



**National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES)
Executive Committee Conference Call Meeting
Monday, July 18, 2016**

Minutes

Members and NCSL Liaison Present on Call: Members Absent from Call:

Nathalie Molliet-Ribet, Chair (VA)
Greg Fugate, Secretary (CO)
Patricia Berger (PA)
Dale Carlson (CA)
Wayne Kidd (UT)
Marcia Lindsay (SC)
Katrin Osterhaus (KS)
Shunti Taylor (GA)
Linda Triplett (MS)
Brenda Erickson, NCSL Liaison

Charles Sallee (NM)

(Note: All times reported in these minutes are in Mountain Daylight Time.)

11:03 a.m. Call to Order. Nathalie called the meeting to order. Nine Executive Committee members were present on the call, exceeding the required quorum of seven members for conducting official business.

11:03 a.m. Approval of Minutes from April 9, 2016, Executive Committee Meeting in Jackson, MS. Dale made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 9, 2016, meeting of the Executive Committee held in Jackson, MS, as presented. Marcia seconded Dale's motion. The Executive Committee unanimously adopted the minutes without objection.

11:05 a.m. Fill Vacancy in Vice Chair Position. Rachel Hibbard's departure from the Hawaii Office of the State Auditor and the NLPES Executive Committee leaves the Committee with a vacancy and the need to fill Rachel's position as Vice Chair. The Committee expressed its gratitude for the many contributions that Rachel made to NLPES and the Executive Committee and its sadness in losing a dear friend and colleague from our membership.

Nathalie opened nominations for the Vice Chair position to fill the remainder of Rachel's term, which ends at the September 2016 PDS in Jackson, MS. Wayne nominated Greg to fill the vacant position of Vice Chair. Pat seconded Wayne's motion. The motion to name Greg to fill the

vacant Vice Chair position on the Executive Committee for the remainder of Rachel's term was adopted on a voice vote with none opposed.

11:07 a.m.

Fill Vacancy in Secretary Position. Nathalie opened nominations for the Secretary position to fill the remainder of Greg's term as Secretary for the Executive Committee, i.e., until the 2016 PDS in Jackson, MS. Greg nominated Linda to fill the position that he was vacating to serve as Executive Committee Vice Chair. Katrin seconded Greg's motion. During a brief discussion, Greg said that he would continue to take notes for the remainder of the conference call meeting. Linda and Brenda stated that they also would take notes during the meeting. The motion to name Linda to fill the vacant Secretary position on the Executive Committee for the remainder of Greg's term was adopted on a voice vote with none opposed.

Wayne clarified that as the newly elected Vice Chair, Greg will move up to the position of Executive Committee Chair at the 2016 PDS in Jackson and will serve in that position until the 2017 PDS in Madison, WI. Also at the 2016 PDS in Jackson, the Executive Committee will nominate and elect a new Vice Chair and a new Secretary to serve for the year, beginning at the 2016 PDS in September.

11:10 a.m.

Subcommittee Updates—Awards (Nathalie). Nathalie reported that the Awards Subcommittee has notified all 2016 award applicants (both winners and non-winners) of their award status. Brenda stated that she would be sending out the official award notification letters in the couple of weeks.

Florida has once again volunteered to produce a podcast announcing the 2016 NLPES award winners. Wayne asked about the target date for release of the podcast and Nathalie said that she will follow up with Florida to determine the date. Florida has been sent the list of all of the 2016 award winners.

Colorado and Louisiana won the *Excellence in Research Methods Award*. Mississippi won the *Excellence in Evaluation Award*. The Awards Subcommittee announced 24 *Certificate of Impact Awards* out of 27 submissions. Three of the 27 *Impact Award* applications were rejected because the judges determined that they did not submit all documentation required for award consideration. This was the first year that the Awards Subcommittee strictly enforced the documentation requirements and did not allow states that did not meet the pre-established award submission criteria to amend their submissions. The Awards Committee judges feel comfortable with their determination.

