

New England Chapter APWA
Minutes of the November 15, 2023, 12:30 PM
Executive Committee Meeting
Zoom Conference Call

1. **Call to order EC Board Meeting:** Meeting was called to order by President Bechard. Roll was called by Connors. Guests/Committee Chairs included Brenda Codella, Christine King, Conrad Leger, Tom Modzelewski, Kris Surette, and Patrick Yeo.
2. **Concerns, etc.:** None
3. **Consent Agenda:** *These items will be acted together at their conclusion by a single vote.*
 - a. **Approval of Minutes:** October 18, 2023, minutes were reviewed.
 - b. **Treasurer Report:** Connors shared the troubles we had with Santander being linked to our account in QuickBooks. It took multiple people at Santander to finally remove the account. Once that happened, we were able to reconcile the account without any issues. Connors then asked Otero to report on our banking transition. Otero reported that we are in the process of opening our Bank of America checking account. This was recommended by Lorri Roth at National. They would like all Chapters to switch to Bank of America to be under one Master Account. We fall under the "business banking customer" which has a \$100 monthly fee associated with it, National pays this fee to be able to have all accounts together. We won't utilize ACH payments due to the \$50 charge per transaction, and wiring incurs a \$13 fee per transaction. Instead, all deposits will be conducted at no cost through the CASHPRO app; going to a bank would result in a \$5 charge each visit. For the events we offer credit card payments, the process will be more streamlined. National will transition to direct deposit, significantly enhancing speed and efficiency. Kimberly Burris at Bank of America mentioned that Scott Grayson will be looking into a credit card program through them in January. I can have Bank of America set up a Square account. With Square, people could call me with a credit card or pay in person during our events. According to the official website of Square, the virtual terminal service is free to use and has no monthly fees or commitments. You only pay the processing fee of 3.5% + 15 cents for remote payments and 2.6% + 10 cents for in-person payments. I have an email into Kimberly at Bank of America to see when the CASHPRO is set up so that I can make the deposits. I have a total of \$5,483.76 (\$4,008.76 is from Chapter Dues from National) sitting on my desk. I received the checkbook, stamp, and deposit slips. Roy inquired with Connors about the timeline for transferring funds from Santander to the new Bank of America account. Connors stated that they need to keep some money in the Santander account as she pays September bills in November. Once everything closes out, we can transfer the rest of the Santander account into Bank of America. Garro agreed that it takes time to pay off the bills and we're looking at February/March timeframe for the full transfer over to Bank of America.
 - c. **Finance Committee:** No report. Schaeffler stated that Otero and Connors did a good job reconciling.
 - d. **Delegate's Report:** No report.
 - e. **Education:** Yeo reported that Otero sent out the Call for Presentations via Constant Contact. They have already started to receive abstracts. In January, the Education Committee will convene to evaluate the abstracts in collaboration with the conference chairs. The New England Chapter Connects program for 2023 will be wrapping up with a very popular topic this week – Workforce Challenges. Benevento stated that it will be a great panel and a wonderful service to our membership. Modzelewski reported that they had 91 registered for the last topic of this season.
 - 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, representing the latest available information on our website's membership roster.
 - g. **PWAC:** Benevento reported that they met on October 25th and will have another meeting next Wednesday. Perry Hallinan is the creator behind the "Public Works Makes it Happen" video, which he hopes that everyone has seen and is distributing to your local access tv station in your Town/City. They have been in discussion with Perry about producing another shorter video to capture the Public Works services. Perry sent a scope of services that the committee will go over at the next meeting. Lawlor asked if they can adjust it for local use. Benevento replied that we were always able to, and that people should reach out to the local access tv station to share the video. The committee also discussed the possibility of having a Keynote speaker for the May Luncheon. They plan to distribute a Doodle poll to gather opinions on whether to include a Keynote speaker and explore the option of changing the location after 2024. Several location choices will be provided for consideration. They discussed utilizing promotional items acquired some time ago, including magnets, stickers, and flashlights. Connors reminded everyone that we already decided to gift those items to Schaeffler to use at her Vermont event in May. Garro reported that he and Aimee Couture spoke about creating booth panels for events in the future. Benevento thanked Mike Gantick for being the custodian for the strategic PWAC plan and that the baton has been handed over to Merson and Pinsonneault.

