

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

October 20, 2007

Crescent Room

Hotel Park City

Park City, Utah

In attendance: Mary Ann Welch (RI), President; Melanie Amrhein (LA), Past-President; Marilyn Cargill (VT), President-elect; Vicki Merkel (OR), Secretary; Lee Andes (VA), Treasurer; Ritchie Morrow (NE), Treasurer-elect; Lois Hollis, Member-at-Large; Stephanie Butler, Member-at-Large; Bart Astor, DC Consultant; Maureen Laffey (DE), ED Technical Forms Chair; Chas Treadwell (NY), Federal Relations Chair; Shiela Joyner (OK), Membership and Communications Chair; Cheryl Maplethorpe (MN), Policy and Research Chair; Dennis Obergfell (IN), Web Chair; Julie Leeper/Lynda Reid/Kent Larson Conference Chairs;

Absent: Mike Solomon (IL), Survey

Mary Ann Welch called the meeting to order at 10:20 PM on October 20, 2007. The agenda was reviewed and a motion to accept the agenda was made by Marilyn Cargill and seconded by Lee Andes. The motion was approved.

The Spring Executive Committee minutes were amended in the Federal Relations Committee Report: Marilyn Cargill made the motion to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Lee Andes. Minutes were approved with amendments.

Conference Committee Report:

- Julie Leeper, Program Committee Chair said the committee worked well together and the program is great.
- Lynda Reid, Site Committee Chair reported that the hotel has been wonderful to work with, as has the committee.
- Utah state taxes will be exempt for the NASSGAP organization. Members still pay taxes for their hotel rooms.

Executive Reports

President's Report

- Mary Ann Welch reported on President Bush's signing ceremony of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. The bill was a "team effort" and Mary Ann Welch said it was a wonderful event.
- Mary Ann Welch reviewed her report below and thanked individual members for their contributions. She said that her year as NASSGAP President was successful due to the members who supported her efforts.

Highlights of activities:

- Examining Leap report distributed with press release to various entities
- Refund policy established for conference registrations

- NASSGAP signed on to a letter opposing denying federal aid to students with drug convictions
- Letter sent to Secretary Spellings highlighting the states' outreach initiatives.
- Three conference calls with Kristin Conklin of the USDE.
- Friends of NASSGAP includes retired presidents and nominated past members. (27 to date)
- NASSGAP represented at negotiated rulemaking for General Provisions
- Simplification Ad Hoc Committee formed.
- NASSGAP represented at the Secretary of Education's Education Summit.
- Letter sent to Under Secretary Tucker promoting LEAP/SLEAP and the Grants for Access and Persistence Bill.
- Polling function on the web was enhanced. (41 polls to date) Web site continuously updated
- Lumina Foundation's 3R Grant – Recession, Retrenchment & Recovery completed.
- Provided Title IV reauthorization recommendations to House and Senate Committees on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.
- NASSGAP Executive Committee held its annual meeting in New Orleans, LA on March 29 and 30.
- 37th Annual Survey Report on State-Sponsored Student Financial Aid was released.
- Membership Directory Updated
- User Guide Updated
- New slate of officers recruited, nominated, and elected
- NASSGAP Spring Conference was held in Washington, DC from May 27 – 30
- Numerous meetings with congressional staff and Washington Director / Washington Update
- Signed on to a CEF letter urging passage of the FY08 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill
- Treasurer's reports continuously updated – budget on track
- NASSGAP representation with FAFSA redesign
- NASSGAP representation at Research Conference
- New members recruited / membership dues collected
- NASSGAP represented at signing of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act
- NASSGAP Fall Conference held in Park City, Utah from October 21 - 24

Future Conference Negotiations

- Mary Ann Welch negotiated the 2009 Washington Court hotel contract. The contract remains essentially the same as 2008.
- The 2008 contract also remains the same as 2007. However, the increased food costs are not part of the contract but, according to the hotel, should increase by about 8%. The conference registration rates may need to be reconsidered to accommodate this increase. Lee Andes reminded the group that the fall conference often has extra funds, which are carried over to the Washington D.C. spring conference.
- The 2008 Spring Conference Site Committee Chair is Christine Zuzack (PA) and the Program Committee Chair is Theresa Antworth (FL).