Shunti mentioned that Georgia's award submission, which included a .ZIP file, bounced back from one judge and she wondered whether this was a widespread problem. Greg said that Colorado's submission also bounced back from one judge, but was received by the other two judges. Nathalie also mentioned the potential problem of e-mail from member organizations being blocked by spam filters. While no award applications

were rejected for these reasons, the Awards Committee agreed to discuss ways of ensuring that future electronic submissions, especially those with large attachments, can be received easily by all judges. Many suggestions were made to help to resolve the potential problems associated with the electronic submission of award applications, e.g., Google Docs. Pat asked whether NCSL could set up an NLPES Dropbox, but Brenda said that this would probably not be an option because it would require special permission from NCSL's IT department. Marcia said that each judge should respond to each agency submitting an application for an award to ensure that complete applications have been received. Brenda and others discussed adding some guidance to the awards criteria to help this process. Shunti recommended adding something in the award submission instructions about .ZIP files not being ideal. Dale said that judges may need to check with their IT staff to see if there are any restrictions to the size of attachments that they can receive. Linda suggested linking submissions to online reports to minimize file size. The group agreed that adding guidance on the application instructions and the judge's instructions will help to address the issues surrounding electronic submissions. Nathalie and Marcia will discuss options in their Awards Subcommittee and gather some ideas to present back to the Executive Committee.

Pat asked whether the two-year time limit for a project's impact under the eligibility criteria for a *Certificate of Impact Award* could be extended from two to three years. Pat said that due to the slowness of statutory changes and the differences in the calendar dates that state legislatures are in session, impacts often happen outside of the allowed two-year window. Pat also asked whether it was possible to change the *Impact Award* eligibility criteria from enacted legislation to introduced legislation. As a member of the Awards Subcommittee, Marcia said that she understood Pat's concerns, but that introduced legislation doesn't necessarily lead to a change, i.e., impact. Wayne reminded the Executive Committee that the Awards Committee extended the allowable impact time frame from one year to two years to help account for delays in legislation. Marcia and Nathalie said that they will discuss the issue in their Awards Subcommittee and report back to the Executive Committee.

11:30 a.m. Subcommittee Updates—Communications (Dale).

NLPES Newsletter

Dale asked Shunti to update the Executive Committee on the upcoming Summer 2016 edition of the NLPES newsletter, *The Working Paper*. She reported that she was expecting the last article that day. Shunti also reported that Angus would be unable to continue writing the Report Radar section of the newsletter due to his new responsibilities as director (Legislative Auditor) of the Montana Legislative Audit Division. Shunti said that in order to continue the Report Radar series, it will be necessary to find someone to assume responsibility for writing the column. Pat mentioned that someone in her office might be interested in the job. She will verify his

interest and communicate the results to Shunti. Linda asked about the criteria for including a report in the Report Radar section of the newsletter. She noted that if the Report Radar is intended to be comprehensive, each member office could be responsible for submitting very brief summaries of their own reports released since the previous newsletter, organized by topical area. Brenda reported that the Report Radar was not intended to be comprehensive. Angus searched released reports and then grouped them by common issues/topics for the NLPES membership. Brenda said that the author needs some editorial discretion to pull the Report Radar together, which is important. Nathalie noted that because all readers and staff like to see the name of their respective state in the newsletter, it is important for the author of the Report Radar to pull reports from across the membership. Dale said that he is trying to be comprehensive/inclusive when pulling together the “Performance Reports in the News” article. Dale noted that the Communications subcommittee is still brainstorming on feedback tools/approaches for newsletter content and that this will be the focus of future subcommittee efforts.

Dale suggested that current members of the Communications subcommittee recruit people outside of the Executive Committee to contribute to the newsletter in order to expand the participation of our NLPES membership. Dale said a call for volunteers could be included in the next newsletter and that, ideally, volunteers would commit to a one-year newsletter cycle, i.e., three issues. Shunti said that the next newsletter will come out in November, after the PDS. She plans for an approximately 4-month time span between issues.

NLPES Website

Pat updated the Executive Committee on several changes made to improve the functionality of the NLPES website since the April meeting of the Executive Committee. Pat thanked Brenda for working with NCSL IT staff to make the changes. Specifically, engaging header links were added to the website to make users aware of

- the different award opportunities available to member offices and their staff (Be Recognized);
- professional development resources available to NLPES members;
- the NLPES Working Paper (newsletter); and
- the 2016 NLPES PDS in Jackson (Hey! Wake up!).

Pat asked whether the NCSL navigation block could be moved to the bottom of the NLPES web page. Brenda said that, per NCSL’s IT staff, the location of the block cannot be moved, but the NLPES Executive Committee can change the content of the NCSL navigation block. Pat will work with Brenda to explore changes to the content of the block, for example, to highlight the 2016 PDS in Jackson. After the PDS, this block can then be used

to feature other topics important to NLPES. The Executive Committee and general NLPES membership should let Pat know about other suggestions.

