



FINAL Minutes – February 19, 2021

**Approved – March 19, 2021**

MD APA Executive Committee Meeting

Time: 10:00 am- 12:00 pm

Location: Zoom Call

**1 Call to Order:** Helen Spinelli

1.1 Meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM with the following attendees:

Helen Spinelli	Ben Hitchings (APA National)
Chris Jakubiak	Alan Feinberg
Sarah Diehl	Angie Hernandez
David Levy	Andrew Bernish
Steve O'Connor	Jim Palma
April Smith	Jasmine Forbes
Joe Griffiths	Luke Benson
Dr. Siddhartha Sen	Clara Irazabal

1.2 **Action on proposed agenda:** None

1.3 **Minutes Approval for January 2021 Meeting:**

- Chris moved, approved by consent.

**2 Housekeeping Issues**

2.1 **Schedule and location of ExCom meetings for 2021**

- Friday, March 19, 2021 – Zoom meeting
- Friday, April 16, 2021 – Zoom meeting
- Friday, May 21, 2021 – Zoom meeting
- Want to get back to annual meeting in June.

**3 APA Update – Ben Hitchings, FAICP, CZO, APA Board of Directors, Region II**

- Ben joined the call to provide an update to the executive committee as to some of the things that National is working on.
  - Region II is an 8-state area – DE to Georgia (there are 6 regions nationally)
  - National trying to maintain strength to assist chapter and members and get more resources out to address post-COVID.
  - National is reimagining their core services (example: moving in-person national conference to virtual: had 5,000 participate last year, 40% had never participated in the national conference).
    - This year's will be May 5-7<sup>th</sup> online (planning.org to register and learn more).
    - Looking at ways to get more resources to members and make them cheaper: check out APA Learn Materials and their cost—most are CM certified training videos.

- National has revisited their strategic goals:
  - Equity/diversity/inclusion – adopted a diversity policy, big focus of 2019 conference in San Francisco. Has also published an equity policy paper, PAS report, etc.
  - Promoting the Voice of Planning – building the value of planning in the eyes of decision makers – how to help people understand and take advantage of the skills and knowledge of planners.
  - Upscaling – trying to get more resources into hands of members- videos, publications, events, etc.
  - Digital Relevance – using technology to provide services to members. Example: APA Learn video training resources
- Ben reminded everyone that he is a resource- let him know if there are issues you want to raise with the National organization. Contact him at: [bhitchings37@yahoo.com](mailto:bhitchings37@yahoo.com).
- Questions for Ben –
  - David referenced the challenges to COVID and asked if anyone at APA thought through lessons to bring forward from COVID to bring to after COVID times – how to do meetings when there is a 60/40 split of in-person and online, can there be a beneficial impact that can be translated into best practices?
    - Per Ben, the research department has been looking at emerging issues and developing resources to get through recovery from the pandemic. What did we learn from this experience? We are seeing communities committing to opening up streets, outdoor dining, closing of streets on Fridays/Saturdays, etc. They are seeing a disproportionate impact on communities of color and are addressing that issue: looking to support progress and advance goals of EDI.
  - Joe brought up the impact on office space now with more people teleworking. For example, there are plans to redevelop State Center, the challenges that State Center were facing are going to be amplified moving forward- if you do not have that economic push for office space what will become of that project?
  - Alan noted that MD is teaming up with WV, etc. for CM credits and would love to see online opportunities on regular basis with the information archived; brown bag sessions that really bring planning back to where it is supposed to be (ground up). He was pleased that we are making progress and using lessons from COVID as a positive thing.
  - Chris asked if membership downturn was a concern?
    - Ben – in response to economic downturn, about 5-6% drop in the last year, this is what we have seen before. Taking the experiences of the great recession into account and this is one of the reasons budget has been trimmed at the national level. Travel/training/membership seems to be the first things that get cut during budget cuts.