- Mary Ann Welch reviewed the Hospitality Performance Network (HPN) conference service. HPN would manage the hotel contract for NASSGAP. They would not charge NASSGAP but would probably be paid from the hotel room charges. The question was raised, that if the rates rise to cover the HPN contract, would that be a problem? Bart Astor said that it probably will not be a problem.
- Cheryl Maplethorpe said she thought that having a professional conference service would be a good thing because they know the details of contracts and are still working with NASSGAP. This process needs to run two years ahead. Cheryl Maplethorpe and Maureen Laffey will seek out information from people they know in the hotel business and report back to the Executive Committee.
- Marilyn Cargill said she suggests that sites for the next several years be identified. Maureen Laffey suggested that membership be asked for sites that they would prefer. Maureen Laffey will follow-up.
- Contacts are now being posted to the NASSGAP Web site so there is a history of rates etc.
- NASSGAP members Carolyn Brinkly from Delaware, and Mary Jane Covington, Mississippi, did volunteer to help negotiate contracts after Mary Ann Welch asked for volunteers at the last conference.
- Mary Ann Welch said that in the User Guide the member-at-large is to be responsible for being the program chair. Lois Hollis said that she thought that is a good idea so they can be more involved. Marilyn Cargill said that doing so would limit leadership opportunities for membership.
- Marilyn Cargill moved that the members-at-large become program co-chairs with a NASSGAP member who is not on the Executive committee. Each member-at-large will co-chair one annual conference. Marilyn Cargill withdrew the motion after discussion as unnecessary.
- The 2008 Fall Conference chair is Melanie Amrhein who reported that the Hotel Monteleone, New Orleans, will be the site. The dates will be October 5, 6, 7, and 8.
- Bart Astor said that some members have expressed concerns about the safety in New Orleans. Melanie Amrhein said that New Orleans has safe places such as the French Quarter and members need to be advised where to go and where not to go during the conference. Mary Ann Welch said that members need to be told that the Executive Committee met there and had a wonderful and safe visit.

Past President's Report

Not in attendance.

President-elect's Report

- Marilyn Cargill will hold her report until after lunch when more Executive Members are in attendance.
- It was suggested that the President-elect be responsible for updating the NASSGAP calendar with other conference information. Vicki Merkel will update the User Guide with that assignment information.

Secretary's Report

- Vicki Merkel reported that the annual directory update project involves an informal committee, and suggested that a formal committee be assigned to the project so that the process will be more cohesive and organized.
- Mary Ann Welch moved that a new committee be developed to produce the directory. The committee will be chaired by the Secretary, with membership to include the

- President, the Membership Committee Chair, the Washington D.C. Consultant, the Federal Relations Chair, the NASSGAP Web site master, and a representative from the printing agency. Marilyn Cargill seconded and the motion was passed.
- Vicki Merkel will update the User Guide to include this new committee.
 - The committee also discussed ways to make it easier to update agency information such as assigning a common password to all agency members.
 - Chas Treadwell suggested that the Washington D.C. Consultant's position description be revised to include responsibility for updating the Cooperating Organizations directory information.

Treasurer's Report

- Lee Andes reported:
- NASSGAP has reached the budgeted target of fifty membership dues, and the 2007 Fall Conference also has more registrants than the target goal.
- There is an outstanding question on whether the Pell Institute Grant is currently in year three or four. Lee has contacted them and is waiting for an answer.
- All outside contract monies have arrived.
- Lee Andes, Treasurer, is working with Ritchie Morrow, Treasurer-elect, to transition the treasurers' duties. Ritchie Morrow has set up accounts in his area.
- The 3R grant has \$4,016 to spend out. It will be used for web enhancements, Research Conference attendance, and the NASSGAP survey instrument.
- The 2006-07 budget year ended with less than \$200 being used from reserve savings.
- Both NASSGAP CDs expire in December. Ritchie Morrow will decide on the next investment host for these funds.
- Chas Treadwell asked when the IRS forms will be filed next. The 2007-08 forms due on November 1 were filed early in September. All tax forms are up-to-date.
- Chas Treadwell suggested that an independent audit of NASSGAP's financials be considered and that the Treasurer check the IRS regulations for requirements. Discussion ensued on if and how often an audit should occur. Marilyn Cargill asked Ritchie Morrow to check on the cost of bonding the Treasurer. Ritchie will also see if he can locate someone who will provide an audit as a pro bono service. Results of this fact-finding will be discussed at the next Executive meeting.

Members-at-Large

- Stephanie Butler reported it was a pleasure to work with everyone on the Washington, D.C. conference.

Committee Reports

Membership and Communications Committee Report

- Sheila Joyner distributed a listing of the current 2007 paid membership. Discussion occurred on whether Associate Members should be on the listserv. Some Associate Members are in special circumstances that benefit NASSGAP to have them on the list serv. All states are on the listserv whether they pay dues or not. Because he was "grandfathered" in during the initial listserv development, Tom Mortenson will be left on the listserv for one more year.
- Sheila distributed the specialty? list serv addresses for review.

