currently requires it, but the lawyer does not advise such a policy.

The idea was floated to offer Bystander Training either to AAPOR Members or Chapter Councils (or both).

Connelly will send Council a proposed revision to Conduct Policy.

## **XII. Standard Definitions (A/R) - McPhee**

A final draft of the revised Standards Definitions was circulated for Council review in December. West provided feedback and revisions were made. The Response Rate Calculator worksheet is under revision now.

**MOTION: [by Holbrook, seconded by Connelly] to approve the current version of the Standards Definition Revision. The motion passed by majority vote with two abstentions.**

## **XIII. American Attitudes Towards Polls (A/R) - Traugott**

Traugott proposed a collaboration with AAPOR, a research project which would involve a committee of experts including some AAPOR members, intended to be a public-facing project with three audiences-1) policy makers and elected officials; 2) general public; and 3) AAPOR members. Work around this effort began in 2018; while it was interrupted in past years, it resumed this last fall.

The full proposal features two surveys - 1) one gauging public attitudes towards surveys on policy issues (not campaign or pre-election polls), e.g., assessment of polls that reflect opinion towards abortion, gun laws, etc., and 2) another examining how political polls are interpreted, including the interaction of preconceived notions or assessments of candidates or political leaning with assessments of survey findings. The second portion would be timed to coincide with election campaigns. At this stage, Traugott seeks support for this proposal from Council in principle. Traugott would work to secure grant funding. A research committee would be formed to design the studies, identify a subcontractor for data collection, conduct data collection and analysis, and develop a communication strategy, ideally with dissemination of results via multiple events.

Hamel noted that the Kaiser Family Foundation conducted a survey like this around 2001 in conjunction with Public Perspectives at the Roper Center. Traugott noted changes that have taken place in recent years that would warrant additional efforts.

Council voiced general support. The question was asked as to how research collaborators will be recruited/invited to join. Traugott asked Council to write a letter of support for this research venture.

**MOTION: [by Agiesta, seconded by Holbrook] for Council to write a letter of support for this research initiative. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

## **XIV. Communications Initiatives (A/R) - Garcia Trejo**

### **Podcasts**

Garcia Trejo reported that the Communications Committee has been considering a pilot for a podcast series. The goals of this series would be to enhance public awareness of polling and

surveys; it could also create fundraising opportunities and provide professional development education opportunities to the listeners. Garcia Trejo presented a proposal for a podcast series that would highlight existing programs and initiatives. The estimated budget for production by AAPOR staff is \$5400 and budget from an outside production company \$3000. The contractor's proposal is on DropBox and was reviewed by Garcia Trejo. The contractor could provide help with distribution.

If the pilot project is funded, AAPOR could potentially use the podcasts as a sponsorship opportunity. Additionally, AAPOR could include requests for donations in each podcast. A question was asked as to whether this would be an appealing sponsorship opportunity, as webinars in the past haven't sold well as a sponsorship opportunity. Perhaps this would speak to a different audience and provide a different opportunity for organizations. ASA's podcast Stats + Stories is an example of a similar product.

It would be important to evaluate use and reactions to the podcasts and also to ask about it in the Membership Survey.

The importance of having a strong and entertaining host was emphasized. Discussion included topics for podcasts, metrics for the proof of concept, and hosts. Councilors thought substantive topics would be more popular than activities of AAPOR.

**MOTION: [by Fobia, seconded by Wiencrot] to support the Podcast Pilot with up to a \$3500 budget. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

**MOTION: [by Moy, seconded by McPhee] to hire Studio Spain, LLC to produce three 15-minute episodes of the Podcast Pilot with up to \$3500 budget. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Following approval of the Podcast Pilot, content was discussed. Jenn Ageista, Courtney Kennedy, and Natalie Jackson will be in the first episode to discuss the "state of the polling industry." Future episodes will have substantively focused content.

## **VII. New Business**

Beatty called for new business.

Ridolfo requested feedback on the Membership Survey by February 13.

It was also noted that the Publications Committee needs to replace Moy and Dykema on the JSSAM Advisory Committee.

## **VIII. ADJOURN**

**MOTION: [by Moy, seconded by McPhee] to adjourn the open portion of the Executive Council meeting and move into executive session. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:17pm.