### 3.1 Report on MD APA Open Counter Presentation – Jacqui/Joe/Sarah

- Jacqui, Joe, and Sarah met with representatives from [OpenCounter](#) to discuss hosting a session about emerging technologies for public service.
  - Proposed that MD APA provide this opportunity to membership to bring smaller jurisdictions together and explore ways technology can/is transforming the permitting process, etc. and how to integrate this into existing systems.
  - Could have a panel with different vendors/different companies and jurisdictions that have developed something similar to discuss decision criteria and the kinds of issues they are running into.
- Chris noted that using APA name is significant and we should think critically if we want to endorse the overall theme, perhaps we should set this issue aside for more offline discussion. This idea could be rolled into a large theme like smart cities, and then introduce the idea of using technology to make planning in cities better. Before we head right into that movement, we need to decide what are our priorities for the year.
- Helen suggested that we wait for now, perhaps do a membership survey to see what people are interested in.

## 4 **Chapter Administration Issues: Action Items**

### 4.1 **Review and Approve 2021 Budget**

- Helen noted that revenues are the same and that we have not spent much (i.e., conferences and training funds have not been used).
- Dr. Sen to double check how much of stipend Morgan State used.
- Helen noted that the Executive Board Meeting Expenses line item is a placeholder for now.
- Jim asked that we continue to sponsor the AIA Lecture series: APA must be involved to claim credits and has given \$500 in the past.
  - This was added into the budget.
  - AIA is finalizing information; Jim will send information when available.
- Alan suggested a side discussion with the regional reps to talk about how to best use the funds. Would loop Jacqui into the conversation.
  - Helen to set up a meeting with the regional reps.
- David asked about the budget showing a loss and how does that work with approval?
  - Helen noted that items won't all get spent; we also have a reserve fund just in case. She also noted that the budget can be amended after approval.
- Chris motioned for approval; David seconded. All approved.

### 4.2 **Review 2021 Work Plan**

- Three Regional Virtual Workshops – Olivia's farm event (Southern), Terrapin Run (Central, late summer/early fall), Alan to continue to work through ideas for Western.
- Transfer of Leadership: Helen noted we will need a special election for President-elect. Her term ends at the end of 2021.

### 4.3 **Resolution: Treasurer added to the M&T Bank Account**

- David moved for approval; Steve seconded. All approved.
- Sarah to sign and send back to Helen.

### 4.4 **Appoint Nominating Committee for election**

- Sarah, David, Helen volunteered for committee.

## 5 **New Business**

### 5.1 **Election information for ExCom members**

- Secretary/Treasurer/VP are not up for reelection.
  - All other positions are and need to hear from current members if you want to keep your role.
  - Oliva and Steve expressed interest in staying on; Angie is leaving the area.

### 5.2 **Other sessions for the membership from regional representatives?**

- Joe referenced MDP's efforts in putting together a Comprehensive Plan Training Series: looking for local examples at various stages.
  - David and Steve noted recent involvement in Comp. Plan process, could be of help.

### 5.3 **Newsletter – Update on next edition**

### 5.4 **Business Manager Report**

- April had to leave the call; Sarah will send April's item summary to Helen to respond to.

## 6 **Treasurer's Report** – available next month once Chris is on all bank accounts.

## 7 **Committee Updates:**

- 7.1 **EPG:** Jasmine
- Virtual Pictionary night went well.
  - Next step to put together PD event, working with MAPS and UMD – will be looking for speakers/dates.
- 8 **Adjourn**
- Sarah motioned; David seconded. Meeting adjourned 12:00.

#### **ACTION ITEM SUMMARY**

1. Dr. Sen to double check how much of stipend Morgan State used and get back to Helen.
2. Helen to set up a meeting with the regional representatives to discuss how to best use funds.
3. Sarah to sign Treasurer Resolution and send back to Helen.
4. ALL: Positions up for re-election, please let Helen know if you would like to keep your role.
5. Sarah to send past membership survey to Helen.