

**New England Chapter APWA
Minutes of the January 17, 2024, 11:30 AM
Executive Committee Meeting
Zoom Conference Call**

1. **Call to order EC Board Meeting:** Meeting was called to order by President Roy. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for their service to the organization. To save time for everyone, we will no longer conduct a roll call when we have Zoom meetings, instead, Otero will keep track of who is present on the call. Roy requested that participants ensure their names are displayed during the Zoom call, rather than just showing "iPad", for example. Roy requested that we all respect each other's time and try to keep these meetings to an hour or at most an hour and a half. He suggested that more in-depth discussions take place within the committee meetings, with chairs then presenting key points to the EC Board meetings. He also requested that if committees have items that require a vote, particularly those that are more complex or contentious, it would be beneficial for the executive committee to receive this information in advance. This would allow them time to properly review, consider, and understand the issues at hand. Roy noted that this approach is commonly adopted by most town/city employees in their interactions with Town Councils, Town Administrators, and Boards of Selectmen. Otero noted attendance. Guests/Committee Chairs included Amanda Bazinet, Jaqui Connors, Brenda Codella, Christine King, Conrad Leger, Kris Surette, and Jamie Veillette.
2. **Swearing in of Directors/Officers:** Roy asked Benevento if he would swear in the members listed on the slate that were not at the Holliday Board meeting, the mid-term Directors are Adam Yanulis, Dave Pinsonneault, Chris Mulleavey, Bob Dexter, Zach Blodgett, Steve Sopelak, and Howard Weissberg, their term ends this year. Benevento also stated that Patrick Yeo took over to finish Bob Goober's 2-year term, which also ends this year. Benevento read the Officer's/Director's roll description. He mentioned the names on the Board who were present at the December 2nd meeting in Plymouth, MA and the ones he would be swearing in today. Benevento asked those needing to be sworn in to raise their right hand while he proceeded to induct them. The Board applauded in celebration.
3. **Concerns, etc.:** None
4. **Consent Agenda:** *These items will be acted together at their conclusion by a single vote.*
 - a. **Approval of Minutes:** December 2, 2023, minutes were reviewed.
 - b. **Treasurer Report:** Otero updated that the new checking account at Bank of America holds a balance of \$67,492.06. She mentioned that the existing accounts with Santander, comprising a checking account with \$24,476.32 and a money market account with \$89,818.40, are in the process of being closed. Jaqui Connors has retained \$204.00 in the Santander checking account to cover two pending checks. Connors confirmed that the money market account has been fully closed and a check for \$89,818.40 has been sent to Otero. Additionally, a check for \$24,226.00 from the Santander checking account is also enroute to Otero. Connors reported that the credit card associated with these accounts has been closed.
 - c. **Finance Committee:** Schaeffler announced that their meeting took place last Friday, during which they extensively reviewed Jaqui Connors' request for reimbursement for services provided. The committee decided to conditionally approve this request, and a draft letter agreement has been prepared. Schaeffler has requested that this item be taken off the Consent Agenda for a vote at the end. Additionally, the discussion covered Otero's role and agreement as Secretary-Treasurer, which has now been forwarded to National for evaluation. Schaeffler also sought to have Otero's contract and payment deliberation removed from the Consent Agenda for a separate vote.
 - d. **Delegate's Report:** Westerling congratulated everyone that was recently sworn in. As of January, 2024, National reported that we had 31,975 members and two of those members received life time membership from National that are New England members, Kürt Blomquist and Robert Astrella. National continues to work on the website, shout out to Ciancarelli, Otero, and anyone else that might be working on the local Chapter website. He thanked them for their patience and stick-to-itiveness. There is still more that National has to do but we are getting closer. National is partnering with ASCE and ACEC. The state leaders will have a road show and they are looking for local Chapters to host. If this Chapter is interested, we can reach out to APWA to help them. If we want to follow up with what APWA Washington is doing, we can look in on the APWA Government Affairs on X (former Twitter) or LinkedIn. APWA National has the 11th edition of the Public Works Management Practices Manual in their store online. The North American Snow Conference registrations open soon. That event is in Kansas City and runs from April 28-May 1st, be sure to check it out on the website.
 - e. **Education:** Modzelewski reported a recent meeting with the new committee members, where they were quickly introduced and briefed on the roles and responsibilities of the Education Committee. The meeting, which was both well-conceived and well-attended, set the stage for future activities. They have scheduled another meeting for January 18th with the Conference Chairs to discuss the recently closed call for abstracts, which garnered 38 submissions. This Thursday, they plan to allocate these abstracts to specific conferences and then forward the list to Otero, who will inform the presenters and seek CEU approval from National. Yeo mentioned the committee's eagerness to offer guidance and support for educational sessions, extending their help to other committees seeking to provide educational content. Connors inquired about potential content for a 10 am session at the National Public

Works Luncheon in May. Modzelewski responded that they could compile a list for her to review and select from, after which Otero would notify the chosen presenter. Additionally, Modzelewski highlighted the continuation of the New England Chapter Connects initiative, with a meeting planned for next week to discuss the outcomes of the abstract submissions and the planning for the six sessions slated for the upcoming season. He will provide an update to the Board in the next month.

