

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS**

Tuesday, October 27, 2015

President Rachel Dresbeck called the meeting of the Board of Directors, National Organization of Research Development Professionals (NORDP) to order at 1:35 pm Central on Tuesday, October 27, 2015.

The following Directors were present at the meeting: Jeff Agnoli, Rachel Dresbeck, Karen Eck, Gretchen Kiser, Alicia Knoedler, Ioannis Konstantinidis, Marjorie Piechowski, Terri Soelberg, Michael Spires, David Stone, and Peggy Sundermeyer. Jacob Levin was absent. Denise Smith of Talley Management attended the meeting as a guest.

Approval of Draft September 22 Board Meeting Minutes – Rachel Dresbeck

Michael Spires moved (seconded by Jeff Agnoli) to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee – Rachel Dresbeck.

The Executive Committee voted at its meeting October 13 to continue with the full-service option from Survey and Ballot Systems for the 2016 election, and have asked SBS to send a contract for approval. The contract was sent to the president for signature.

Executive Conference Committee – Rachel Dresbeck

The committee has not had a formal meeting, but has been emailing. The main item of business is to finalize the conference location for 2017. The decision had already been made to have the conference in the Midwest-Mountain region, and Designing Events is beginning to look for appropriate venues now that we have their contract finalized. Initially, we were only planning to look at Utah and Colorado, but there was some debate about including sites in other states within the region, such as Saint Louis, Kansas City, and Las Vegas. When the Executive Committee of the Board met to discuss those options, none of them found support, for various reasons. Consequently, we would like to go ahead with investigation of possible sites in just Salt Lake City and Denver.

Peggy Sundermeyer noted that for last year's process, we sent out a general call to the listserv (since the Southeast region had a regional group that had one), asking for both suggestions of potential sites that could host the meeting, but also volunteers to serve as site managers in those cities. Dresbeck agreed, and asked whether we might also consider Boise as a potential site. Terri Soelberg said that she hadn't ever looked at full conference sites in the area before, but thought that flights might be potentially a little cheaper into Boise. Michael Spires agreed that Boise was worth a look; while we might have to pay a bit more for plane tickets, if that's offset by a lower cost for the conference facility and other items, it comes out even in the end. David Stone suggested Cour d'Alene, but Soelberg noted that attendees would have to fly into Spokane and then find transportation to Cour d'Alene proper, which is a drive of 30-40 minutes. Dresbeck suggested taking Sundermeyer's suggestion of sending a request out to the listserv, because we will need assistance in getting sites vetted once Designing Events has prepared a list, and also will need site managers for the actual conference. Dresbeck will send out a notice to the NORDP listserv, which will both put members on notice that we're planning ahead for the next annual meeting and get it on their radars, but also provide a little more transparency for the process of site

selection. She will ask NORDP members in the Midwest-Mountain region to identify sites in their area that could host a 400-person conference and also to volunteer as a potential site manager. If both conditions are not met, the site will not be passed on to Designing Events for consideration. Sundermeyer noted that there is a job description for site managers, and suggested including it (or linking to it) in the email.

Member Services – Marjorie Piechowski/Terri Soelberg

Terri Soelberg reported that the committee has updated its website and posted the salary calculator. Given exchanges of email shared with Soelberg from Gretchen Kiser's presentation at the recent annual meeting of the Society of Research Administrators International, which suggested that the salary survey and calculator generated a considerable amount of interest, it is possible that NORDP might see a bump in its numbers.

The committee is currently working on a frequently asked questions list for the membership. So far only four questions have been answered fully; the committee has encountered some issues that are slowing them down. The first is timely notification of monthly renewals and new members: these do not seem to be coming to the committee, although Peggy Sundermeyer and Talley have been working on the issue. Sundermeyer replied that she'd had an email from Denise Smith at Talley just yesterday, informing her that those reports had been sent. Soelberg will reach out to Denise to ensure that there hasn't been a miscommunication somewhere in the chain, or an incorrect email address. She would also like to know if it would be possible to develop a query in Memberclicks that could be run by someone on Member Services each month or when Talley is not able to generate the reports. Soelberg has not heard back from Talley on that issue, but Sundermeyer replied that it would be possible to develop such a query.

