# **NNECAPA Executive Committee Virtual Meeting Minutes**

Friday, February 16, 2024 - 11:00 am

**EC Attendance:** Meagan Tuttle, Sarah Wraight, Erin Zwirko, Sam Durfee, Matt Sullivan, Dayea Shim, Jeff Levine, Kyle Pimental, Angie Cleveland, Eric Vorwald, Nancy Kilbride, Amanda Bunker

**Guests:** None

# **1. Call to order**

The February 16, 2024 meeting of the NNECAPA Executive Committee was called to order by M. Tuttle at 11:03 am.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the January 23, 2024 meeting were presented for consideration. J. Levine made a motion that was seconded by S. Durfee to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0-1, Vorwald abstaining).

**3. Treasurer's Report**

S. Durfee added a column to the Treasurer’s Report to address accounting that overlaps with the previous year. He reported that the Chapter has received a second quarter disbursement from APA, but the amount is trending down.

S. Durfee also reported that the Chapter received a $1,000 donation from a Fidelity Charitable Donor Fund. The donor will receive a thank you note.

S. Durfee noted that all conference expenses and revenue have been settled. The Chapter made the third and final deposit for Stoweflake.

S. Durfee noted that the Chapter’s CD matured. As discussed at the previous meeting, the Chapter reached out to the Sections about the conference profit sharing, and each Chapter agreed to forgo the disbursement. There was some discussion about using the profit for scholarships to the conference. Ultimately, 75% of net profits from the previous year and money market funds were reinvested into the CD, with a balance of $26,000. The interest rate is 5.4% and the Chapter could expect about $1,400 in interest.

J.levine asked if the donation came from the same person as last year. It is a different person. J. Levine noted that the Chapter might want to have a conversation about philanthropy.

E.Vorwald made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report that was seconded by M. Sullivan. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

**4. Conference Revenues & Investments Updates**

M. Tuttle noted that the three Sections were supportive of the Chapter retaining the conference profit. She reported that both Maine and NH noted that the unexpected profit should be used for conference scholarships, with NH being more explicit about the request.

Because of the CD investment deadline, the Chapter decided to roll $3,000 into the CD. In line with the conversation at the previous meeting, the Chapter ]felt comfortable making the investment prior to this meeting.

Regarding the money market account, there is a $2,500 minimum account balance, below which maintenance fees are assessed. The Chapter ]determined to maintain the minimum balance and rolled about $2,500 into the CD as well in order to take advantage of the high interest rate environment.

M. Tuttle explained that having a separate reserve account may be important, so the balance in the money market account is beneficial.

Regarding conference scholarships, M. Tuttle asked that the Conference Committee and N. Kilbride keep this on the radar when finalizing the conference budget and registration fees.

**5. Membership**

N. Kilbride noted that APA is no longer sending renewals by mail, but thought that APA still sent reminders via email. She noted that there were many people, including Chapter leadership, that did not renew their membership. She reported that she checked in with a number of known members, and only 1 person remembered receiving an email from APA. Moving forward, N. Kilbride recommended that the Chapter and Sections will need to send out notices to the members. A notice was just sent to 269 members that expired and those that are due to expire, and only 62 people renewed right away. These numbers are low.

M.Tuttle noted that she reached out to the APA Chapter Presidents Committee when APA announced that they would no longer send paper invoices. She expressed that it would be impactful on this Chapter, but did not receive a response. She reached out again more recently, but still has not received a meaningful response from APA. in January, N. Kilbride reached out to more than half of the Chapter membership, but it doesn’t appear that APA is concerned, meaning that the Chapter needs to take a more proactive role.

E. Vorwald reported that he has managed membership contact for VT, and that the Chapter only members never received anything from APA. APA may not be doing anything for Chapter only members, and only full members. E. Vorwald reported he got a reminder email in late January, with the email subject along the lines of “APA invoice is online and ready for payment”. The Board discussed that email security around phishing attempts and other scams may be hindering contact.