- f. **Membership:** Field reported that we still do not have access to the National website to pull membership reports. As of June 2023, our membership count stood at 1,005. We have not had a meeting but are looking to plan one soon to go over new initiatives.
- g. **PWAC:** Benevento reported the committee has been talking about 2024 promotional items. Benevento shared his screen to show a logo that Jeff Foote's wife, graphic designer created to see what the Board thought of it. The logo is to celebrate the New England Chapter's 70th anniversary. It went out to PWAC first for a barometer test. Roy asked Benevento to share it via email to all. Many on the Board expressed their thoughts and liked it. Schaffler asked if New England could be capitalized. Yanulis stated that it's just a style thing. Benevento stated that it is a stand-alone logo that we would share just this year. We didn't want to make changes to the NEAPWA logo as that would have to go to National for review and approval. Yanulis questioned if we would be planning any 70th anniversary events, that 70th feels odd to celebrate and would think we would celebrate our 75th anniversary. Benevento agreed the Yanulis had a great point and let the Board know that nothing was planned yet for the 70th. The committee's next meeting is January 24th and all are welcome. Piacentini stated that she, Aimee Couture, and Ciancarelli met with a video production company for a video, just putting feelers out there as prices are high. They will come back to the group with what they find and what their goals are.
- h. **Sponsors:** Leger shared a positive update about their December 8th meeting, noting it was highly productive with 25 participants in a hybrid format. On January 3rd, they distributed the 2024 sponsorship forms, implementing a 30% increase in sponsorship levels across the board. There was no hesitation from our sponsors, demonstrating their strong support for the organization. This year we incorporated the opportunities with the Western Region to make sure we have representation there. He and Otero are keeping tabs on the forms that are already coming in. During the last meeting, a new sponsorship program was introduced, aimed at enhancing the PWX events. The committee is collaborating with Roy and the Finance Committee to refine this program, promising to share more details in the future. Feedback on recent updates has been favorable. The next meeting, scheduled for January 31st, will focus on discussing further changes to the PWX events.
- i. **Scholarship:** Mulleavey reported they will have a meeting in the next two weeks to go over last year's winners. We hope to get more applicants. They will be updating the applications so that we can list them on our website and send out notice. They are aiming to get the information out early February. Looking to announce the winners the end of April, early May. Mulleavey asked about the charity portion of this Committee. He doesn't believe this committee is the right committee for it. He is assuming the Past President or Otero would receive these requests. Roy stated that Connors shared the policy recently as this came up during other meetings and he feels it's dated. Yanulis said we have that item on our budget, charity donations. He mentioned having a subcommittee made up of Past Presidents to look at them but we don't get a ton of them.
- j. **Newsletter:** Bazinet said TEC did a great job on the last edition of the Chapter Chatter that came out in December. They handed everything over to VHB so that VHB can start pulling those together going forward. She stated Myers and TEC did such an amazing job over the past 5 years, she is very thankful for their previous work and for also volunteering to help her in the future.
- k. **Website and Social Media:** Piacentini reported that the job listings are now on our website and thanked Ciancarelli for his work on that.
- l. **Young Professionals:** Yeo has announced the committee's plans to host quarterly events throughout the year. The first quarter will feature a Director's Breakfast in March, with Stinson taking the lead on organizing it. In the spring, plans include a project tour in Newport. The third quarter is our Woo Sox event, followed by a YP Holiday event and Toys for Tots in the fourth quarter. Yeo urged everyone to encourage Young Professionals (YPs) within their organizations to participate in the conference, suggesting they consider joining a committee or a sub-committee to contribute their ideas. The aim is to boost YP involvement. Leger inquired about discussions concerning the YP summit, to which Yeo responded that it was mentioned, with Frank Marinaccio also participating in the discussion and they were hoping he would help guide that. However, little progress has been made, but it will be a topic of conversation in the next meeting. The last YP summit was in 2013.
- m. **Past President Advisory Council:** Bechard reported within the chat area of our Zoom call that past presidents will be meeting soon and will be working on updating the Bylaws.
- n. **Spring Conference:** The committee met yesterday, January 16th and plan to meet every other week until the event is closer. The Spring Conference will be on Monday, April 8th at a new location, New England Air Museum. Next meeting we will be talking about speaker gifts.
- o. **Summer Conference:** No report.

- p. **NorthWest Committee:** Blodgett reported that they will be meeting soon. Schaeffler stated they are looking to plan a lunch in learn in July. They are looking for locations and possibly pulling from the educational committee's abstracts. She mentioned the Vermont Equipment Show and Field Day is May 8th and hopes to see more people attend.
- q. **Holiday Event:** Sopelak reported that they will be meeting tomorrow, January 18th.
- r. **Director of Region 1:** Benevento reported that Westerling gave a good report in terms of things directly affecting our Chapter. Benevento is traveling to Washington D. C. on February 7th - 8th. The President Elect, Lisa Rapp passed away early December. APWA scheduled an emergency meeting on February 7th so that the Board selects a Board member to be President Elect. Normally it goes through a process, a National Nominating Committee for technical directors and presidents. We are honored to have Chris Mulleavey from our Chapter as a member of our National Nominating Committee. Because of the death, the Board will select the President Elect. On Feb 8th APWA Washington office will be setting up meetings with Congressional delegations from the various regions to talk about Public Works matters. Roy asked if there is anything that the New England Chapter should be doing or could be doing to acknowledge the passing of the Vice President Lisa Rapp. Benevento replied no, her husband has been very private about this. Benevento mentioned they might do something at PWX this year and it's a reminder that life is short hug someone you love and maybe someone you don't.

