

June 12, 2015 EC Meeting Minutes

Minutes

National Communication Association
Executive Committee Meeting
June 12, 2015
Washington, D.C.

Participating in the meeting

Carole Blair, President (presiding); Christina S. Beck, First Vice President; Stephen J. Hartnett, Second Vice President; Kathleen J. Turner, Immediate Past President; Joseph A. Bonito, Research Board Director; John O. Greene, Publications Board Director; Scott A. Myers, Educational Policies Board Director; Bobby Patton, Finance Board Director; Orlando L. Taylor, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Nancy Kidd, Executive Director (non-voting); *National Office Staff*: Mark Fernando, Chief of Staff; Wendy Fernando, Director of External Affairs and Publications; Kim Griffin, Chief Financial Officer; Trevor Parry-Giles, Director of Academic and Professional Affairs; *Absent*: Annette Madlock Gatison, Finance Board Member (non-voting)

1. Call to order

President Blair called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time.

2. Executive session

The EC convened in executive session to discuss the Executive Director's annual performance review. At 8:47 a.m. the executive session concluded and the EC took a break. The meeting reconvened with the staff at 8:55 a.m.

3. Announcements, updates, and reports

President Blair drew the EC's attention to a number of routine reports provided in the written meeting materials. Finance Board Director Patton shared with the EC some revisions to the employee benefits package the FB approved. President Blair shared with the EC the text of a statement critiquing a proposal pending in the Wisconsin State Legislature which threatens to undermine several longstanding features of the state's higher education system including shared governance, tenure, and academic freedom. The statement was issued by the American Historical Association and cosigned by 21 other scholarly societies. *A motion was made by Patton to endorse NCA signing the statement. Seconded by Turner. Motion carried unanimously.*

4. Consent agenda

The consent agenda included the following items: approval of February 6, 2015 EC meeting minutes, emeritus memberships, distinguished scholars, editor nominations, and Association for Communication Administration LA representative. There was some discussion about editor nominations. *A motion was made by Greene to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried with 6 for and 1 abstention.*

5. National Office real estate

Kidd updated the EC on recent events regarding the search for a new office building. She reported that another possibility has emerged for which additional information is being sought to determine if it is viable for our purposes. Finance Board Director Patton reported that the Finance Board feels comfortable with this prospect from a financial perspective, provided that the answers to our remaining questions are reasonable. Discussion ensued. *A motion was made by Patton stating that the EC is comfortable with the National Office staff further pursuing the possible purchase of the property under consideration given the general parameters outlined in the memo provided to the EC. Seconded by Turner. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Patton stating that the EC is willing to commit to scheduling a conference call to discuss additional information and make a final decision on very short notice if necessary. Seconded by Turner. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Patton to retain JLL to consult with us on the sale of our building to MEI with the terms described in the memo provided to the EC. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.*

6. FY15-16 budget

Finance Board Director Patton presented the proposed FY15-16 budget to the EC for consideration with endorsement from the Finance Board. Discussion ensued. *A motion was made by Patton to approve the FY15-16 budget. Seconded by Turner. Motion carried unanimously.*

7. Dues restructuring

Given changes in the nature of academic work, the EC has recently been thinking about the possibility that there are groups of potential members who do not join NCA for cost reasons or who join with some real hardship to their personal finances. The LA shared this concern during discussion about membership dues last November, and the EC is committed to finding a viable solution. The EC of the LA wants any communication teacher/ scholar who is interested in being part of our community to be able to join comfortably. The most likely group at issue is adjuncts who are teaching full time (as opposed to adjuncts who have jobs outside of academe and teach a single course), but there may be others as well. Further, once we start thinking about the appropriateness of our current membership categories/dues structure, other potential questions arise. For example, by using “formal retirement” as a proxy for no longer working (which is presumably the spirit behind emeritus membership), we are providing free membership to some people who retired from one job and are now working full-time in a highly paid post-retirement position. As such, the EC talked about a number of different potential strategies, from the simple addition of a new category or categories of membership to exploring an entirely different dues structure, such as an income-based sliding scale.

As fiduciaries of the organization, the EC recognizes that whatever proposal it ultimately presents to the full LA for consideration will have to generate confidence that we are not going to end up with substantially lower revenue as a result. The reason for considering change is not to increase revenue, but we also cannot afford to lose revenue. As such, we have to do detailed, careful analysis of the possibilities to ensure that we are meeting our goal of inclusivity without putting the association at considerable financial risk.

In order to identify all of the possible membership models and carefully consider their implications for NCA, the EC decided to turn to someone who is expert in this type of analysis. *A motion was made by Turner to hire an expert in membership models and analysis to provide us with detailed data that will inform our decisions in this regard. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.*

The group adjourned for a break at 10:05 a.m. and reconvened at 10:18 a.m.

8. Distinguished Scholars

In early 2015, the EC brought two proposals to the Distinguished Scholars for advisory votes. The results of those votes were discussed. Proposal #1: The current nominating procedures indicate that “[n]ominations can only be made by existing Distinguished Scholars.” Instead there should be an open call for nominations. The selection of Distinguished Scholars would still be made by Distinguished Scholars, but opening the nomination process may have the effect of broadening the pool of options from which the Distinguished Scholars would ultimately choose. *A motion was made by Turner to add a provision that self-nominations will not be considered. Seconded by Patton. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Turner to accept proposal #1 with the additional provision. Seconded by Patton. Motion carried unanimously.*

Proposal #2: The current selection procedures indicate that “[n]ormally, no more than four awards will be given in any year. However, if a deceased nominee is among the top four in the rankings, then an additional award may be made, provided that the fifth-ranked nominee is ranked by enough Distinguished Scholars to qualify.” Instead, increase the normal number of annual awards to no more than five and allow for a sixth in the case of a deceased nominee being among the top five in the rankings, provided that the sixth-ranked nominee is ranked by enough Distinguished Scholars to qualify. *A motion was made by Turner to table proposal #2. Seconded by Patton. Motion carried unanimously.*

9. Donation proposal

Robert Shuter proposed making a series of donations to NCA which will be used for future programming for the International and Intercultural Communication Division. The EC discussed the proposal as well as feedback from the IICD. *A motion was made by Patton to approve the donation contingent upon Robert Shuter coming to agreement on all terms with the leadership of the IICD and the National Office approving the final gift agreement with respect to legal considerations. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried with 4 for, 3 opposed, and 1 abstention.*

The group adjourned for lunch at 11:23 a.m. and reconvened at 12:35 p.m.

10. Constitution/bylaws revision

The EC discussed how best to ensure that the Legislative Assembly and membership are fully informed about the proposal being brought to the LA for consideration in November.

The group adjourned for a break at 2:00 p.m. and reconvened at 2:18 p.m.

11. Strategic plan

Given that a strategic plan should be a living document, the EC began a discussion of the current plan to ensure that it still does a good job of guiding our activities in alignment with our mission statement. The EC had a thoughtful brainstorming session, and the ideas raised will be summarized and brought back to the EC for consideration in September.

12. EC review

The EC took some time to reflect on its work during the meeting.

13. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m. Eastern time.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Kidd, Executive Director