



Society for  
Technical  
Communication

**Society for Technical Communication**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Hartsfield Room**

**Rosemont, Illinois**

**22 May 2012 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM CDT**

## **Attendees**

### Board

- Alan Houser, President
- Nicky Bleiel, Vice President
- Aiessa Moyna, Treasurer
- Alyssa Fox, Secretary
- Hillary Hart, Immediate Past President
- Bernard Aschwanden, Director
- Ray Gallon, Director
- Rich Maggiani, Director
- Tricia Spayer, Director

### Office

- Kathryn Burton, CEO
- Greg Larsen, CFO
- Lloyd Tucker, Deputy Executive Director
- Steve Skojec, Director of Community Relations
- Liz Pohland, Director of Publications
- Barbra Sanders, Membership Manager

### Guests

- Menno de Jong, Technical Communication Editor

- Leah Guren
- Mike Markley
- Kit Brown-Hoekstra
- John Hedtke
- Anna Parker-Richards
- Ben Woelk
- Marilyn Woelk

## **Call to Order**

Mr. Houser called the meeting to order at 8:04 AM CDT (GMT -5:00). A quorum was established and the Board approved the agenda.

## **Introduction**

Mr. Houser reviewed invited guests for today's meeting. Barbra Sanders, STC membership manager, and Menno de Jong, Technical Communication Editor, will join the meeting for discussion. The public portion of today's meeting is scheduled for 11:00 AM CDT (GMT -5:00).

## **Executive Session**

The board entered executive session at 8:07 AM CDT (GMT -5:00).

The board exited executive session at 9:32 AM CDT (GMT -5:00).

Break from 9:32 AM to 10:17 AM.

## **Publications Presentation**

The following office staff and guest joined the meeting at 10:17 AM CDT (GMT -5:00):

- Kathryn Burton, CEO
- Greg Larsen, CFO
- Lloyd Tucker, Deputy Executive Director
- Steve Skojec, Director of Community Relations
- Liz Pohland, Director of Publications
- Barbra Sanders, Membership Manager
- Menno de Jong, Technical Communication Editor

Mr. Menno de Jong and Ms. Liz Pohland reported on the status and future of STC publications. Mr. de Jong and Ms. Pohland presented several options for publications strategies in 2013. Mr. de Jong noted that creating a hybrid journal or moving the journal completely online would negatively impact the status of the journal. Mr. Larsen asked if it would be appropriate to have universities "sponsor" the journal and pay to be listed in the journal as supporting the effort of

the journal. Ms. Hart noted we could increase our efforts to reach out to universities to support this idea. Mr. Larsen noted that we need to look for more ways to bridge the gap between academics and practitioners. Mr. de Jong noted that selling the journal to non-members would generate revenue, as well as sponsorship. Ms. Pohland noted again that selling bundled content would also be another revenue generator.

Break from 10:52 AM to 11:04 AM.

The following guests arrived at 11:04 AM CDT (GMT -5:00):

- Ms. Leah Guren
- Mr. Mike Markley
- Ms. Kit Brown-Hoekstra

Mr. John Hedtke, guest, arrived at 11:10 AM CDT (GMT -5:00).

Ms. Burton noted that the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) has named Ms. Barbara Sanders as a Diversity Executive Leadership Program (DELP) scholar for a two-year program. The DELP's purpose is to increase the ability of underrepresented identity groups to rise to leadership positions within the association management profession.

## **Membership Presentation**

Ms. Barbra Sanders, Membership Manager, reported that she is working on a plan to deal with the declining membership renewals. Members report that they are not seeing value in renewing their memberships. Ms. Sanders recommends that we more clearly show each membership level what value the society can offer for that level.

Ms. Sanders is working on a plan that details the benefits for each level and ideas for marketing those benefits to each level. The overall goal for the membership team is to communicate value and justify the cost, and increase member engagement so members are aware of this value to them. She recommends we educate staff on the benefits we're providing at each membership level, and conduct a survey to find out why people aren't renewing and address those reasons.

Ms. Sanders has a goal of having members be active within 30 days of joining – we should contact them if we don't hear from them within 30 days. Mr. Tucker noted that we don't frequently contact new members to show them how they can benefit from their membership. However, our systems and website are complicated and not easy to figure out, so we need to figure out ways to contact them and walk them through that step. Ms. Sanders agreed that some technical issues present an impediment to the plan.

Ms. Guren noted that membership numbers are tied to certification and continuing education.

## Education Committee and BOK Presentation

Ms. Hillary Hart, Immediate Past President, reported on the efforts of the Education Committee. Ms. Hart proposed that we form an actual committee to work on the Body of Knowledge and interact with Ms. Pohland and the Education portal. Ms. Burton noted that iMis has a module that could track the education courses tied to certification.

The following guests arrived at 11:31 AM CDT (GMT -5:00):

- Ms. Anna Parker-Richards
- Mr. Ben Woelk
- Ms. Marilyn Woelk

## Committee Liaisons Approval

*A motion was made that we approve the committee chairs and board and staff liaisons as noted in the Committee Charges document. Motion seconded. The motion carried.*

*A motion was made to form a development committee to work on creating programs and ways to give to the society through sponsorship and donations. Motion seconded. The motion carried.*

## Report from Bernard Aschwanden

Mr. Bernard Aschwanden, Director, has ideas for funding. Mr. Aschwanden proposed creating a corporate Advisory Board with 5 groups: hardware, software, services, CMS, and translation. This “board” would be a society-level board, but doesn’t necessarily have to be made of members. Each group would have a voice that has contact with the board on a regular basis (perhaps 2-3 times per year), but doesn’t have a vote on the Society board. The cost to participate is estimated at \$5000 per year, with payment due immediately. Mr. Aschwanden has gotten commitment from 6 companies for \$10,000 each thus far (\$5000 per year for a 2-year term). Ms. Moyna asked whether this would affect the bylaws and require a bylaws change. Ms. Burton responded that it would depend on the scope but she doesn’t believe it would require a bylaws change.

Ms. Brown-Hoekstra questioned whether we would have a potential conflict of interest since we are charging them to be on the advisory board, so will we get neutral feedback/information during those discussions? Ms. Burton responded that in other organizations where she’s seen this arrangement, it can be a challenge to ensure people are acting for the overall good.

*A motion was made to form a task force to explore the idea of a corporate advisory board. Motion seconded. The motion carried. Mr. Aschwanden will work with Ms. Burton on this initiative.*

# Adjourn

Mr. Houser adjourned the meeting at 11:58 AM CDT (GMT -5:00).