M. Tuttle does not feel the support from APA will be there and reiterated that the Chapter and Sections need to stay on top of this issue, especially ensuring that the Chapter has updated contact information for members. A.Bunker recommended that the Chapter and Sections need to divide up the responsibility so that we aren’t duplicative and suggested that it might be a topic for the retreat. M. Tuttle noted that one of the Chapter VP roles is to manage membership, and she asked J. Levine and N. Kilbride to start on an effort to document roles and responsibilities around membership now rather than wait for the retreat.

This conversion will also lead into a discussion around the Chapter membership dues structure. A. Bunker and the Maine Section Treasurer would be happy to provide support to J. Levine.

**6. Conference Planning Updates**

S. Wraight provided a conference update summarizing the notes in a memo she provided to the Board. N. Kilbride visited Stoweflake a few weeks ago and reported that the new owner is completing renovations to the resort and the resort will now be under the Hilton brand. She is pleased to see the upgrades, and noted that there should not be any capacity issues. The resort opened the townhouses as a room option for the conference. The space for vendor exhibits can accommodate about 30 vendors. She will be communicating with the Sections to bring in sponsorships.

M. Tuttle appreciated hearing the capacity increases for the breakout rooms, and that it may be informative for registration caps. N. Kilbride does not think that the breakout room capacity should impact registration caps, but understands wanting to avoid conflict.

M. Tuttle asked about sponsor outreach, and how that overlaps with the spring Section events. N. Kilbride noted that her deadline is this month to give space to the Sections. Late summer will be another Chapter push for sponsorships.

A. Cleveland noted that she is aware of one speaker that was surprised to have to pay for registration. There is a Chapter policy that speakers can attend their session without having to pay for registration, and communications should be clearer about that. Chapter policy also allows non-member speakers to register for the entire conference at the member, early bird registration rate. N. Kilbride and the Conference Committee will be clear about registration. The session submission form includes a statement that a speaker is responsible for all costs related to the conference. The Conference Committee might need to clarify that statement.

The Board also discussed various needs of conference attendees, such as accommodations for those who are nursing and other accessibility needs for those who may use a mobility device or have a service animal with them. N. Kilbride noted that it is important to know ahead of time, so that she can coordinate with the venue, and it will be important for the Chapter to be clear on this in communications in order to be proactive.

S.Wraight turned the conversation to the important items in her memo:

1. Additional conference room: There is an additional conference room available for the conference that can be used by interest groups that may want to create informal meet ups or for others looking for more networking opportunities.The Conference Committee is interested in organizing meet ups around pre-established topics and are looking for logistical recommendations.
   1. There may be some submissions that trend toward that format.
   2. A. Bunker thought that so many topics come to mind, and the best options may depend on what’s in the program. Once the program is set, perhaps the Committee can come back to the Chapter and Sections with more concrete ideas.
   3. A recommendation was also made to consider a meet up that is about the planners and less about a topic (i.e. planner therapy sessions).
2. Schedule: The Conference Committee is recommending no lunch on Monday, but some content on Monday afternoon. The availability of the venue allows the opportunity to do meet ups, social networking, mobile sessions, and maybe sessions. The typical schedule would follow with a reception Monday night, and a typical Tuesday and Wednesday. The Conference Committee is seeking feedback about dinner at the hotel on Tuesday, as the shoulder session in Stowe may limit options. The dinner, planned to be stations rather than a plated meal, offers an opportunity to network.
   1. N. Kilbride indicated that the cost of meals often drives registration fees. Overall, the registration fees will be less than the Wentworth Hotel, but higher than Sunday River. The Stoweflake is supportive of the station dinner.
   2. A suggestion was made to tie a specific sponsorship to meals to help reduce registration costs.
   3. The Board expressed interest in serving dinner on Tuesday with some follow up about costs.
3. Logo: A recommendation was made to include the specific words “Northern New England Planning Conference”, which is consistent branding with last year’s logo.
   1. E. Vorwald noted that the Conference Committee should double check any copyright issues with the gondola, which is in the Stowe Mountain Resort logo. The Conference Committee may want to use a chairlift instead.
   2. The Board liked the idea of a square stamp as a fun passport idea for members to collect logos into the future.
4. Social: S. Wraight noted that the Conference Committee debated the relationship with Halloween. A suggestion was made that the cocktail contest be Halloween themed, but should there be a costume contest?
   1. M. Tuttle suggested that the minimalist idea on costume may be ok for the conference (i.e., bring one item for your costume) or group costumes, and would not deter people from participating. We do have to be concerned with insensitive costumes.
   2. The Board did not express concerns with a Halloween cocktail contest
5. Speakers: There are two speaker slots, a keynote and plenary. The Speaker Subcommittee discussed that the keynote should be a more technical presentation. The Subcommittee discussed finding a speaker who can address the challenges around densifying small communities and the unintended consequences. The Subcommittee is also interested in a response panel to the keynote to add to the relevance from all three states. The Subcommittee discussed that the closing plenary should be inspirational and light hearted. S. Wraight is looking for any feedback from the Chapter.
   1. A. Cleveland suggested that a comedian might fit for the closing plenary, which has been successful for the SNEAPA conference.
   2. There were no concerns with this direction.