The committee had also previously asked about adding a question to the membership questionnaire about interest in serving on committees, but needs to know where that data should go so that when new members do express an interest in serving, they can be directed to the appropriate persons. Sundermeyer asked whether they had been able to get the data on regions, since we had previously asked Talley to fix that query. Soelberg replied that she had been able to build a query of her own for Southeast, but was not sure whether it worked 100% correctly. Sundermeyer replied that there had been an earlier report, which Soelberg may not have gotten, that the region field in Memberclicks was supposed to be searchable but was not working. Talley had put in a ticket to have that fixed, but apparently the ticket is still being processed. Soelberg will follow up with Denise on this issue.

Lastly, the committee is working on resources that NORDP members can use to promote awareness of NORDP and provide to people interested in joining or learning more about NORDP when they are at other meetings. Conversations on this project are still in early stages. The committee also discussed following up with people who post jobs to the NORDP job board to identify individuals hired and doing some pro-active outreach to those individuals. Committee members expressed concern about this approach, given that it would require people to provide information on a hiring process that could potentially violate privacy concerns. Those conversations are currently on hold while those issues are investigated.

Marjorie Piechowski added that the poster on the salary survey that was displayed at the SRA meeting attracted quite a bit of notice: there were people reading it nearly every day during the conference. When Gretchen gave her presentation on the poster during the conference, it was very well-attended. Kiser agreed, and added that there was a lot of interest, especially as regards the distinction between research development and research administration. She said that a number of people spoke to her and said that what we're defining as research development is a better fit with their job responsibilities even

if they aren't formally designated as doing research development. There was also interest in the salary data themselves, since there is overlap between the two professions. Kiser explained that interested parties could get the salary calculator through becoming NORDP members. Dresbeck asked Piechowski to send in a blog post by the end of the month, and Piechowski agreed to do so. Dresbeck added that while the monthly communicators have been great about submitting materials, anyone on the Board is free to do so even if it is not their assigned month.

Enhancing Collaboration – Karen Eck

The collaboration continuum survey was uploaded to Basecamp. The survey has gone through IRB review at Old Dominion. While the survey was determined to be exempt (largely because it will be requesting anonymous data), there are a couple of amendments that the review board asked them to make. The IRB would like a list of all the institutions that will receive an email request for participation in the survey. Peggy Sundermeyer noted that there was a list of institutions with NORDP members on the last NORDP brochure. Eck asked if she could get an electronic version, and Sundermeyer replied that Anne Windham, who put the brochure together, would likely have one. David Stone suggested that running a list from Memberclicks would be both simpler and more current. Gretchen Kiser noted that she had just asked Talley to run a count for her when she was producing her poster, so Denise could probably get that information very quickly for Eck. Dresbeck asked Eck to cc her and/or Sundermeyer when she emails Talley, so that we can track requests for support and document responses.

Eck added that the second request from the IRB was to include language in the survey instructions advising respondents not to include any personally or institutionally identifying information when providing qualitative comments. Once approved, we can then send the survey out. Jeff Agnoli had previously offered to help disseminate the survey to various lists; Eck will contact him once the survey has been approved for dissemination, and he will help. The survey will be distributed directly from Memberclicks and not through the listserv. The committee will finalize the survey at its next meeting Thursday, October 29. They are also considering submitting a proposal for a pre-conference workshop on the tool for the 2016 annual meeting and will contact Ioannis Konstantinidis about doing a webinar in the new year.