- h. Sponsors:** Leger reported that they will be meeting in December. They sent out the meeting invite to the sponsors and RSVPs are rolling in. They are mostly reviewing the 2024 sponsorship program and trying to meet the levels of the Chapter budget goals. After their meeting the sponsor letters will go out.
- i. Scholarship/Charity:** Severance asked if the word “charity” could come off their committee’s name. He said that in the past that was the Past Presidents decision to donate to a charity. Benevento said that it has been years since we had any charity events and there is a policy on donation amounts and that the Board would vote on it. Connors said she would send out the policy that was last updated in 2019 (**see attached**). The donation value was up to \$100 for Chapter members. Yanulis mentioned that in the past, we were spending money we didn't have, but he noted that with the current Financial Committee (FinCom), our financial management has improved, thanks to their better understanding of our finances.
- j. Newsletter:** Meyers reported that they are still on track to release the newsletter by the end of the year. They reached out to the sponsors letting them know to get their articles in by December 1st. They have received four submissions so far. Connors took a moment to thank Meyers and the PWX committee for the wonderful job they did this year. The Chapter dinner was amazing, and everyone had a great time. She wanted to express that during the September meeting but that was cancelled.
- k. Website and Social Media:** No report.
- l. Young Professionals:** Surette stated that they are working with Connors on their annual Woo Sox event. They are looking to expand it based on this year’s numbers and how successful that was. Lauren Nicholson is working on the details with the Woo Sox representative. The committee is actively organizing the upcoming Young Professionals (YP) social for the holiday event and is collaborating with the Providence Engineering Society and the American Society of Civil Engineers Young Members Group for another Toys for Tots Drive this holiday season.
- m. Professional Development & Knowledge MGMT:** Lawlor reported that they have been getting inquiries regarding the next course program with the Public Works Institute. He will be reaching out to Blomquist to discuss the timeline and would like to report back to the Board after more discussion and before responding to the applicants. Roy asked if anyone, specifically Merson or Benevento, if they had any prior history with the Institute. Merson stated that he’s had no direct contact with them, it’s under-served and under-promoted but it’s definitely worth reviewing. Benevento said many years ago we had an affiliation with Norwich University. He wasn’t sure of where we stood now. Lawlor said it’s the same, the affiliation is with Norwich University. And it’s intended to be a program for more senior level within the Public Works Profession, not to take away with what we do with the T2 Center. Benevento asked if Lawlor spoke to Becky Stein at all. Lawlor replied that he has spoken to Becky but not about this subject. Benevento said it might be helpful and told him to reach out if there was anything he could do. Connors inquired whether Lawlor had received the email she forwarded to him. Lawlor confirmed that he did receive the one from Patrick Shield, and she acknowledged that it was the specific email in question.
- n. Past President Advisory Council:** No report.
- o. Summer Conference:** Codella stated that the Program Committee will be meeting this Friday about how to move forward with the 2025 Summer Conference.
- p. NorthWest Committee:** Schaeffler reported that their Lunch and Learn on November 2nd went very well. There were 25 people in attendance, and the session featured active engagement, excellent presentations, and a discussion about membership. At the conclusion of the event, a couple of people asked for more information about joining our membership. Otero posted photos to our Facebook page and sent them to Meyers for the newsletter. Roy congratulated the committee on a great event.
- q. Fall Conference:** No report. Otero stated that she sent out invoices to the Fall Conference attendees.
- r. Holiday Event:** Benevento reported that this event will take place on December 2nd at the 1620 House in Plymouth, MA. The location is chosen by the outgoing President. The last day for the hotel discount at \$149.00 ends today. Surette mentioned that they are doing the YP reception. Benevento stated that the YP reception starts at 3 PM, cocktail reception starts at 5 PM, the Executive Board meeting starts at 5:30, we will break and reconvene at the Installation of Officers right before dinner at 7 PM. There will be an awesome band to entertain us. There are 29 registered for dinner as of today. He asked everyone to please register sooner than later. Past Presidents and Board members attend for free, while spouses/guests are charged \$100.00. He mentioned that there are a few things to do in the area and once he pulls a list together, he will send it over to Otero to send out via Constant Contact.
- s. Director of Region 1:** Benevento reported that we are not the only Chapter having website issues. The implementation and messaging about the website didn’t go well. King asked if we could create a website and if so, there would be a cost to have a domain and fees to register for events. Benevento said that he would ask but we are supposed to use the one that was created for us. Lawlor mentioned the problem of not being able to post jobs onto the website. Connors asked if the list can be posted to LinkedIn. Piacentini stated that we should send the posting out via Constant Contact with a link right to the Town or City’s website for more information. Benevento requested that people email their website issues to Otero, Otero will gather this information, compile it, and then send it back to Benevento for reporting to the National team. Roy wanted to take a minute to recognize Ciancarelli and all that he has done to help with getting our website in better shape. Benevento reported that Scott Grayson

said that our issues with websites should be taken care of by December 31st. Benevento also brought up the Award's Program. March 4, 2024, is the deadline for all awards except the Excellence in Snow and Ice Control Award and the PACE Award. December 4, 2023, is the deadline for the Excellence in Snow and Ice Control Award and June 3, 2024, is the PACE Award deadline.

4. Approval of Consent Items

Above Consent Items were approved on a motion by Schaffler/Lawlor.

5. Action on Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

6. Other Business and Correspondence

Professional Development & Knowledge Management: Roy and Lawlor spoke about merging with the Education Committee prior to the meeting. Lawlor and Blomquist will present about the merger in the near future.

Spring Conference: Otero reported that the contract for the venue is fully executed, and the catering contract is in the works.

2024 PWX Chapter Dinner: Meyers reported that they will meet on December 12th. With hopes to take the trip in early Spring.

PWX 2029: Benevento stated that Bechard has been in communication with Diana Forbes, National about the NE Chapter hosting the 2029 PWX event. Bechard requested additional information, not only financial obligations but other obligations such as volunteers. In 2010, there was a significant financial commitment, but the situation may have evolved, and National might now provide more coverage than before. Bechard will provide a report to the Board for consideration.

8. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Otero
Chapter Administrator