

**American Accounting Association
Financial Accounting and Reporting Section
Minutes of Officers Meeting
March 8, 1997; Durham, North Carolina**

Members Present: Linda Bamber, Gene Comiskey, John Elliott, Tom Frecka, John Hand, Wayne Landsman, John Smith, and Bob Swieringa

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. and concluded at about 3:45 p.m.

Various reports were distributed at the beginning of the meeting including Minutes of the 1996 Annual Meeting, section by-laws, and financial and membership information. As of January, 1997, the section cash balance is \$65,436. Section membership totaled 1,146, with 297 1997 renewals pending, bring the potential total to 1,443.

The three primary topics addressed by the group were (1) the section's web site, (2) the section's research conference, and (3) annual meeting sessions.

Web Site

Linda Bamber reported on the efforts of Rob Bricker at Case Western Reserve University to organize a web page for the section.

The section officers believe the web page provides an opportunity to significantly expand member services. The officers have approved the expenditure of \$2,000 for student assistants who will be working with Rob Bricker. The objective is to make as much progress as possible with the web page prior to the 1997 AAA Annual Meeting. To this end, Wayne and Linda will check with Rob Bricker to determine the scope of his efforts and the time commitment involved. The officers authorized expenditure of an additional \$5,000 to support Rob's efforts, if Wayne and Linda conclude that Rob's time commitment to the project justifies financial support.

Linda raised a variety of policy issues concerning the web page, including the following

* The web page software was purchased by CWRU. Is the section legally allowed to use this software? Are there other copyright issues that need to be addressed?

* How much control should be maintained over items put on the web page? The group agreed that, at least initially, centralized control should be maintained by the webmaster.

* What items should be included in the web page? Suggestions included (1) section administrative information such as by-laws and minutes, (2) announcements/calendar of events, (3) member working papers, (4) section newsletters, (5) teaching information, and (6) a chat facility.

Wayne and Linda will contact the AAA webmaster and other appropriate individuals to clarify copyright and

other web site issues.

AAA Annual Meeting

Wayne mentioned that he was awaiting feedback from Russell Lundholm, chair of the section's Annual Meeting Program Committee. Russell had previously indicated that the workload involved in reviewing papers was much greater than he had anticipated.

The following C.P.E. session possibilities were discussed:

- * John Smith-- derivatives
- * FASB/SEC Update-- Wayne to arrange
- * Intranet/Internet Teaching-- John Elliott to check with Charles Lee

Note: In subsequent discussions with Bill Collins I learned that the C.P.E. session deadline was 1-15-97.

Specific C.P.E. sessions that Bill arranged and will be held are as follows:

- * John Smith-- derivatives
- * Dave Ziebart-- retrieving information from electronic sources
- * FASB Update-- Todd Johnson and Jim Leisenring

These sessions should be coordinated with Bill Collins.

The following panel session possibilities were raised:

- * FASB/SEC chairs-- Bill Collins has arranged a session involving Michael Sutton, Chief Accountant of the SEC and the yet-to-be-named new chairman of the FASB
- * International accounting standard setting-- Wayne to investigate the possibility of a session involving Mark Lang and Trevor Harris
- * International accounting standards-- Wayne to investigate
- * Soft assets-- Lev and Larcher; Tom to follow-up

These sessions should be coordinated with Russell Lundholm.

Suggestions for a speaker at the section luncheon were discussed. The consensus was to seek a dynamic, provocative speaker from industry. John Smith will contact Michael Brown, from Microsoft, or other industry representatives if Brown is unable to participate.

Conference

The first AAA Financial Accounting and Reporting Section Conference will be held at the Kenan-Flagler Business School of the University of North Carolina on October 31-November 1, 1997. A call for papers has been issued, with a submission deadline of June 15, 1997 and authors will be notified of the selection status of papers by August 15, 1997.

John Hand, who is assisting Wayne with conference planning, presented a suggested budget for the conference. The preliminary cost estimate was \$28,830. There was extensive discussion concerning the appropriateness of spending such a large portion of section dues for a conference that can only be attended by a small subset of the section membership.

Approximately \$17,000 of the proposed budget was designated for covering travel expenses of paper presenters and discussants, including airfare at \$600 each. It was decided to limit the airfare allowance to \$300, and encourage participants to stay over Saturday night. Also, it was agreed that a \$150 fee would be charged for the rest (approx. 57) of the conference participants. With these changes, the budgeted expenditures were reduced to approximately \$16,000. The officers approved expenditures for the conference to a maximum of \$16,000.

Other means of financing the conference were discussed, including public accounting and industry support. Gene Comiskey suggested that we should consider asking our membership to provide donations in support of the conference. It was agreed that Gene would identify perhaps one hundred individuals who will be solicited for contributions of approximately \$100 each. Funds received will be used to reduce the actual expenditures below the \$16,000 budgeted amount and to provide "scholarships" for some individuals who might otherwise not be able to attend the conference.

Wayne asked for volunteers to work with the conference planning committee on paper selection and invitation issues. Bob Swieringa and Tom Frecka agreed to help.

Other Business

* The section by-laws need to be updated based on changes approved at the 1996 annual meeting. Tom Frecka will work with Bill Collins to complete this task.

* Gene Comiskey reported on the recommendations of the Nominating Committee. The officers reach tentative agreement on next year's officer slate, pending contact with and reaching agreement with the specified individuals.

* Gene Comiskey suggested that a separate committee be established to process the Best Paper Award. Bob Swieringa agreed to appoint a nominating committee. Officers were encouraged to submit their nominations.

* The group discussed additional ways of expanding section activities. Possibilities include (1) supporting research monographs, (2) focusing on teaching and instructional support, and (3) an annual best dissertation award. The best dissertation award idea will be brought before the membership for consideration at the 1997 annual meeting and the other ideas were tabled for future consideration. It was agreed that the web page is an important investment by the section and that it has to potential of providing a variety of member services.

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