



Special Summer Meeting via Zoom

June 30, 2020

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. ETS

Minutes—Approved

Present: Kendall King, President; Patsy Duff, 1nd VP; Lourdes Ortega, 2nd VP; Laura Collins, Past President; Glenn Martinez, Treasurer; Christina Higgins, Member-At-Large; Jennifer Leeman, Member-At-Large; Haoshan (Sally) Ren, GSC Representative; Terry Dougherty, Ex Officio; Jessica Atkinson, Ex Officio; Ellen, Shea, Ex Officio; Natalie Nardone, Guest; Garrett Tomlinson from Sumner and Associates, Guest; and Fabiola Ehlers-Zavala, Secretary.

Absent: Charlene Polio, Member-At-Large

President Kendall King called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Kendall started the meeting by offering remarks to both welcome and thank everyone in attendance. Then, she proceeded to establish the main reason for the meeting (i.e., to continue to minimize the potential impact of shift to virtual conference on AAAL). Next, she proceeded to introduce the guests joining this special meeting: Natalie Nardone and Garrett Tomlinson. After introductions were completed, Kendall proceeded to establish the three goals for this special meeting:

- 1) To be transparent and open about the financial landscape moving forward.
- 2) To strategize, optimize, and minimize the damage the organization may incur in cancelling the hotel contract for AAAL 2021.
- 3) To seek input on the letter to the membership about changes to AAAL 2021

At this meeting, there **were no motions that the EC acted on**, but there was discussion on each of the various agenda items to ensure that all EC members fully understood the background behind each item. All of this would also contribute to move quickly and effectively with the hotel cancellation as well as with communication to the membership while having an understanding for the current projected conference budget for 2021.

Kendall invited Garret to offer background on the state of affairs regarding our contract obligations with the hotel in Houston. It was clear that the sooner AAAL proceeds to cancel, the fewer the damages it would incur. He also explained to the EC that the bar AAAL would have to

meet is very high, as it would have to demonstrate that the meeting is **impossible** to be held in March. This is very difficult to show this early in the process (i.e., nine months prior to the scheduled event). He also pointed out that “virus fear does not raise to the level of impossibility to host the event.”

Members of the EC asked several questions, ranging from Texas law to issues perceived as the hotel’s inability to meet AAAL’s expectations for maintaining the health and safety of attendees. Questions also included whether or not State regulations and/or institutions where members reside / work could (or not) make a difference in supporting the AAAL case. Other questions were along the lines of whether or not there was any precedent in Texas of cases successfully argued in this regard.

All in all, Garrett supported the AAAL’s decision to send the termination letter to the hotel with the goal of being out of the contract by July 17. He indicated that taking action now could potentially open the door for further negotiations.

After discussion on the hotel contract termination concluded, the EC proceeded to discuss the letter that would notify the membership of the changes to the conference (moving from face to face to a virtual mode). This letter was not presented to the EC for review ahead of the meeting or at the meeting, but it had been previously shared with Garrett for comments. He was very complimentary of the letter and the work that went into it, but also offered advice on how to approach it, calling for a revision of both its content and length. In sum, it was agreed that the letter would be revised and run by him for a final professional opinion before sending it to the AAAL membership. (Note: Though a brief discussion was entertained on other topics related to dates and other particulars concerning the 2021 conference, including what would be communicated to the membership, no decisions were made.)

Finally, both Kendall and Glenn proceeded to go over the budget projections for the 2021 Conference (virtual), and it was evident that 2021 was not going to be a year where a profit would/could be observed. Instead, 2021 is projected to be a year with financial losses in relation to the conference, and therefore, it was important to ensure that the EC was fully aware of this situation. Glenn noted, however, that the figures presented constituted a very conservative approach.

Kendall adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Prepared by F. Ehlers-Zavala, Secretary
Submitted for EC review on July 6, 2020

Remarks:

- Approved as submitted:
- Approved with editions: X
- Date: October 23, 2020