

**AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION FLORIDA CHAPTER  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE: JANUARY 22, 2016**

**Members Present**

Melissa Zornitta, AICP, President  
Andre Anderson, AICP, President Elect (left at 12:20 p.m. and returned at 1:45 p.m.)  
Alissa Barber Torres, AICP, Secretary  
Allara Mills Gutcher, AICP, Treasurer (left at 2:59 p.m.)  
Marcie Stenmark, AICP, VP Communications  
Kathie Ebaugh, AICP, VP Conference Services  
Laura Everitt, AICP, VP Membership Services  
Henry Bittaker, AICP, VP Professional Development  
Tony LaColla, AICP, VP Section Affairs (joined at 10:14 a.m.)  
Lisa Frazier, AICP, Atlantic Coast Section (joined at 10:12 a.m. and left at 12:33 p.m.)  
Thuy Turner, AICP, Broward Section  
Barry Wilcox, AICP, Capital Area Section  
Wiatt Bowers, AICP, First Coast Section (joined at 10:12 a.m.)  
Maeve Desmond, AICP, Gold Coast Section  
Jason Burton, AICP, Orlando Metro Section  
Tony Palermo, AICP, Promised Lands Section  
Adam Hall, San Felasco Section  
Stephen Benson, AICP, Sun Coast Section  
Josh Long, AICP, Treasure Coast Section  
Andrew Meyer, Student Representative (FAU)

**Members Absent**

Brian Teeple, AICP, Past President  
Rick Perez, AICP, VP Certification Maintenance  
Kristin Shell, AICP, Emerald Coast Section  
Hetty Harmon, AICP, Heart of Florida Section  
Steven Thorp, Young Planners Group  
Joseli Macedo, AICP, University Liaison (UF)

**Guests**

Alex Magee, APA Florida Executive Director  
Lester Abberger, APA Florida Legislative Representative (by phone)

Melissa Zornitta called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

## **Consent Agenda**

Melissa Zornitta asked for comments on the Consent Agenda, and no changes were proposed. A motion was made by Marcie Stenmark and seconded by Allara Mills Gutcher to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Conference Items**

Kathie Ebaugh reviewed conference services proposals received, which were distributed to members. Kathie noted the State Conference Committee recommends HelmsBriscoe as the pre-conference service provider. Discussion ensued regarding the proposals, including the references received for the firm, the choice to use new service providers, and the fee structure.

Members and Alex Magee expressed their support for continuing to use Jackie Roberts as a service provider during the conference. Kathie responded that the conference budget includes her services. Discussion ensued regarding logistics and bus transportation, control over speakers, conference site selection, and other conference matters.

A motion was made by Andre Anderson and seconded by Henry Bittaker to use HelmsBriscoe. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Legislative Update**

Lester Abberger presented a legislative overview, including this year's early legislative session, the tensions between the Legislature and the Governor, the proposed budget, Medicaid expansion, Gov. Scott's proposals for tax cuts, budget spending categories, and differences in budget revenue projections.

Lester noted the water policy bill signed by the Governor yesterday has seen both support and opposition from various environmental organizations. Amendment 1 funding has been controversial, and bills have been introduced to direct funding to Everglades restoration. Lester reviewed other environmental and growth management bills that have been filed to date, as well as the traffic engineering bill discussed at the last Executive Committee meeting.

Members discussed Development of Regional Impact bills filed relative to proposed revisions to required review and the current review process, Senate Bill 1100 regarding votes on local option taxes, springs protection concerns, and House Bill 605 regarding building permits and implications for small governments.

Alex Magee noted the Legislative Policy Workshop is forthcoming and expressed concern that the registrations to date are below previous years. A total of 76 registrations have been received, compared to an average of 120 attendees, and revenue may be below projections.

Alex expressed that this year's workshop has an exceptional program, and members were encouraged to promote the workshop.

Discussion ensued regarding the use of Vertical Response for workshop notification, which was deferred to the Communications Concerns portion of the agenda. No formal action was taken on this item. Lester Abberger departed the meeting.

### **Conference Items**

Discussion resumed on remaining conference agenda items. Kathie Ebaugh highlighted the draft speakers list distributed to members. Members discussed conference sessions devoted to AICP training and specialty certifications, APA National's reassessment of the specialty certifications under development, the SOP goal to broaden the scope and level of conference topics, proposed conference topics and tracks, the uses and potential elimination of tracks, and related matters.

A motion was made by Wiatt Bowers and seconded by Allara Mills Gutcher to request that the Local Host Committee continue to work on the call for sessions with State Conference Committee and to provide general focus areas for session topics, with efforts to be completed by middle of next week. The motion passed unanimously.

Kathie Ebaugh discussed proposed speakers and corresponding fees. Kathie highlighted the State Conference Committee's concern about having broad topics and diverse speakers. Wiatt Bowers discussed all proposed speakers' attributes, topics, and fees. Discussion ensued regarding Gabe Klein's potential to speak on leadership and change management, past use of some proposed speakers, use of speakers for workshops, the need for more diverse speakers in this slate, the importance of speakers' topic and content, and related matters.

A motion was made by Andre Anderson and seconded by Kathie Ebaugh to have Jeff Vinik, Bob Buckhorn, Judy Genshaft, and Gabe Klein as speakers. Discussion ensued regarding the status of these speakers and another potential option to present a new Publix development concept. The motion passed unanimously.

Members discussed the Local Host Committee's proposed option for an Incremental Urbanism speaker, Jim Kumon, and the potential to secure another speaker option. A motion was made by Andre Anderson and seconded by Tony LaColla to accept the Incremental Urbanism topic as proposed with Jim Kumon as speaker.

