



**Board of Directors Meeting – Toftrees, State College
May 13, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Present:	Absent: Jan Warnick, Craig Bushey Staff: Terri Breon Others: Eric Buncher, Deb Poppel, Kendra Atkins, Mike Kenawell, Kristin Aiosa
Linda Zug	
Mike Parrent	
Danielle Elwell	
Joe Musil	
Stephen Shaw	
Eric Rosina	
Sarah Lavin	

Linda Zug called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 11:18 am.

Roll Call / Introductions – Linda Zug

- Individuals present introduced themselves.

Open Discussion – Linda Zug

- Linda began the discussion with asking how can PAEP attract new members and keep people interested, how can we increase attendance? Responses show we had a fantastic conference. The speakers were good and our numbers were really good this year. Katie and her crew of people, and Keith McNally did a really fantastic job.
- Mike P. reported on First Quality. They had three employees at the conference who paid for dinner and joined PAEP. They are in support of reviving the round table in the Central Section. They will be assisting in the planning the next conference. Craig Bushey is a very strong advocate for the roundtable in the Western section. Mike plans to recruit Craig, Jim Valana, and Megan Stambach who are interested in the roundtable as well, to pull together ideas for a P2E2 track for the next conference. There's a unique opportunity to pull in more industrial-type members.
- The conference is a huge draw for people to become interested. It had been primarily sort of "highway heavy" in the past, but this years was noted as being very diverse. If we keep the diversity in the rest of our events throughout the year, it could draw even more members in.
- Presently, there is not a formal membership drive. Mike P. and the P2E2 section hand out membership application forms at their events and encourage people to join PAEP. It's a potential way to increase membership if it were practiced at all sections' events.
- Part of the student scholarship application, if the applicant joins as a member they get points. And a free membership for one year. So every year we have an influx of students.
- We also have an email list of 1,300 people who get all of our email blasts.
- Eric R. feels the website it certainly going to help with recruitment. Website event registration is a positive. We should consider a MailChimp survey to get feedback from attendees of events, like, how would they rate it, who did they meet, would they considering joining. That could send them



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to the registration process. From early on, though, he's felt there is a lack of environmental professionals like, air, water and wastewater folks. We need to be strategic in reaching out to them. We should have booth space at other conferences where environmental professionals are. There's an opportunity to reach out to engineers working with DoT to assist with permit applications or be a resource to them.

- Steve is concerned we desperately need to pull together a formal plan and follow through and implement it. Right now its membership that's hurting us. We're not having a problem with the conference. It seems a lot of the effort needs to be focused at the section level. Membership numbers are way down compared to last year and the numbers don't look promising for the rest of the year.
- Sarah asked former members from her company why they are no longer involved; the universal answer was there were no events. A lack of interesting events and not hearing from the section for a long time made them lose interest. She will be focusing on setting up events and getting individuals involved to discuss the types of events to hold. She plans to include non-members, as well.
- Danielle? noted the same issues as Sarah. Membership numbers are way down and it appears to be from a lack of events in the regions. We have to get some great events together that are beneficial to our members.
- Mike P. added that P2E2 is trying to meet the needs of their sections and with the effort of Craig Bushey in the western section, and Megan? in the central section, there's an opportunity to do more events across the State. Eric R. and Mike have collaborated to come up with events in the northeast and southeast.
- Joe suggested looking at what other similar organizations are doing with recruitment and how their numbers are. PAEP should glean any ideas from them on attracting members.
- Eric said groups like SWEP do some killer events and they do regular events. They are regularly scheduled so members know they're coming up.
- Linda noted WPS has a standing committee that just does events. They plan three or four events ahead. Whether we could do the same because of people's schedule conflicts. Their attendance numbers seem very good. The one event that they had with Leslie Richards was over a hundred.
- It seems those events that are on topics important to the membership at the time are the most well-received. Those also take the most time to organize and coordinate. They often include State agency personnel as presenters. We may need to partner more with other organizations to increase attendance and exposure. PAEP had a virtual event that did well. It took a lot of logistics to pull it off.
- There has not been a survey done in recent memory that asks the membership what kinds of events they want to see offered. With MailChimp, we have a lot of capabilities to do such surveys.
- We should try to bring in fresh ideas by including other members in committee work. We need to be proactive in asking our members to be involved.
- Sarah noted she just scheduled a western section committee meeting for May 3rd. She made