NASSGAP Web Committee Report

- The Web site homepage has been updated. Dennis Obergfell described the changes that include rotating pictures, feeds from national organizations, and links brought forward to the home page instead of drop down only boxes from the top menu. He will preview it at the conference.
- There are also poll enhancements so that members can reach the polls more easily.
- Dennis also is exploring using a research library service from the Indiana Pathways Network that would provide a query tool. Pathways will give NASSGAP their programming code for free. The actual library could be transferred to NASSGAP or NASSGAP could just link to their library

ED Technical Forms Committee Report

- Maureen Laffey reported on several changes:
- FAFSA copies are not being bulk mailed for 2008-09. Students and families can order up to three copies of the FAFSA and organizations can order up to 50. FAFSA Web worksheets are not limited and are available. Bart Astor reported that 96.5% FAFSA filers use the electronic form.
- There will be real-time PINS beginning in January 2008.
- The FAFSA4caster has had a second update that allows students to receive aid award estimates that are customized. It lists the federal student aid programs and estimated award amounts a student may be eligible to receive. It also calculates up to 12 different school scenarios to include: 4- or 2- year schools, public or private schools; in-state and out-of-state residency; and on or off-campus housing.

Federal Relations Committee Report/DC Representative

Appropriations

- Chas Treadwell reported that there was not an education appropriations bill approved by the start of the federal fiscal year, October 1, 2007, but congressional staff reports that they are trying to have one reach the President by November 1, 2007. NASSGAP signed a letter of support for the Senate education appropriations bill with many other organizations.
- LEAP is level-funded, which means it will be able to be authorized in the Higher Education reauthorization bill.
- Bart Astor reported that he has identified a key advocate for LEAP who is on the House education committee.
- Chas Treadwell suggests that the new D.C. Consultant meet with OMB staff to review LEAP facts.

Reauthorization

- Chas Treadwell reported on the Higher Education reauthorization bill's progress. The potential LEAP transfer to GAP leaves questions at the "nuts and bolts" level.
- Bart Astor reported that the College Access Challenge Grant and GAP differences are "fuzzy". Each state's Governor will choose the state agency that will administer the Challenge Grant. It provides a 2-to-1 federal-to-state match and may be able to be matched with current monies. Each state's Governor will get a letter in November for July 1, 2008 implementation. The Challenge Grants are probably a forerunner of GAP. Bart Astor will report more during the conference.

- GEAR UP changes proposed in the Senate committee's reauth bill eliminate minimum allocations between state and partnerships. Instead, it requires the Secretary to consider geographic areas. It also allows for the creation of trusts for students and would extend GEAR UP through the first year of college (making GEAR UP a seven-year grant.)
- Reauthorization also extends the Robert Byrd Honors Scholarship to home schooled students.

Simplification Committee Report

- Melanie Amrhein said that there is not much committee activity to report at this time.
- Chas Treadwell reported that House and Senate reauth bill development, including simplification proposals, are underway. One important section of current law that NASSGAP must see sustained is that the number of state data elements will not be less than there were on October 7, 1998, unless the states notify the Secretary that questions can be deleted.
- Dennis Obergfell discussed the impact of simplification on his state's grant aid because so many more students will be eligible. He wonders if NASSGAP should weigh in. Bart Astor noted that states can pro-rate awards or modify their award schedules to compensate for federal need analysis changes.
- Discussion about simplification and the effect on states ensued.
- Melanie Amrhein asked if this ad hoc committee needs to go forward and regrets that she cannot continue as the Committee Chair.
- Chas Treadwell and Marilyn Cargill suggested that the ED/Tech Forms Committee should continue this work. President Mary Ann Welch agreed. The Simplification Committee was dissolved.

Washington D.C. Consultant

- Marilyn Cargill reported that Bart Astor has resigned, effective October 29, to accept a full-time position.
- Bart Astor has identified several people who may be interested in the position. Other names will be welcomed from NASSGAP membership and explored. Melanie Amrhein suggested that Bart's contacts also be asked for references.
- In the transition period both Marilyn Cargill and Chas Treadwell will have their phone numbers posted as the NASSGAP contacts. **Vicki Merkel will update the NASSGAP letterhead.** Chas Treadwell has updated the LEAP fact sheet.
- Bart will send out a letter to all of his contacts to let them know he will be stepping down and will give them contact information for Marilyn and Chas.
- Marilyn Cargill asked Melanie Amrhein about the prior process to fill the position. It was an informal search by the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs.
- Chas Treadwell suggested that the contract be reviewed to see if items should be added such as updating the Cooperating Organizations directory information.
- **Marilyn Cargill will set up a conference call process for interviewing a potential replacement for Bart.**

Policy and Research Committee Report

- Cheryl Maplethorpe has sent out a list of state comparisons and will update it soon with graduation rates, etc. Dennis Obergfell will post it to the Web site.
- Cheryl said she wants to use the committee more to help states use their data or find researchers to help states.

- Mary Ann Welch said she has tried to contact the Pell Institute about coordinating conference dates with NASSGAP but hasn't received a response. Cheryl Maplethorpe will follow-up.

Transition Issues

- Marilyn Cargill would like Committee members to email her soon with what dates in late January, early February, or early March will work for the next Executive Committee meeting.
- Mary Ann Welch thanked the committee for all their help his past year during her term as president.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:25 pm by Melanie Amrhein and seconded by Marilyn Cargill. Motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vicki Merkel
Secretary