



ASSOCIATION FOR  
COMMUNICATION  
EXCELLENCE

**ACE Fall Board Agenda 2017**

**October 9-12, 2017**

**Scottsdale Plaza – Lodge Room**

**Scottsdale, AZ**

**Monday, October 9**

**8-noon:** Officers meet, review bylaws and constitution

**4 pm:** Meet with Diane Johnson, AMS, and tour 2018 conference site

**Tuesday, October 10**

**8-8:30 am** (Coffee, tea will be available)

Roll Call

President Suzanne Steel, Past President Steve Miller, President-elect Elizabeth Gregory North, Vice President Doug Edlund, Membership Director Beth Forbes, Research Director Lauri Baker, Professional Development Director Victor Villegas, Learning Community Director Mary Wirth, Retirees Director Janet Rodekohr

Non-voting: Executive Director Holly Young, Treasurer Becky Koch, Marketing Director-elect Matt Browning, Learning Community Director-elect Lori Greiner, Membership Director-elect Tobie Blanchard

Attending by Zoom: Development Officer Donna Sheffield, Marketing Director Dennis Thomas

Absent: Professional Development Director-elect Craig Woods

Welcome – ACE President Suzanne Steel

Review and approve September minutes

**Action:** Motion to approve the September, 2017, board minutes from Mary, second from Janet. Approved.

Discuss process for management firm interviews:

Suzanne thanked the search committee for its efforts, Beth, Mary, Becky, Doug, Elizabeth and LaRachelle Smith. Two firms will come before the board for final presentations. After making a final selection, Becky and Elizabeth will conduct contract negotiations.

Steve – do we have a plan to viably pay for the management firm? How do we afford it, can we afford it? How much? Becky has the same concern; her hope is that they will bring a diversity of skills and more time to help increase revenue. Becky said we will need to dip into the investment fund first year.

The contract will begin June 1, 2018.

Steve wants to ensure we have a mechanism in place to pay the management company the approximately \$5,000-8,000 a month. Elizabeth noted it also needs to be an ethical process.

**Action:** Once negotiations are complete, and before the contract is signed, the board agreed by consensus that a lawyer will review it for ACE.

### **8:45**

The board met with Diane Johnson, AMS. Diane noted the program committee should work with Barb Baylor Anderson as its liaison to the conference. ACE members Robert Casler and Susan McGinley can help with local speaker contacts. Lori noted there will be a proposal for a tour from Robert.

Becky – ACE receives \$20 per person. Did not know we also were bringing sponsorship money into it, so what benefit is it to ACE? Do we get a cut? Diane, no. Ag Media brings in about \$200,000 in sponsorships; it will go into the pot. Registration at this point is \$385.

Lori said there are a couple of items that will be ACE-only, so the program committee is looking for a couple of sponsors to cover them. Becky noted we'll only make about \$4,000 instead of the more than \$8,000 made from New Orleans.

Holly asked about membership with registration ability. Diane is sure we can work that out as well. Holly noted that the Development Fund Committee will continue with a silent auction. Lori noted AgMedia summit promotes before the conference.

There is no theme yet for the conference. Lori wants to get out a call for proposals by the end of October.

### **9:30**

Celtic presentation and Q&A.

Presenting: Deb Ryan, who would serve as ACE executive director, and Marlene Byrne, Celtic president.

### **1:00 p.m.** Debrief on Celtic

Pros regarding Celtic:

Appears they care about their people. Seem very flexible. Looking at the long picture, strategic planning emphasis, the strategic role for the board to getting more on the board; the breadth of skills. Confident it could be explained to the membership, assistance with committees.

Several did not have "cons" yet until the second management firm presents.

Top 3 concerns: finances and add-ons at additional costs; transitioning, don't want to lose the personal touch; some of the answers were a little vague; lose institutional knowledge; loss of personal touch; anticipate hiccups in C&A; institutional knowledge; how much ag experience and what are the add-ons.