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sure first to ask everyone of the regular members who are mostly involved, to tell her when their available times were. From that, she scheduled the date and then made a flyer and sent it out to her list of western section members. She also included people that she had gotten emails from at other events who are just interested in PAEP. She included them on her list, and invited them to join them to have dinner, drinks and discuss ideas for events and hear what your ideas are. Others noted that such turn-outs tend to be small, although, Sarah felt even one could help to make a difference. Eric Buncher suggested a personal, direct contact is needed to spur them on. He also felt section leaders had to put a lot of effort into them.

- There were a number of previous section presentations that were quite popular that could be redone in other sections. Such presentations as the Philadelphia rooftop gardening and agriculture presentation, Tammy ?? presentation, and Central Region's presentation on Lymes disease.
- If we put out an email about the website once it's up and running, that can be a Portal to having a survey about sections. Eric R. said there needs to be some work done before that as he has to reconstruct the home page because it isn't in WordPress. It's extremely hard to make any changes to it at present.
- Eric R. suggested, as far as section events, they need to bridge the gap as PAEP will be \$3-4,000 short of its budget. Even though there was more raised at the conference this year, there have also been more expenses, like the website. Linda questioned why we never charged a modest fee, like \$15 for non-members and \$5 for members (or free for members). Eric R. mentioned there's now an easy way to pay those fees through the website. Linda said most companies will pay those fees. Danielle noted her company requires a six-month notice before they will pay. Eric R. recommended when we say we're going to have an event, we have to put hard dates - and within a week - we need location, date, time, fee and all those pieces of info. Then we can set the event up on the website. People can start registering right away. He suggested this model is the one they should follow. There should also be set section meetings on a bi-annual, or even quarterly basis.
- Joe asked about the membership profile part of the webpage, to which Eric R. replied the only way to get into the membership section right now is to get a password. He has to enter each person into the system and send out an email blast with a temporary password, although if the member pays \$65, the website will auto generate one for you and you'll get an email with your temporary password. A suggestion was made to create a common password for first-time log-ins that would show up as soon as you create a new account. Then the password could be changed. Another thought was, on a membership page we could announce for members to please update your membership listing and at the same time have a checkbox providing options for them to become involved in PAEP planning committees, the section they want to join, and the like. We can use that as a springboard to start putting together our local email addresses. Steve volunteered to a draft plan together, asking the other directors to send him their ideas.
- Eric B. brought up their model for their events. They followed a pattern where the host bore the brunt of the hospitality. It would be held on a business day, start in the morning with whatever the host wanted to present, then, over lunch there would be a (?). Joe noted they do the same thing in the eastern section, they try to line up a sponsor that will contribute \$250, that covers the basic refreshments and then they don't charge for participation. Eric R. explained that through the



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website, it's possible to collect a participation fee, both at a member rate or a non-member rate. A discounted fee could also be set up for guests of members.

- PAEP has to start pushing the MailChimp stuff to Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. As the leaders, we need to repost and tag the resources that it leads to. For instance, if it leads to a website or job posting, that will be behind a locked door, if it leads to presentations, that will be behind a locked door.
- There was discussion on the selection of dates for staggered quarterly section events. There could be a rotational schedule, starting with the Western in January, then April, July and October. Central would have theirs in February, May, August and November. The Eastern section would have theirs starting in March, then June, September and December. Joe cautioned that P2E2 holds events every month, same time, same place. With some of the events PAEP does, it becomes hard to work around their schedule. PAEP should be able to find out their schedule so sections don't conflict with them.
- Discussion ensued on what types of events were in the offing. Several field visits were brought up. Linda cautioned on the amount of work involved in planning such an event and having it be successful. One tour was a control plant. Another was a tour of the Army Corps of Engineers dam work around Jenkinstown. This would be an excellent opportunity to include the township's commission as it's likely the local population will raise questions. PAEP could do a presentation in the parking lot or bus or something. Mike P. said P2E2 has six people on its steering committee who are active in planning events. One will spearhead an event and make contact with the host, using a checklist to make sure everything is planned appropriately. If the host cannot provide refreshments, P2E2 will provide something for the attendees. Having six people spreads the responsibility around and there are more ideas. They keep a spreadsheet, record what the ideas were, who we want to see there, point of contact. If they can't do it at least there's a point of contact. Planning takes place about a year out, and occurs on a quarterly basis. That's been their model since 1997. It also helps to have places to meet, with backup places if the primary one doesn't work out.
- In conclusion, Steve will send out an email asking everybody to give him a summary of their comments. He requested Mike P. to attach P2E2's checklist and any other information that might be pertinent that the sections can use for a model.
- Keith McNally is preparing a text message to send to attendees of the conference, saying thank you for coming, here's an evaluation survey, tell us about the speakers. Eric R. requested a check box be added "is there a topic you would consider presenting next year?" Also, specific questions like, "which did you attend?" Terri will contact Keith with these requests.

