

Membership and Communication Committee

Meeting Minutes

2019 ASLCS Spring Business Meeting
Jackson, Wyoming
Saturday, April 27, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting of the Membership and Communication committee was called to order at 10:03 a.m., by Tim Sekerak (Ore.), acting as Chair in the absence of Chair Melissa Bybee-Fields (Ky.).

Attendance

The following members of the committee were present: Tim Sekerak (Ore.), Buddy Johnson (Ark.), Lee Cassis (W.Va.), Darek Grant (Maine), Ann Cornwell (Ark.), John Hollman (Ill.), Carrie Maulin (Idaho), Brad Young (Ohio), and Ali Sagraves (Ohio).

Other members/guests in attendance included: Holly South (NCSL).

Approval of Minutes

The previous meeting's minutes were not available at the time of this meeting and will be presented for approval at the committee's next meeting.

Old Business

Acting Chair Sekerak explained a few items for discussion, prompted by Chair Melissa Bybee-Fields (Ky.). The first was to continue the committee's discussion from the 2018 PDS regarding how the committee can do a better job of connecting new members with current members in a structured and meaningful way. Carrie Maulin (Idaho) mentioned the positive response to opening the hospitality suite early for new attendees and their sponsors to have an opportunity to interact before the meeting starts. Ann Cornwell (Ark.) mentioned that sponsors need to be purposeful in introducing their new attendee to members at the hospitality suite, as it can be an intimidating social experience if you are by yourself and do not know other members yet. The committee discussed that sponsors also need to take actions to plan to be with their new attendee: plan to grab lunch together during the "lunch on your own" times, plan to attend concurrent sessions together – especially the session more geared toward new attendees.

In terms of how to pair sponsoring members with new attendees in similar roles, the committee discussed that this is all dependent upon who volunteers to be a sponsor. Brad Young (Ohio) explained that sometimes pairing members with similar duties can happen; sometimes, it cannot. Ali Sagraves (Ohio) mentioned the challenges of having one sponsor paired with two or more new attendees and the fact that this cheats the new attendees out of a better experience when the sponsor must split time. To help solve the issue of generating more sponsor volunteers, Carrie Maulin (Idaho) offered that current members may miss their opportunity to volunteer to be a sponsor in the days leading up to the PDS; therefore, a more formalized, well-known sign-up process could be helpful in getting more sponsors. Holly South (NCSL) explained that members can check a box to be a sponsor when registering for the PDS, but it could be showcased more. Ann Cornwell (Ark.) suggested that members be encouraged to make a commitment to be a sponsor at the NCSL Summit in Nashville this summer, perhaps at the business luncheon. John

Hollman (Ill.) and Carrie Maulin (Idaho) explained that the email typically sent out to sponsors right before the PDS spelling out expectations for connecting with their new attendees could be outlined at the Summit to assist members in signing up to volunteer.

Another item for further discussion from the previous meeting was the idea of developing an app for the Passport Program for easier access and participation. Brad Young (Ohio) asked about the cost, as it seems app development can get expensive. Holly South (NCSL), Chair Sekerak (Ore.), and Carrie Maulin (Idaho) discussed the possibility of adding a “checked-in” capability to the current NCSL app platform that exists for the PDS. This kind of feature could mimic the paper passport. Holly plans to look into specifics and communicate back to the committee.

The committee also asked of Holly, in her upcoming communications regarding the PDS, that she remind members to bring pins and/or business cards to the PDS so that new attendees may collect both for the pin contest. Allowing both items to be collected and counted has worked well thus far, especially for those states that do not have pins.

New Business

Prior to the meeting, Chair Bybee-Fields (Ky.) brought a new idea before the committee for a possible concurrent session. The Amazing Race session from last year was a big success, so to continue with the game/puzzle theme, she asked the committee to discuss doing an “escape room” activity. Chair Sekerak (Ore.) emphasized the need to allow new and not-so-new members to team up and work together to conquer a puzzle/scavenger hunt/escape room challenge that is fun, easy (not too challenging), and useful for learning about the Society. Carrie Maulin (Idaho) asked if this activity would need to be a plenary session, rather than a concurrent session; the Chair would need to discuss this with the Program Development committee. Ann Cornwell (Ark.) suggested that committee members bring small prizes from their home states. This could be in addition to the pin maps, since the pin contest will also be taking place. The Chair mentioned that this committee may need to break into working groups to develop this “escape room” idea in time. Having several members dedicated to specific tasks worked well with preparing for The Amazing Race last year. The committee determined that it is supportive of Chair Bybee-Fields’ “escape room” idea and looks forward to helping her develop it.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Brad Young (Ohio), seconded by Ann Cornwell (Ark.), the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ali Sagraves (Ohio)