Janet said she felt a nervousness among the members; we're going to have a good job of explaining it, selling it, there are members who don't agree with it.

### **1:30** Review plans of work from each officer and director

Marketing from Matt – two goals. Increase membership among millennials by X amount and develop an ACE social media marketing plan and determine what resources are needed to complete this. Roadblocks: time commitment and active committee members, perhaps lack of a current strategic plan and active administrators.

Second goal: increasing awareness among administrators and communicators outside of Extension; use email/direct mail to expose people to us. Resources needed: content/emails for these people and funding.

Elizabeth noted she and Faith Peppers had worked on a one-pager for Extension administrators, some of those messages could be brought over for agcomm heads. Matt also wants to develop additional ACE marketing materials, video testimonials; current Marketing Director Dennis Thomas has been able to travel to record videos.

**Suggested action:** board members go back and photograph ACE members at their own institutions. Matt will send an example of what he's looking for in a photograph.

The board will continue its plans of work discussion at its November meeting.

Suzanne noted her plan of work includes development of a transition plan in conjunction with the firm, Holly, and the board; facilitate regular meetings with Holly and the firm; have the firm meet with individual board members; and communicate progress with board.

Past President Steve Miller is at work with the Nominating Committee and hopes to present a slate of candidates by February 1; there is some hesitancy due to the proposed transition.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Good news from New Orleans with more than \$8,000 in profits. ACE currently has about \$17,000 in income, \$13,000 in expenses. Still need to pay first quarter to UNH.

Becky also reviewed how the spreadsheet is set up, so we can easily see income versus expense. A discussion then followed in C&A and how awards are presented. Becky would like a link to all the winning entries. Lori believes providing press releases to winners would provide more momentum for our awards.

Linda noted that the awards don't note what the specific award was for; nothing that communicates when the recipient did.

Janet we don't honor our people enough; they are crucial to our membership. A paper certificate, to her, goes into a drawer. This was her "academy award" in her profession.

**Motion** to approve treasurer's report: Victor, second Lori, approved.

### **Executive Director's Report**

**Motion** to approve executive director's report, Janet, second Lori, approved.

### **Wednesday, October 11**

The meeting resumed at 8 am.

### **Officer Reports**

- President: main focus has been on the search, 2018 committee, and moving the board towards thinking about "who we are." In terms of the search, the search committee conducted the zoom interviews, went through reference checks, and narrowed it down to two.

- 2018 Conference: Martha Filipic and Lori Greiner are co-chairs; thankful for their flexibility; ethics/diversity/who we are – started first summer board meeting looking at ethics and diversity – we can't alienate new members; Janet has agreed to work further this year on ethics and diversity and how we can ensure we are reflecting the organization we mean to be and also as we prepare for a strategic plan.
- President-elect: Reviewing C&A for consistency with a sub-committee; one area of concern is the description of diversity, they are described as diversity awards but the individual class descriptions talk about targeted publics.

There are more than 300 urls that need placement in the new ACE website.

Elaine has looked at accreditation for our members, and has set up a conference call with John Ford at MSU for her, Suzanne, Mary and Beth to look at possible benefits. This will be brought back to the board.

**2019 Conference:** The board voted its approval of San Antonio for the 2019 ACE conference, to be located at the Westin River Walk from June 24-27, 2019. The other option was the Hilton Fort Worth. Room rate, Westin: \$185; \$50,000; Hilton Fort Worth, \$179, \$40,000'

**Motion:** Janet move to approve San Antonio, second from Lauri. Approved.

**Dates:** June 24-27, 2019

- Past-president: Two tasks, bylaw/constitution review and the nominating committee effort. Learning communities, need a "how to join" the learning communities on the website.