Katrin asked whether it would be possible to post the Executive Committee meeting minutes on the website more quickly following each Executive Committee meeting, i.e., instead of waiting until the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Dale asked whether timeliness could be improved by allowing the Executive Committee to review and approve the minutes via an e-mail vote. He suggested that the Secretary could e-mail a draft of the minutes to each Committee member and then Committee members could be polled as to whether they approved the minutes as written. If a majority of the members approved, the minutes could then be posted to the NLPES website. This change would put more pressure on the Secretary to get minutes drafted and sent out more quickly. Dale said that making the minutes of the Executive Committee available to the NLPES membership more quickly could be helpful for recruiting new members to the Executive Committee. The minutes allow members to research and understand the issues that are being discussed in Executive Committee meetings. Marcia thinks that the timely completion of minutes is a good goal to have. Shunti said that the online link to Executive Committee minutes contained in The Working Paper could drive more traffic toward the minutes and increase the pressure on the timely completion and posting of the minutes following a meeting of the Executive Committee. Greg suggested that this is an issue for the Executive Committee officers to deal with as opposed to the Communications subcommittee. Wayne noted that some meetings are more difficult to capture quickly than others because some Executive Committee meetings last all day. Nathalie proposed talking with Greg and Linda about reasonable goals for the timeline for submitting minutes to the Executive Committee for approval. Linda mentioned that the recent style of the meeting minutes is very extensive—more of a court reporter format—and wondered whether there is a way to be more concise while still being transparent. Nathalie mentioned that because the primary consumer of the meeting minutes is the Executive Committee, it would be ideal to strike a balance between brevity and ensuring that all actions and directives of the Committee are captured. Brenda noted that most legislative journals are summaries of the discussions that took place rather than transcripts of the discussions.

12:03 p.m.

Subcommittee Updates—Professional Development (Katrin). Katrin provided the update for the Professional Development Subcommittee. She reported that the April webinar explaining the methodology used by OPPAGA in its 2015 NLPES *Excellence in Research Methods Award*–winning report on drug courts went well. NLPES also co-sponsored a webinar in June on teen pregnancy. Katrin noted that the Subcommittee has not yet made headway on its next planned webinar on data access, tentatively scheduled for the fall of 2016. She said that there were no other action items at this time.

Greg suggested sponsoring a webinar for the 2016 winners of the *Excellence in Research Methods Award* (Colorado and Louisiana) to discuss their research methodologies. This webinar could be held in the spring of 2017.

12:05 p.m. **Subcommittee Updates—Peer Review (Wayne).** Wayne updated the Executive Committee on the NLPES Peer Review marketing brochure, noting that modifications had been made to the brochure based on prior Executive Committee feedback. Nathalie will review the changes made to the brochure and distribute them to the directors of member offices. Nathalie will also bring copies of the Peer Review brochure to the 2016 PDS in Jackson, MS, to place on tables at the Awards luncheon. Nathalie will print the brochures in-house in Virginia.

Charles is working on a “how to” guide for peer reviewers.

The most recent peer review was conducted in June 2016 for Hawaii. Brenda is in contact with South Carolina to schedule a peer review in October 2016. She hasn’t had further communication with Maine, which was considering a peer review.

12:08 p.m. **Subcommittee Updates—Elections (Wayne).** Wayne updated the Executive Committee on the Committee rules for filling the vacancy left by Rachel. Consistent with the bylaws, the person with the next-most votes in the last election to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee is offered the opportunity to fill the vacancy. Having received the next-most votes and agreeing to serve on the Executive Committee, Kiernan McGorty of North Carolina will be joining the Executive Committee at the 2016 PDS in Jackson, MS. Rachel’s position on the Executive Committee will remain vacant until then.

Emily Johnson (TX Sunset) and Melinda Hamilton (MI) were elected in the spring 2016 Election and will also be joining the Executive Committee in the fall.

12:10 p.m. **Subcommittee Updates—Data Access.** In a quick update, Greg reported no progress on the NLPES Principles of Data Access draft since April. He plans to circulate a draft prior to the fall meeting of the Executive Committee in conjunction with the PDS in Jackson.

12:12 p.m. **2016 Professional Development Seminar Update.** Brenda sent an updated PDS registration list showing that there are currently 34 registrants for the 2016 PDS in Jackson. Linda sent a copy of the draft PDS agenda as well as a list of PDS tracks and sessions (including session name, description, moderator, and panelists) to the Executive Committee prior to the meeting and discussed each of them.