2017 Conference Updates – Danielle Elwell

- Mike P. has talked to Keith regarding potential conference sites for next year. They will be visiting a location north of the Maryland border, about an hour away from Harrisburg and one and a quarter hour from Gettysburg. They will also be checking out a site Tammy suggested. That one is too close to Harrisburg and we have room commitment fees we'd have to take into consideration. They will also consider Toftrees, although he questioned whether they could run



more than two tracks there.

- The Toftrees model works well. There are companies and State agencies that would not approve members to go. As this is the big money-making effort of the year, if attendance suffers because of this trend, PAEP should be looking at other ways to compensate for the decline. Perhaps adding webinars? It was noted the conference made money, more than it has in a long time. There were more sponsorships (kudos to Deb for the phenomenal effort). There were more diverse speakers that seemed to draw in different people. Concerns were raised about the firms who sent no one to the conference. A question arose regarding whether we are holding our conference at the wrong time; is this the big conference season? The time of year can be tough because of budgeting considerations. This is also the prime field season for environmental professionals. It was mentioned that conferences were held in September, at times on a Friday and Saturday because companies wouldn't pay for attendance. Past survey results have supported the current time period as the most popular.
- Students need to be encouraged to attend for the networking opportunities alone. Several directors noted there is interest from several universities interested in setting up student chapters. Pitt, Carnegie Mellon and Susquehanna were mentioned. A presentation could be put together to present to schools promoting careers in the environmental industry. Eric R. and ?? planned to hit up schools within an hour distance. It may not be important for them to be a student member so long as we get PAEP in front of them. There may come a time in their professional career when they become interested in a membership. Perhaps a better avenue is through a professor or dean who asks PAEP to come to a class once a semester. A suggestion was made for each Board member to create a slide that explains what he/she does in their professional position and combine them into one PowerPoint presentation any could present to a college.
- Linda suggested the committee look into Toftrees. Mike P. said they would along with the other venues brought up. He would really like to consider Seven Springs. As some background, Terri identified that, of the past 16 years' conferences twelve were held in May, one in June, one in April, one in February and one in September. The September one was lowest in attendance, held at the Ramada Inn in State College. That particular meeting was shifted to later in the year to accommodate environmental managers, who subsequently, couldn't come anyway. Williamsport was suggested as another possible location. There are new facilities there. Terri noted that PAEP has been able to offer the government per diem rate at Toftrees with no problem.

PAEP providing PennDoT environmental updates

- Linda noted this topic was started at last month's meeting. From the Environmental TAG group as part of the PennDoT Stick Initiative, he noted other states' DoT's have a service where you can subscribe to a listserv and receive an email of regulatory updates being proposed or enacted. He asked if PennDoT could do the same. They thought it was good idea, their question was can anyone host this. I told them I'd bring it back to this Board. It was suggested by the Virginia moderator for TAG that PAEP could be the recipient of these email blasts and then forward them to interested members as a service of the Association. It doesn't need to be limited to just PennDoT. It could include other agencies that don't offer this service. A recent PennDoT announcement was just broadcast to our members saying, "PAEP is pleased to forward



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information for events that some of our members might be interested in.” it was suggested to add a link to that.