M. Tuttle also noted that there are additional conversations planned with Southern New England on an all-New England conference. The Chapter has not committed to anything at this point.

**7. 2023 Chapter Awards Next Steps**

M.Tuttle noted that the Chapter has forwarded on the awards.

**8. EC & Sections 2024 Retreat**

D. Shim explained that she has coordinated with M. Tuttle and N. Kilbride to identify a location for a spring retreat. D.Shim noted that AMC Highland Center was most cost effective and best use of the Chapter’s budget, but may require Board members to bunk together. There were no objections.

D. Shim noted that a Friday afternoon to Saturday afternoon would likely be the timeframe in April or May. D. Shim will send out a poll to Board members, and it was noted that the Maine conference is trying for either May 10 or May 17, but has not yet been scheduled.

An agenda will be forthcoming.

**9. Yankee Planner Newsletter Format**

A. Cleveland discussed the format of the Yankee Planner newsletter. She would like to move toward using a different program to format the newsletter, but wanted to check with the Board. There were no objections to trying something new.

A. Bunker noted that Maine’s newsletter uses Constant Contact after researching a number of options. Lynne Seeley, the Maine VP, could provide some feedback.

**10. Officer and Committee Roundtable**

**a. President (& States) Updates -**

M.Tuttle will touch base with S. Durfee to register for the APA National Conference. The Chapter will organize a reception.

**b. Vice President (& States) Updates -**

None.

**c. Professional Development Officer Updates -**

D. Shim noted that there is an issue with the Chapter being able to offer AICP credits. D. Shim, E. Zwirko, and M. Tuttle will work to address the ability of the chapter to offer AICP CMs.

The Chapter sponsored Ben Frost for FAICP, and unfortunately, he was not accepted.

**d. Public Information Officer Updates -**

A. Cleveland noted that the Chapter is offering a webinar through Ohio Planning Webcast on April 5 on Census data. A. Cleveland has also discussed a partnership with researchers at Anitoch University New England and scheduling a focus group at noon on April 26.

The Board briefly discussed how to best coordinate events and information sharing, and whether a shared calendar would be helpful.

**e. Section Representatives -**

A. Bunker asked about insurance for events. In particular, venues where the section holds events might ask for insurance. A. Bunker was curious if the Chapter covers the sections. M. Tuttle noted that the Chapter conference has insurance through Events Your Way. None of the other section representatives have insurance for events. M. Tuttle noted that the three sections may want to address cooperatively, and the sections may need legal support. Additionally, the Maine spring conference will be held on either May 10 or May 17.

M.Sullivan reported that the NH conference will be held on June 14. He reported that the NH section is continuing to discuss how to tailor the programming for NH to set it apart from the Chapter.

E.Vorwald did not have anything to report from VT. M. Tuttle noted that the Vermont Legislature is focusing on housing.

**f. Conference Representatives – 2024/2025 -**

None.

**g. Legislative Updates – Chapter or States -**

None.

**11. Other Business**

Next meeting is Friday, March 15 at 11:00 AM.

**12. Adjourn**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.