Effective Practices and Professional Development – Ioannis Konstantinidis

A report was posted to Basecamp, but there are a couple of items that Konstantinidis wanted to bring to the Board's attention. First has to do with the mentoring program. EPPD has begun an informal survey and evaluation of the program by emailing participants from last time. No formal mechanism was included in the previous process, and so before we open up the program again, the committee wanted feedback on what worked (or didn't), so they could consider it as they designed the new program. About half of the participants in the program have been contacted so far. One finding was surprising, and perhaps alarming: a significant portion of participants from the last mentoring program have let their NORDP memberships lapse. Nineteen of 51 mentees are no longer in the database, and 7 of 39 mentors are also out of the database. This is a higher lapse rate than is usual for NORDP, and we need to find out why. The response rate from participants contacted for the survey who are still NORDP members was also not very high: about half of the mentees contacted so far have not replied. Feedback so far has identified issues to consider: lack of clear expectations and the need for training so people can engage better with their mentees; need for program monitoring and evaluation. Some participants reported not having a good match with their mentor, or did not get any follow-up.

One issue that EPPD would like to study, perhaps together with Member Services, is why we see such a high lapse rate for NORDP membership, especially among people who have gone through the mentoring program. Terri Soelberg expressed an interest in this issue as well. She added that some of what we're

seeing may be artefactual, since the way Memberclicks handles renewals when the member renews after their initial renewal date has passed treats them as effectively new members. We need to identify ways of sifting through the data to identify people who really have not renewed.

Konstantinidis added that the committee has decided to push back the launch of the new mentoring program until January, so that it can consider feedback received and make adjustments to the new program to address the issues identified. The committee will reach out to additional individuals before completing the evaluation process. There will be a session at the annual meeting about the mentoring program: how to get the most out of the program, misconceptions about the program, how to be more engaged, etc.

There was a webinar on Friday about demystifying the Ideas Lab process. It's early to assess feedback, but based on early replies it was popular. There is a tentative date for the speed networking webinar in December.

The committee was contacted by an outside group about the possibility of offering an online workshop. This group had a session at the last conference, about an evaluation instrument for assessing proposal dissemination plans. They would like to do a three-week online workshop. It won't be like a pre-conference workshop, but neither will it be like a one-off webinar. The committee is investigating whether this would be feasible, but Konstantinidis thinks it would be a nice addition to try. If it works, we could host at least one such workshop each year, which would add to our online offerings.

In terms of the preconference workshops, Konstantinidis asked Karen Eck whether she thought they would be able to make the announced deadline for proposals of November 2. Eck responded that she hoped to do so, but given that the committee is not meeting until Thursday and the proposal deadline is Monday, some additional time would be welcome. Konstantinidis noted that last year all the proposals for preconference workshops were submitted on the deadline day (and he expected the same to be true this year), and suggested that the committee might consider extending the deadline this year to allow for more time. A few changes have been made this year to the details of the workshops, and those are discussed in the report posted to Basecamp. Rachel Dresbeck suggested that we might want to devote some time in a future Board meeting about the mentoring program.

Revenue/Finance Committee – Peggy Sundermeyer

Sundermeyer posted the monthly balance sheets and profit/loss statements to Basecamp yesterday. Jeff Agnoli is looking into some investment options that would allow us to move some of the money not needed for operating expenses out of the NORDP checking account. He also did a great deal of work on the report about compensation for the Executive Director position. That report is also posted to Basecamp. Jacob Levin has expressed some reservations about the recommendations made by the committee. Agnoli added that the conversations he had with representatives from the Association of Association Executives indicated that it is common, as a governing board or an organization begins the process of hiring an executive, for there to be some disagreements about how best to proceed and that the decision to go forward is not easy to make.

Gretchen Kiser asked whether organizations really do hire a firm to provide management for them, as opposed to hiring an individual directly. Agnoli replied that yes, it is a common practice. Marjorie Piechowski added that she had learned as SRA president that there are a number of firms that offer such services, and Dresbeck added that Talley is such a service. Sundermeyer replied that yes, Talley is an association management service, but that NORDP is currently only getting administrative support, not management services, from Talley.

Dresbeck asked for a quick summary of the committee's recommendations. Sundermeyer replied that the recommendations are somewhat inconsistent. We don't want to pay the executive director more than we think our membership are making, so we pulled out the 75th percentile as the norm. The committee feels strongly about this recommendation. Secondly, the committee recommends the Board consider a management company, in that it would provide some flexibility in terms of revenues needed to support an executive director on a long-term basis. Finally, given NORDP's annual budget and not having any staff, the committee did recommend a suggested compensation amount. Agnoli added that when we are trying to finalize the ED's compensation, once we have candidates in mind whose locations are known, there are likely to be some local non-profit associations or foundations that we could contact for salary information, which would give us additional data supporting a final recommendation.