- It seems these are the kinds of things we need to do in order to bring in new members and retain existing ones, especially those who become members when they sign up for the conference. We need to provide relevant, current information, regulation changes, policy changes, and other things that affect their work. This can be touted as a member benefit.
 - A separate email blast could go to non-members telling them of website updates and presentations added that they cannot access unless they become members. After the conference, an email blast could go out to non-members with teasers about what was presented at the conference with an encouragement to join and just how easy it is to join.
 - Eric R. commented that as soon as someone joins via the website, their status automatically changes. The flip side of that is if members haven't renewed before January 1, they lose access to the members' only site.
 - Eric R. noted there was a problem with accessing announcements on the website, which has since been fixed.
- The TAG meeting is the first week of June. If the TAG has new things that come out at the end of the year or beginning of 2017, they can be email blasted to members.

Meeting Minutes – Linda Zug

- March and April minutes were discussed. There were no edits. Minutes were accepted as presented.

Section Reports – Linda Zug

- Central -
- There will be a joint PAEP/SWEP/WTF event on June 2.
 - They may have a golf outing. PAEP's golf outing is May 13th.
- Eastern – Joe Musil
- Eastern Section is planning an event for June. Joe wasn't sure what it is.
- P2E2 – Jan Warnick
- Their events were discussed earlier.
- Western – Sarah Levin
- The event on April 15th with Ron Swartz from DEP was very successful. Twenty-eight people attended there were some new faces. Sarah handed out membership forms to them. A company sponsored the event and it actually made money. It will help fund the next event.
 - Sarah will email information on Tammy's talk as she will not be at the May 23rd meeting.



Student Scholarship – Mike Kenawell and Kristen Aiosa

- Kristen reported they made \$830 at the conference. They are looking at revamping their evaluation forms for the scholarship for next year. They're also going to limit scholarships to undergrads for next year. Mike K. said they will be reviewing the status of their funds. They are looking at other opportunities, like, asking companies to consider sponsoring a student, either with a full or partial scholarship. Sponsors' names could go on the scholarship and maybe mention we're asking for conference sponsorships, too. The committee is looking to see if the Board would consider covering some of the costs of attendance of the students to the conference. They are okay for this year but next year could be a problem. Fundraising is a challenge. They will have \$1200 after paying out the scholarship grants. With the proceeds from the conference they'll be back up at \$2000.

Annual Conference Briefing – Danielle

- Danielle didn't receive the official attendee count. A couple of speakers dropped out near the conference date, but were replaced by Wayne Kober and Dave Forman.
- A question was raised as far as Don Quigley for keynote speaker next year, is he a good speaker? The DEP secretary was not. Someone noted there are lots of good speakers around the State.
- Danielle noted the conference was an overall major success. Everyone heard good things. There was conversation about pulling in more P2E2 members. That is the goal of the third track, to add people because of a different view point.

Membership Report – Joe Musil

- General membership is down by 85. Student memberships are down 15 students. Non-profits are down seven memberships. We need to get those numbers up. There will be some from the conference. Joe suggested an email blast about the conference to let people know what they missed. Sending the PennDoT email blasts will help. Also, email blast exclusives, inside scoop. Eric R. is working on website with information provided by Cindy. He thought he would have that link functioning today, but it's not quite ready.

Treasurer's Report – Stephen Shaw

- Account Balances as of May 9:
 - Scholarship fund: \$3,208 (this will be reduced by \$2,000 for scholarships)
 - Checking: \$17,711
 - Total: \$20,919
 - This is \$5,100 less than where we were last year.



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- Deposits and Debts Report
 - As of the end of April, the paid membership was 67% of 2015 at the same time. Membership dues comprise 40% of PAEP's income. That translates to a roughly \$4,100 hit to the budget.
- Annual Conference Income
 - It appears there will be \$2,800 in proceeds.
- At this point, there's a \$3,500 deficit. We started the year with \$3,500 in the bank, so we could break even at this rate.

Adjournment

- The meeting officially adjourned at 1:00 PM.

The next board meeting will be held on June 14, 2016 at noon by conference call.

tgb 6/18/16