5. Approval of Consent Items

Above Consent Items were approved on a motion by Pinsonneault/Westerling.

6. Action on Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

Payment for Services Rendered: Schaeffler reported extensive discussions and meetings regarding Jaqui Connors' invoice from October 2023 for services provided as the Secretary-Treasurer throughout 2023. A Subcommittee, consisting of three members, convened and unanimously agreed to authorize a payment to Connors. During the most recent FinCom committee meeting held last Friday, after considerable discussion, the committee voted to proceed with the \$10,000 payment to Connors, acknowledging her contributions throughout 2023. **Subject to the conditions mentioned by Schaeffler, a motion was made by Westerling/Mulleavey and approved to pay Jaqui Connors the \$10,000.00 requested in October 2023 for services rendered.** An agreement will be sent to Connors stipulating that all bank accounts must be closed, the funds transferred to a new Bank of America account, and all financial records forwarded to Otero prior to receiving the final payment for services rendered. Schaeffler thanked Connors for all of her hard work, keeping us up and running.

2024 Secretary-Treasurer Agreement and Compensation: Schaeffler announced that a draft contract for Molly Otero, the new Secretary-Treasurer for 2024, is currently under review by National. Otero's annual compensation is set at \$37,500, to be paid in monthly installments of \$3,125 for her services. **A motion was made by Pinsonneault/Westerling and approved, subject to any amendments suggested by National during their review of the one-year agreement for the Secretary-Treasurer position.**

7. Other Business and Correspondence

PWX Chapter Dinner: Meyers reported they had their first committee meeting on January 12th. They have a team of 12 making the recon trip March 18th to Atlanta. They are looking at the hotels, they have a sense of hotels that National will be recommending. They are pulling together a list of possible locations for the PWC Chapter Dinner. Historically the dinner was held on Tuesday night, one of the things the committee discussed was scheduling the Chapter Dinner for Monday night this year. They are hoping to have the Awards Reception and Chapter Dinner at one location for both events. To combine these budgets to have a cost saving and provide more flexibility to improve that event. Benevento mentioned a potential issue: National might not agree to have the Chapter Dinner on the same night as the Awards Reception. He suggested Westerling should double-check this. The Awards Reception at PWX is usually a short, free event with snacks, after which people have free time. But with the new plan, people would need to pay \$100 to attend both events. Benevento recognized Meyers' hard work and careful planning.

Awards: Pinsonneault stated they held a couple meetings. They have eight people to consider for the individual awards and nine projects to consider for the project awards to review. They believe they will have 18-21 submittals that they can do which includes the PACE award. Stinson did an excellent job summarizing the areas we are exploring. Pinsonneault mentioned that he will send this list to Otero to disperse to the Board. We'd like to have the people we are going to peruse nominating by Tuesday the 23rd. He thanked Otero for sending out the Constant Contact flyer. He reported they have great conversations during their meetings. If anyone has any questions, reach out to him.

Admin Event: Pinsonneault reported that they are looking to have their event in the Worcester, MA area. This event last year was well received and appreciated. Benevento mentioned a nice venue at no cost would be the District 3 office at MassDOT. They hold the Baystate Roads Advisory meeting there. There is a lot of parking, awesome venue. We could probably get Berry Lorian, District Highway Director there to give a tour to attendees they have their operating center there too, pretty cool. Pinsonneault thanked Benevento for his recommendations and mentioned that the committee has City of Worcester connections with the Park and Rec department. They have a couple options at this time.

Questions from the Board: Westerling inquired about a term he encountered during the last Friday's FinCom Committee meeting, "finite executive committee," which seemed to surprise some attendees. He questioned how this committee was formed and its extent of authority. Roy clarified that Garro had intended to refer to the Chapter's officers, namely the President, Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and the immediate Past President, rather than a "finite executive committee." Garro confirmed this was his original intent.

Further questions and discussion was had regarding the authority of various board members and specifics of the Chapter by-laws, with a determination that a further discussion would be held with Roy, Westering, Benevento and others that may be interested.

Treasurer's Report Continued: Otero asked to return to the Treasurer's Report after being accidentally interrupted earlier. She updated that the reconciliation for the two Santander accounts in QuickBooks is complete up through November 2023. Additionally, Vendor Forms, along with the required W-9s for anyone paid over \$600 in 2023, were to be submitted to Lorri Roth by January 15th; our Chapter successfully submitted these documents on January 4th. Otero also mentioned that by prepaying for Constant Contact for the year, we achieved a savings of \$198.48, and by prepaying our Zoom account, we saved an additional \$47.87.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Yanulis/Westerling.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Otero
Secretary-Treasurer