Kiser questioned the committee's assumptions about NORDP revenues. Revenues from the conference, while they primarily go to support the meeting itself, still constitute part of NORDP's revenue stream and should be considered as such. Sundermeyer replied that the conference basically breaks even, so the annual revenues really amount to what we take in from membership dues, and that portion of the sponsorship income that isn't needed to cover conference expenses. Agnoli added that if the Board votes to go ahead with the hiring of an executive director, it will represent a risk and may need to be re-evaluated in future if things don't turn out as expected. The committee's recommendations are not intended, Sundermeyer noted, as an opinion that the Board should not proceed, just that, as Agnoli commented, we should do so with our eyes open.

Dresbeck said she doesn't really disagree with Levin's position about hiring an association management firm in place of an ED. On the one hand, it seems like it might be a prudent route to take given that NORDP is still growing and revenues are uncertain. On the other hand, she felt that we might want to have an individual in place who is hungry, with some skin in the game. The concern with hiring an association management company is that we would be only one small piece of their pie, and are consequently less likely to get full, good service out of them. Levin's other concern is that paying someone \$65,000 is not enough to attract high-quality candidates. Agnoli noted that the \$65,000 figure is just one of the estimates in the committee's report, and that it isn't even necessarily the best one, since it's based on non-profits. Dresbeck agreed, and said that Levin's larger point was likely that we have to be able to offer a salary (or total compensation) large enough to attract quality candidates who will be able to accomplish all the goals and tasks that the Board sets.

Sundermeyer opined that we don't necessarily have to advertise the salary when the position is announced. Dresbeck agreed. Sundermeyer argued that we should put the description out on the market and see who applies. Dresbeck added that we don't want to hire an executive director who is paid considerably more than what most NORDP members make. One possibility would be to offer a base salary (say of \$70,000), with bonuses for meeting certain milestones (such as increasing membership by a certain amount, revenue targets, etc.). Kiser and Piechowski agreed that this would be one good way of lessening the impact on NORDP's budget.

Konstantinidis added that there were definite advantages to hiring an executive director over a management company. For example, in two years, he would like to see us making substantial progress on our certificate program. He cannot make that happen on his own, or working with the volunteers on EPPD, and it is unlikely that a management company would be able to provide the kind of support needed to move such an initiative forward. The same can be said for things like NORD. Helping NORDP achieve its goals, and especially if it brings in additional revenue to the organization, should result in some form of additional compensation for the ED who makes it happen.

David Stone objected that at this juncture, it is vital for NORDP to hire someone who understands what it is we do and can articulate that. When we multiply the examples Konstantinidis gave by all of the standing committees who want to be able to move themselves and their agendas from point A to point B, the ED is going to have a great deal to do, each element of which will be extraordinarily subject-specific. If we hire someone who just has generic management chops, they will not be able to do the job. The individual hired will have to understand the ecosystem in which we operate, how universities work, and will have to herd a group of cats—us, who are too busy with our regular jobs to do what’s needed. There will be a very narrow pool of qualified candidates. Even if we get a thousand CVs in reply to the ad, when we sort through them we’ll find maybe six people we think have the ability, the passion, the knowledge, the diplomacy, the background, the network to be our executive director. We’re going to have to be prepared to pay them what they should be paid—and that should not be relative to anything else. It certainly shouldn’t be relative to the mean or median amount that our members make: many of our members are new to their jobs and are making minimum salaries. Plus, the ED’s job has nothing to do with those jobs. We pay someone for the job they do. Dresbeck agreed, but added that we didn’t want this to look like a boondoggle to the membership. Stone replied that no, we don’t have to advertise what the base salary is going to be, but anyone who is looking at our financials and what we’re offering, if we offer \$110,000 or \$120,000 a year, and we’ve got \$190,000 in the bank and make about \$10,000 a year, it won’t take anyone long to figure out that if this is a boondoggle, it’s a two-year boondoggle, beyond which they will be unemployed. This is a risk for us, and it’s a risk for the person who takes the job. But we need to set this up so we get the person who can do the job. While we don’t have to advertise the salary, we need to be conceptualizing this as a position that carries a salary in the low 100s.