### **Director & Committee Reports**

- Professional Development (what is it each director is supposed to)  
Also need a structure for working committees, what is "my job" as the professional development director? Suzanne shared the information from the bylaws on job description for pd director.  
\*Facebook feed a professional development page on the website.
- Membership – Beth, there is a full committee. Looked at what services should be made available. All listed in the report. Suggested that the web committee review it.
- Retirees – Janet has been working with retirees through the newsletter; she always gets a good response. Linda and Janet have been working on goals: developing a proposal for the 2018 conference, Lori suggested a speaker on freelancing. Another goal – find out when folks are retiring. No way to find out currently and it would be nice to find a way to invite them to remain a member of ACE. That would be a role for the state representative. Freelance opportunities could be provided under job opportunities.

### **Presentation and Interview with Van Petten**

Presenting: Megan Van Petten, president of firm who would serve as ACE Executive Director, and Greg Smith, Creative Director

Pros: familiar with association work, innovative, clean presentation design, month-to-month contract pro and con, looking for partners, not clients, seemed to understand younger audiences and took calls during off times. Liked social media strategy and 90-day audit, attention to detail, good at results

driven design. Loved marketing ideas, good at giving ideas and suggestions rather than abstract, like that personal touch and appreciation for current members, excellent credentials, incredible negotiations around conferencing; think they're very strategic, would they give us the time we needed; liked emphasis on awards, very strong negotiators, biggest strength they had, did like their design and good marketing ideas, focus on membership renewals, identify strongly with the standards of the association industry; great emphasis on strategy.

Cons: didn't understand their workflow, more details for what they did for their clients, found him annoying, aggressive pay structure, don't like people to just call me, didn't seem to know ACE as well as they should, cons: presentation and proposal too wordy, should be more polished in written information, their website is terrible. Not clear on day-to-day workings they would provide us, still never answered question about associations, don't think they got "us"; the cost of the add-ons, Cons: off-putting, appear to have a formula rather than customizing for ACE. Prospectus poorly written,

Straw vote to "take the temperature." Ex-officios included in straw vote. 6-4 in favor of Celtic.

Following further discussion about the two firms, Beth motioned to continue negotiations with Celtic, second from Janet.

If things fall apart with Celtic, the board would discuss negotiating with VP.

Yes: Elizabeth, Doug, Steve, Victor, Janet, Lauri, Beth, Mary

No: Dennis

The negotiating team of Elizabeth and Becky will report back at the November board meeting.

- Development, Donna working on getting reports up on the website from grant recipients. Any suggestions from the board are welcome. There will be a joint auction, so we need to find a way to do it together at the Ag Media Summit. We need to make it more clear on how to submit items for our website, would help to know when and how to post, best practices.

Becky noted that there is a draft document because we had no policy regarding financial policy and procedures.

## Thursday, Oct 12

### Reports, continued:

- Research: moving to getting more submissions online; are still seeking earlier issues. Moving forward with New Prairie Press, a few glitches. Finalized reviewer form. Holly checked authors against membership, and at least a third were not ACE members. It's pretty common to require membership with authorship. There are currently 42 agcom programs, and they need a lot of support and help. Many are smaller programs, without travel budgets.

**Action:** Beth motioned that the JAC board consider requiring membership in ACE as a requirement to publish in JAC, Elizabeth second, amend and consider a publication fee for non-members. Approved.

- Learning Community  
Mary has focused on trying to move the administrative role from the learning community chairs. Like to see some priorities around that, including listservs. LC raised the question of incentives, or recognition, to give them credit for the work they do. They are having trouble getting leadership.

Suzanne wondered if simply recognizing them more. Doug, maybe an award for a LC chair, for “above and beyond” in their LC efforts. Recommendation/discussion on how to further recognize outstanding LC chairs.

Suzanne needs a list of LC chairs and then their administrators to send out a note.

Elizabeth asked Mary and Lori to put together a proposal for a recognition of LC chairs.

- JOE Update provided by Joanne Littlefield, ACE JOE representative

## Old Business

- 2018 Conference  
Lori, Reuben Brigham award – it might be nice to recognize someone in publishing field or journalist. Elizabeth suggested Sonny Ramaswamy.