Linda reported the following:

The 2016 PDS in Jackson will offer 16 hours of CPE credit. In addition to plenary sessions focusing on data-driven decision-making, managing for results, and futures exploration, there will be three tracks from which attendees can choose:

- Basic Skills for Newer Evaluators: The Foundational Elements of Sound Legislative Program Evaluation
- Technical Skills: Converting Raw Data into Actionable Intelligence
- Human Resource Skills: Realizing the Full Potential of our Workforce

There are six panels/sessions in each of the technical and human resource skills tracks. Finalization of the panels will take place after Linda determines the number of volunteers to serve on each panel.

The PDS agenda is also taking shape. The Executive Committee will meet all day on Sunday, followed by an evening welcoming reception for all PDS attendees at the King Edward Hotel (Hilton Garden Inn). Dinner will be on your own at a local eatery, The Iron Horse Grill, within easy walking distance of the hotel. Monday's opening session will be held in the House Chamber of the State Capitol, followed by a brief tour of the Capitol. There will be group social events on both Monday and Tuesday nights. The first social event will be held at the Mississippi Museum of Art and the second social event will be held in Fondren, "Jackson's Hippest Neighborhood," with plenty of options for good food, drink, and closing music entertainment at Duling Hall. The PDS will wrap up at 11:45 a.m. on Wednesday with concurrent sessions and a plenary session led by Dr. Max Arinder on the future of the profession. The Mississippi staff is working with NSCL to schedule shuttle buses between the events and the hotel. As the panels fill, work will begin on room scheduling.

Because Greg had difficulty finding transportation from the Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International airport to the PDS hotel for the April Executive Committee meeting held in Jackson, MS, host state staff will give notice to local transportation companies to expect a number of travelers attending the PDS and will also advise participants to consider prearranging transportation to the hotel. Official transportation arranged through NSCL has to be handled carefully because of liability issues. Because of such issues, staff from the host state driving their personal vehicles cannot arrange to pick up PDS attendees from the airport.

Because of concern over the impact of the state's enactment of H.B. 1523 (the "Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act") on travel to Mississippi, Linda updated the Executive Committee on the status of the law's enforcement. On July 1, 2016, U.S. District Court Judge Carlton W. Reeves, issued an injunction barring enforcement of the law. The State's Attorney General said that he would not appeal the judge's decision.

Staff of the PDS host state would appreciate any efforts to market the event. Brenda said that she will send out an e-mail blast now that there are additional PDS materials available. Dale suggested that Charles could contact *Governing Magazine* to include the NLPES 2016 PDS in its list of upcoming events. There was discussion about trying to recruit participation from our NLPES member offices before turning to outside participants.

Greg offered advice/encouragement about getting the panels put together, recruiting participants, moving the schedule forward, etc.

Pat had a question about the poster session planned for the 2016 PDS. Linda said that the session will focus on the Impact Award winners, following the same format as the very successful poster session held during the 2015 PDS in Denver. To encourage attendance and participation at the poster session, following Colorado's lead, Mississippi will offer prizes for participants who attend the session and who learn about the award-winning reports. There was some discussion about the poster session format and approach, and there was general agreement that Impact Award winners should have flexibility in how they present their reports during the poster session. For example, states could bring posters if they choose to do so, but are not required or even encouraged to make posters. The main requirement for those representing award-winning states at the poster session is to be knowledgeable about their state's award-winning report and to have a few copies of the reports available for poster session attendees to view and discuss. Wayne suggested that it would be helpful to have one page summaries of the award-winning reports available to hand out to attendees. The host state will be in further communication with representatives from the award-winning states to discuss expectations for the poster session.

12:54 p.m. **Other Business—Date and Location for Next Meeting.** There will be a brief meeting of the Executive Committee at the NCSL Legislative Summit in Chicago on Tuesday, August 9 from 7:30-8:45 a.m. Dale, Marcia, Katrin, and Shunti will be unable to attend. Brenda said that conference calls are typically not available at the Summit due to the cost of such calls.

12:55 p.m. **Other Business—Other Items.** Brenda said that NSCL is in the process of soliciting hotel bids for the 2017 PDS in Madison, WI. When hotel options have been identified, she will send the list to the members of the Executive Committee for their consideration.

Greg asked about changes to the NLPES bylaws that had been offered by Rachel, who is no longer part of the membership. Nathalie and Greg will discuss the proposed changes prior to the August meeting.

12:59 p.m. **Adjourn.** Having no further business, the conference call meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned.