

APA Federal Planning Division  
Executive Committee Monthly Meeting  
17 June 2021  
(Via conference call)

## 1. Call to Order:

Approximately 1300 EST, 20 May 2021

## 2. Executive Committee (EC) Members and Officers in Attendance:

| <b>Office</b>                           | <b>Office Holder</b>                | <b>In Attendance</b> |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Chair*</b>                           | Andrew Wright                       | Yes                  |
| <b>Vice Chair (2nd Year) *</b>          | Abbey Ness                          | Yes                  |
| <b>Vice Chair (1st Year) *</b>          | Elizabeth Perales                   | Yes                  |
| <b>Treasurer*</b>                       | Celeste Werner                      | Yes                  |
| <b>Secretary*</b>                       | Heather Mendenall                   | Yes                  |
| <b>Communications Coordinator*</b>      | Dave Leonard for<br>Rena Schlachter | Yes (David)          |
| <b>Membership Coordinator*</b>          | Daniel Wheat                        | Yes                  |
| <b>Professional Development Officer</b> | Vacant                              | n/a                  |
| <b>Student Representative</b>           | Alison Evans                        | No                   |
| <b>Conference Chair</b>                 | Joe Hart                            | Yes                  |
| <b>Immediate Past Chair</b>             | Brett James                         | Yes                  |
| <b>APA Engagement Coordinator</b>       | Jill Schreifer                      | No                   |

*\*Voting Member*

## 3. Approval of Minutes:

Andrew Wright motioned to approve the minutes from 20 May 2021. David seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## 4. Featured Business

None at this time.

## 5. Officer Reports

### a. Chair (V): Andrew Wright

Nothing to report this month.

### b. Conference Chair (NV): Joe Hart

Nothing to report this month.

### c. Senior Vice Chair (V): Abbey Ness

Conference Budget: Could we afford to pay for some conference coordination? For the annual workshop, we rely on over 50 volunteers with dozens of hours

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contributed by each person. There is concern about burnout and diversity of volunteers. What would it look like to hire conference management to help with some of the mundane activities?

1. We have contacted a firm that APA VA has worked with. They could help create budget, sponsorship tiers, venues, catering. They act as a project manager in the workshop chair role and have worked with the company we use for the app.
2. If they provide just oversight: ~\$22,000. If extra effort related to AV, catering, then approximately \$25,000.
3. We could consider a small fee for mobile workshops, increase sponsorship. Increasing registration by even \$10 could help.
4. One challenge is that the workshops are usually hosted in downtown environment in large cities.
5. She suggested that we consider hosting in Norfolk. She is familiar with the area, we have a network of volunteers, and it is more affordable.
6. DISCUSSION:

The EC should provide feedback directly to Abbey via email on two agenda items discussed below.

Separating FPD Conference from APA Conference Location

- a. Separating from APA has been discussed in the past and could be evaluated again. Would need to survey the members about preferences. Understanding how many members are interested in attending and hosting sessions at both conferences would be helpful.
- b. If we disconnect the FPD from the APA national conference, there would be an additional challenge in selecting alternate sites.
- c. There is a benefit for federal planners to attend conferences in cities that do not have significant federal presence (similar challenges/solutions between local state and national). Attending conferences in large cities that are expensive (NYC and SF) brings significant value to membership.

Hiring Professional Conference Management

- d. Is paying a conference management company setting a precedence that FPD can maintain year after year?
- e. Is there a possibility to alternate FPD conference locations between expensive and inexpensive cities so FPD can maintain required balances annually? This would reduce the risk of going over budget in cities that are expensive (i.e. NYC, SF).

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- f. The conference management company can help with establishing budget and find ways to help pay for costs.
  - g. We could negotiate the contract to be month to month and/or a more comfortable balance of roles/responsibilities.
  - h. There is risk if we split apart APA from FPD. For DOD, they may need to split approval packages.
  - i. We could survey our membership about preferences.
  - j. We have been in the range of 200-250 of attendees each year and we do have a volunteer group that comes through every year.
  - k. Past conferences have been larger than 250 attendees so there is potential to reduce cost by increasing volume.
  - l. From a financial standpoint, we would need to discuss the timing of funds. We may need to move up the registration dates and sponsorship commitments.
  - m. In the past, feedback from APA about separation is that they would be disappointed.
  - n. There was a recommendation to get several quotes for a conference manager and provide a list of tasks to provide their costs (like a menu) and possibly take baby steps and select two tasks that are the most time consuming.
  - o. Could we see how many volunteers are from the private sector.
7. ACTIONS: Survey the members; additional quotes; better budget to prepare for a motion during the next month's meeting. We could also seek APA thoughts.

**d. Junior Vice Chair (V): Elizabeth Perales**

- 1. Fall Workshop 2021: The following list of session tracks were shared and refined during the meeting.
  - a. Virtual, Autonomous, and Mobile (IOT, UAV)
  - b. New Mobility and Transit Oriented Development
  - c. Resiliency and Emergency Management
  - d. Resource Conservation and Protection
  - e. National Security
  - f. Student Research
  - g. Planners Networking Event

Elizabeth will email a full list of tracks and potential agencies to EC members today to solicit agency interest in attending or hosting sessions at FPD. Several EC members offered to call or email agency contacts and will email Elizabeth with feedback.

- 2. She requested that we reach out to our POCs at these to support.
  - a. The potential session list will be shared via email.

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- b. FPD cannot support the fall workshop financially, so that is a planning consideration.

e. Immediate Past Chair (NV): Brett James

1. We have received four nominations: 2 for each position. Voting starts 19 July 2021.

f. Treasurer (V): Celeste Werner

1. National APA is not providing reimbursement for some of the conference/personal expenses.
2. Our cash report is also behind because of this. However, we are healthy with ~\$105,000. We received \$7,800 from sponsors and made ~\$5500.
  - a. Conference expenses ended up around \$8k.

g. Secretary (V): Heather Mendenall

1. Sending Chair quarterly minutes for approval this month.

h. Communications Coordinator (V): Rena Schlachter

1. There are plans to publish a newsletter in the next couple of weeks. There is a need to get volunteers to write articles.
2. Website needs to be updated with awards. The content drafted for the newsletters will be used for the update.

i. Membership Coordinator (V): Daniel Wheat

1. There are 893 total members. We are still growing and have grown after the workshop.
2. Only 40 responses to the workshop survey. Top items were that most were likely to attend next workshop and found that the workshop has value. Eblasts and newsletter are ranked low.
  - a. Adding membership as part of a registration bonus seems to have paid off.

j. Professional Development Officer (NV):

This position is currently vacant. Josh had been in the position since 2017. Please reach out and encourage our colleagues to volunteer. Webinars were very successful, but now they are not running. Need a PDO to help assist.

k. Student Representative (NV): Alison Evans

We received 12 responses to the scholarship application and will be reviewing those in the coming weeks

l. FPD APA Engagement Coordinator (NV): Jill Schreifer

Report unavailable.

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## 6. Other announcements

Business meeting? Chair will report back on optional dates.

## 7. Adjourn

Motion by Andrew, Joe second. The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:55 p.m. CST.

*Andrew Wright*

FPD Chair 2020-2021