Dresbeck added that, from the revenue side, we can always try to increase our sponsorships, but we are basically a member dues-based organization. That is our primary source of income. In the fee structure document that was shared with the Board yesterday, comparing our numbers to SRA and NCURA as the most closely related organizations to NORDP. Our basic membership fee is about \$25 lower than our counterpart organizations. If we raised dues to \$199, which is more than SRA and NCURA, we would generate approximately \$27,000 in revenue that would help address the issue with compensation for the executive director. Something NORDP does not do, but SRA and NCURA do, is to charge conference fees for non-members that basically include a year’s membership fee in addition to the cost of the meeting. If we used the conference attendance from last year, changing our registration fees to match SRA and NCURA’s practice, we would generate quite a bit of additional revenue. Similarly with the webinars and other content that EPPD provides: those should be free to NORDP members, but also available to non-members for a fee. This would not only increase revenues, but also provide both exposure to NORDP and the services it offers, and an incentive to join the organization. We need to give reasons for joining NORDP. The listserv is not enough of an incentive: it will be things like our certificate program, or eventually a graduate degree program. Ultimately, tuition, association dues, and products will be how we make money. We have products that we can monetize, and also products. It would then be an explicit charge to the new executive director to make that happen, with part of the compensation tied to making that happen.

Sundermeyer replied that we should have a differential between a new membership and a renewal membership. It doesn’t have to be a lot, and we might only do it for the first couple of years. Dresbeck noted that this is similar to what SRA does. New members pay a \$30 processing fee in addition to the membership dues. The advantage to the one-time fee is that if a membership lapsed, a renewal would be considered a new membership and would incur the fee again. Stone demurred, noting that renewals are often not in the control of the member him/herself: we send in our requests to accounting, which has its own processes and procedures to go through, and consequently the renewal doesn’t get paid

until after the membership lapses. It's not fair to punish people for slow processing by their institutions. Stone also observed that, while it would be good to have Member Services look into why people leave NORDP, it's doubtful that the price of membership is the reason, and that offering a \$25 discount on renewals wouldn't be much of a reason to stay. People are likely leaving NORDP because they get into research development for a while and then move on to other things. Kiser agreed, and suggested that we might also not be meeting the needs of the more mature research development professional once they've been in the field for a while. Again, this speaks to the need for an executive director to provide support for developing additional programming to meet those needs. Stone agreed, and noted that this was what NORD and LDRD were designed to provide. We're strong for people just coming into research development. We can charge more than SRA and NCURA because we're providing that value to people in research development. We don't have the volume of membership that SRA and NCURA do, which lets them subsidize their operations to a certain extent: in order to provide the same level of service to NORDP members as SRA and NCURA provide to theirs, we need to ask for a little more from our membership. We're a boutique operation: we do different things, offer different services, and our members have different needs. We need to charge what we need to charge, and do some investigations to see whether, if we raise our dues to the level needed to sustain our operations, we would lose a large number of members, although that seems unlikely.

Governance Committee – David Stone

Revisions of the bylaws are complete, and a draft was posted to Basecamp. Michael Spires added that there is an item on this month's agenda to discuss the draft. Once the Board approves the draft, Spires will post it to the Bylaws Circle for the 30-day comment period.