Considering a pre- or post-conference. Topics discussed around diversity, inclusion. Is that something you feel you would come to, and any suggestions on how we would formulate that type of workshop. ChaNae Bradley is working with the Diversity LC to get its feedback.

Sponsorships, Brian and Donna are leading that effort. Brian has developed some talking points and descriptions of sponsorship levels. Lori will send to the board and ask that they go to their administrators to share with them. Also need a little money to pay for our ACE only, including a reception for new company, around \$1,500.

ACE exhibit table possibility, to help promote membership. Lori will discuss with Diane Johnson. We have a banner stand.

Manage proposals. K-State has bid at \$1200. Suzanne will check with Celtic for a bid. Holly will investigate if Submittable can handle it.

Suggestion – have a “dine around” option.

ACE/eXtension Fellows: Elizabeth, call twice for applications. Only heard from two people. Josh Paine replied but is trying to finish up a graduate program, could this be offered next year? This is a great opportunity for ACE.

Proposed changes to ByLaws & Constitution – Past President Steve Miller  
Steve went through the highlighted changes.

The board discussed the descriptions for directors.

Victor, PD committee, would like to add the LC director to committee. Standing committees also are three-year terms. PD director, chair, current president, past president, and LC director, and a member in good standing.

Recommended voting on this will take place on this as well as the Constitution. Donna has asked that the Development Committee review the proposed financial bylaw be reviewed by that committee first. Becky felt this was a larger issue that just for the development fund.

Becky, problem has been in “approved.” All contracts should be presented to the board before signage. Janet wondered if it should be the officers to approve? Approval needs to occur if an amount goes over a budgeted amount. Need some language for budgeted and unbudgeted expenses.

Janet noted that the Development Committee needs to compare the two documents.

Suzanne:

Two directors are seeking members, prof development and marketing

When do we meet in November? Elizabeth/Holly

At next meeting, hoping to have a contract to review from Celtic

Reviewing Plans of Work

Suggestions for officers

Meeting adjourned at 11:32 am

ACE Fall Board Reports, October, 2017

## Membership

During the annual conference, new members were added to the membership committee. The committee consists of:

Beth Forbes, membership director

Tobie Blanchard, membership director-elect

Kelli Armbruster

Maggie Lawrence

Suzanne Street

Kelley Redmon

Audrey King

This summer the membership committee discussed the website, thinking particularly about how it benefits the members. What aspects should be reserved for members only and where might we provide services/information that would bring other communication professionals to our site and possibly interest them in membership.

The committee met in July and the following are points made about the benefits to members of these items currently found on the ACE website:

**Journal of Applied Communications** – members used to receive a printed copy, but it has only been available on the web for several years. Academic members do search it regularly which will soon become easier to do as it becomes indexed. Summaries of current issues are highlighted in the ACE newsletter, which hopefully drives more traffic to the publication. It is open access to benefit those who publish in it.

**Job postings** – there was not a strong feeling about the value of job postings. Making them viewable by nonmembers does not seem like much of an issue and may actually drive some potential members to our

website. It was discussed whether we should charge those outside of ACE to post – could be a source of revenue but probably not a lot and may even keep some people from posting jobs on our site.

**Professional development opportunities** – perhaps some of our webinars should be made available to members only. We should also better promote archived versions of past webinars for later viewing by members. In addition to webinars sponsored by the LCs, maybe we could consider proposals for webinars that members might present on their own. Faculty presentations on current research that is applicable to communications staff might also be good learning opportunities.

**Learning Communities** – only members may participate and should stay that way. Currently only those who are in a certain LC can email members through the LC list serve – may be we could expand that to any member. (There might be times when someone wants information from members of a specific LC, but does not want to participate in the LC all the time. An example might be a question about video or social media) In addition, might we consider Learning Community message boards and/or encourage each LC to have a Facebook page for further interaction and collaboration.

**C&A Contest** – those who win awards could be encouraged to announce their awards more broadly through news releases or social media. In addition to sending college administrators the award announcements, it would be helpful if department heads and state reps also were copied. The significance of the awards should also be highlighted. For example when a smaller college or institution wins awards that shows how they stack up in a national competition. Encouraging content faculty to be a part of the award submission also can give the contest greater opportunities for recognition.

**Member directory** – it was not felt that the member directory was used a great deal. Many people use Google to find their peers. Still if kept it should be only for members.

**Newsletter** – for members only. Many do read through it if only to skim through the articles. Perhaps add more content that is not only about ACE such as links to helpful articles.

**Communicators Handbook** – This is an old publication (2000) that is located on the website. While it is dated, it does have a lot of information. Perhaps it could be updated. Maybe there are more recent publications that could replace it. The Program Leadership Network of the Southern Region of Extension has considered putting together a curriculum on communication (social media, best practices). Possibly consider linking to it if access is granted once it is complete.

**Retirees' news** – the highlights of their awards and achievements are a nice touch. Perhaps ACE could highlight the same for other members. The content could be supplied by the members and located elsewhere on the ACE website.

**Professional development grants** – only available to members and should benefit members. Perhaps more people would apply for them if they knew that the process was easy. ACE might also suggest some possible proposal ideas as a way to get people to work on topics of great interest to members. The ideas would also give members some examples of what good proposals might entail.

*Report submitted by  
Beth Forbes and Tobie Blanchard*

**JOE Report** – See separate PDF submitted by Curator Joanne Littlefield



## **Leadership & Management Learning Community – Beth Stuever, chair**

Mission Statement Leadership and management LC: To work together to maximize the leadership potential of ACE members through professional development and networking.

Vice Chair: LaRachelle Smith Vice Chair-elect: Sarah Lupis

How are leadership responsibilities divided among the officers?

We just elected our vice-chair and are still figuring this out.

What are your Learning Community's goals for the year including professional development offerings? (Fall)

- Help stimulate growth among new and emerging leaders in ACE
- Offer professional development webinars throughout the year
- Ensure that there are leadership and management sessions at the annual

We plan to have three webinars per year, and hold LC meetings once or twice during the year. Looking forward to having a calendar to reserve dates for webinars. A little frustrated that this is taking so long ... can't we just do a shared Excel spreadsheet in Google Drive? In 2017, we presented an award to Ruth Borger. The nomination process was relatively easy. We typically only nominate one person annually so the selection process takes place prior to filling out the nomination.

## **Marketing Learning Community – Melissa McGinnis, chair**

The Chair will continue efforts started in 2016/17 to meet the needs of the Marketing LC as described in a group survey. The Chair will recruit additional leadership and organize a schedule of speakers. In addition, the Chair will attend all ACE LC leadership meetings.

What are your Learning Community's goals for the year including professional development offerings? (Fall)

Provide at least 4 total webinars covering topics on marketing plan development and implementation. Current communicating with members vial email, as needed.

Diversity Learning Community – Leilana McKindra, chair

Blair Hess, vice chair Maurice Perkins, vice chair-elect

There is no established division of responsibilities among officers. As tasks, issues, projects, concerns and ideas are presented, an officer volunteers to take the lead.

What are your Learning Community's goals for the year including professional development offerings? (Fall)

- 1) Establish a monthly diversity e-bulletin that will be distributed to all ACE members – This effort is already in progress.
- (2) Upgrade the social media presence of the DLC via the ACE and DLC Facebook pages by using DLC e-bulletin content.
- (3) Develop one or two webinars on pertinent diversity topics.
- (4) Identify and employ ways to increase the dialogue around diversity throughout ACE.

We are mainly communicating with members via email and phone/video conference. We have monthly calls and notifications for meetings are sent via email. Outside of our monthly calls, we primarily communicate through email and phone.