Discussion ensued regarding the motion. Kathie requested that this matter be sent back to the Local Host Committee, as this topic is similar to past offerings, to work with the State Conference Committee. Discussion ensued regarding that proposal, and the motion was not amended. There was a call to question, and the motion passed.

A break was taken at 12:06 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 12:41 p.m.

## **Communications Issues**

Marcie Stenmark noted there are several items for discussion, starting with whether APA Florida should develop its own mobile application (app). Marcie has assessed other APA Chapter apps and researched whether APA Florida could have AICP Certification Maintenance credits accessible through an app. APA National staff responded their current staffing and work program could not support that effort.

Marcie noted that beyond providing the Chapter newsletter, she needs direction from the Executive Committee as to what app functions may be valuable. Discussion ensued regarding potential app functionality, APA National apps, value to members, mobile-friendly website design, accessing a newsletter free to show value to potential members, and related matters. Executive Committee consensus was to ensure the current website is mobile-friendly and updated, rather than develop a separate app.

Marcie highlighted social media reporting in the agenda packet, which indicates social media engagement has increased from 2014 to 2015, supported by the efforts of the Communications Coordinator. She noted that diverse social media efforts are needed, which includes Vertical Response outreach, hosting current website content that is regularly updated. Discussion ensued regarding newsletter “click-through” and readership, members not receiving email from Vertical Response, contacting members to determine if messages are being received, AICP, the formats of the newsletter and delivery email, adding or updating bylaws on Section web pages, social media reporting, and making the newsletter format mobile-friendly.

Alex Magee noted the Chapter needs the contact information for each person updating a Section web page to ensure consistency and to trouble-shoot issues, as well as to provide potential training. Changes have been made to web pages that have affected the display of pages and that have deleted pages, which the Chapter Office has restored. Patti Shea, the Communications Coordinator, has re-formatted the WordPress manual for convenience in training. The Chapter Office now is the only contact that can change a page, but event updates and similar functions can still be done by Sections.

## **Section Exchange**

Melissa Zornitta noted only two Sections submitted updates for the agenda packet and that this time on the agenda was reserved for updates from each of the Section Chairs. Section Chairs provided updates regarding events, Board membership, joint activities with allied professional associations, member recruitment efforts, email communications, and related matters. Melissa commended all Sections for their efforts.

Kathie Ebaugh noted the Atlantic Coast Section had their 2017 state conference kickoff recently and is ready for the conference planning efforts, which members feel will strengthen their Section. Alex Magee stated the San Felasco Section also has volunteered to assist the Atlantic

Coast Section with the conference, and additional support has been volunteered by the Florida Planning and Zoning Association. Alex mentioned this is the first conference to be hosted by two of the Chapter's smaller Sections. Kathie mentioned she is very proud of both Sections' efforts. Additional discussion ensued. No formal action was taken on this item.

### **SOP Update/Work Session**

Melissa Zornitta mentioned this work session will feature small-group work on items identified as Chapter priorities. Melissa noted her term ends this year, and she is hopeful the Chapter can demonstrate value to members through progress on the SOP tasks identified. Alex Magee noted the Center for Florida Local Government Excellence is interested in doing webinars with the Chapter.

The items for group discussion were the means to provide webinars, outreach to employers and nonmembers, and the Chapter annual sponsorship/advertising benefit package. Members broke into groups for discussion, then returned to assembly to report outcomes of group brainstorming. Discussion ensued regarding group suggestions. No formal action was taken on this item.

### **SOP/Budget Implications**

Melissa Zornitta noted that as Task Groups work on SOP items, members should let Allara Mills Gutcher and Alex Magee know of any SOP-related needs that affect the Chapter budget. Alex asked that budget-related requests, such as hosting options for webinars, be submitted by the end of February. There is only one more meeting before Executive Committee considers the budget, so timely submittal is needed. No formal action was taken on this item.

### **2016 Elections Process Overview**

Alex Magee updated the Executive Committee on the new elections process, based on APA National assuming some responsibility for Chapter elections. The major difference is that the request to members to vote will come from APA National, not the Chapter Office.

After the call for nominations is issued by the Chapter, the Chapter's Committee will send a slate of officers to APA National by June for voting in August. Both the National and Chapter officers will be on the same ballot. Voting ends after Labor Day, and the results may or may not be available by the time the Chapter conference is held. Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of the election process, outreach to members, and other concerns. No formal action was taken on this item.

### **President's Items/ Other Items**

Melissa Zornitta noted APA Florida delegates to the APA National conference are being identified and invited participation from Executive Committee members. APA National sent a

team to Miami to review as a potential national conference site, with a reception held by the Gold Coast Section—Melissa and Alex Magee were in attendance.

APA National is still interested in doing smaller special-topic conferences, such as on water issues. Melissa encouraged the Chapter to consider making a proposal for this type of conference to APA National—climate change and hazard mitigation could be potential topics. Discussion ensued regarding the benefits to the Chapter, the potential format, and possible host cities within Florida.

Melissa mentioned the Membership Committee she is chairing for the Chapter Presidents Council is focusing on emerging professionals and increasing their involvement. Melissa noted the Executive Committee biannual retreat in November needs a new location, as it rotates around the state, and asked members to suggest options. Alex Magee can research options suggested by members, and discussion ensued regarding various cities.

Henry Bittaker stated that APA National needs AICP exam scholarships to be used, or they may not make as many available to the Chapter.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.