Nominating Committee – Michael Spires

The committee chair from last year is absolutely swamped. Spires spoke offline with her, and she agreed that asking Jerilyn Hansen from Utah to step in was a good idea. Spires will reach out to her this week to see if she will coordinate the process of transitioning from last year's committee to this year's. That's normally the duty of the outgoing chair, but the press of her work will prevent last year's chair from doing so this year. We're going to try to get expressions of interest in continuing on the committee from the members from last year, which will give the committee an idea of how many new people we will need to recruit. The committee should then be able to put out a call to the membership sometime next month to solicit new members. Per the policy, our timeframe is that the committee is supposed to be formed sometime between October and December, so we should be in a good place to get the election process up and running on schedule. Spires added that the committee is supposed to choose two members of the Board after the non-Board members are selected, so if anyone is interested in filling that role, please let him know. Spires is willing to continue in the role, but stressed that the Board should be proactive in letting the committee know who is willing to serve, since the Board does not appoint its two members to the committee, they are chosen by the committee. Due to other ongoing duties and responsibilities, Gretchen Kiser, Rachel Dresbeck, and David Stone asked not to be chosen for the Nominating Committee.

Conference Committee – Gretchen Kiser

The call for proposals is due to go out on Monday; the language is being finalized, but it's mostly ready to go. The form itself is also being finalized. The form is for the purpose of the abstract submission, not for registration. We still have time to address the changes we might want on the registration form whether we want people to be able to sign up to volunteer as we've discussed. The preconference workshop call for proposals went out a couple of weeks ago and those proposals will be due shortly. That part of the conference should be defined earlier.

We are planning a new-sounding format for tracks, which is to have as part of the conference presentations a series of invited talks from the membership that will speak to either research development fundamentals (pillars). These topics are still being rounded out and defined. The other pillar is leadership development in research development, which is a precursor to what we hope to realize fully in the LDRD program, so we are trying to develop topics that can be presented at the conference that will give a preview of what we hope LDRD will develop into. The third pillar is funding agency representatives who are invited to speak, based on abstracts. Michael Spires asked whether the pillars talks would be regular one-hour sessions, or are we looking at longer sessions more like a workshop? Kiser replied that no, the pillars talks would be regular session presentations, 50 minutes in length with a Q&A.

Rachel Dresbeck asked for an update on the keynote speakers. Kiser replied that Carl Herndahl has agreed to give one of the keynote presentations. She asked David Stone whether he had heard back from his ACE contact. Stone replied that he had sent a note to Molly Broad, the president of the ACE a couple of weeks ago after the Executive Committee meeting, but had not yet heard back, so he contacted her again today. If he doesn't hear back by the end of the week, he will call and speak to her in person.

Kiser added that she had spoken with Michelle Bennett at NCI, who is now director of research strategy, and more formally involved in bringing teams together on different scientific projects across agencies. Kiser will talk it over with the program committee and the executive conference committee, but she might be another good fit as a keynote speaker, bringing a different perspective on team science. Bennett has looked at the date and could be at the conference if asked.

Additional Business

Executive Director Search Update – Rachel Dresbeck

As previously discussed, we need to post the job description. We have several places in mind. Dresbeck asked Board members to take one final look at the position description on Basecamp and if there are any additional questions or concerns, please let her know. Dresbeck will then craft an advertisement that encompasses the position requirements by the end of the week. Gretchen Kiser moved (seconded by David Stone) that we hire an executive director rather than a management firm. Motion passed unanimously.

Communications – Rachel Dresbeck

Marjorie Piechowski is signed up for October, but Board members should feel free to send Dresbeck additional items if they have any. Dresbeck will send a note to the listserv about the Executive Conference Committee.

Proposed Revisions to the 2014 Bylaws – Michael Spires

Several weeks ago the draft from the Governance Committee showing the proposed changes to the bylaws and the rationales behind those changes were posted. The Board having read and considered the changes, Spires moved (seconded by David Stone) to recommend the bylaws changes as drafted by the Governance Committee and to post the draft to the Bylaws and Policies Circle for the one-month comment period before taking a final vote on the proposed changes. Motion carried unanimously. Spires will post the draft and send a note to the listserv to inform the membership.

There being no further business, Michael Spires moved to adjourn (Gretchen Kiser seconded) at 3:04 p.m. Central. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Spires, Secretary

Note: The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 22, 2015, from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Central Time (2:30-4pm Eastern, 11:30am- 1pm Pacific and 12:30-2pm Mountain).

Approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting November 24, 2015.