

National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES)
Executive Committee Meeting
Saturday, April 5, 2014
Raleigh, NC

MINUTES

Attendees – EC members and NCSL liaison:

Lisa Kieffer (GA), chair

Wayne Kidd (UT), vice chair

Rachel Hibbard (HI), secretary

Karl Spock (TX), immediate past chair

Dale Carlson (CA)

Greg Fugate (CO)

Katrin Osterhaus (KS)

Marcia Lindsay (SC)

Nathalie Molliet-Ribet (VA)

Angus Maciver (MT) – via telephone

Brenda Erickson, NCSL liaison

Carol Shaw, North Carolina Program Evaluation
Division (host state) representative/contact

Absent:

Charles Sallee (NM)

1. **Call to order.** Lisa called the meeting to order at 9:00am.
2. **Minutes from last meeting approved.** Karl moved that meeting minutes from the 9/22/13 meeting in Austin, TX be approved; Katrin and Nathalie seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the minutes.
3. **Subcommittee work.** Dale asked whether there has been any feedback regarding streaming some of the sessions from our last PDS, and whether there is value in continue to stream PDS sessions. Karl and Brenda said they have not had any feedback. Marcia noted that some people in her office watched but two of the streamed sessions were concurrent, and it would be more helpful if they were not overlapping. Nathalie asked whether there is a way to monitor the number of viewers. Dale asked if there is a cost. Karl said there was a small cost last year, but it was waived because Texas regularly streams anyway, so the PDS used the same technology; and he did not know whether traffic could be monitored. Carol said she will talk to her IT folks regarding ability to stream video in addition to audio. **Karl noted that per NCSL's requirement, waivers need to be obtained from anyone who is being streamed – e.g., panelists.** The full committee meeting was recessed for subcommittee meetings. Subcommittees met from 9:10am–11:00am.
4. **Preparation for the 2014 Professional Development Seminar (PDS).**
 - a. **Professional Development Subcommittee report** – Angus reported there are two issues to raise with the full committee: potential plenary topics, and potential sponsorship.
 - 1) **Potential plenary topics:** Carol discussed getting input from state key contacts on potential issues/topics for PDS sessions and to identify potential presenters. The NC office (host state) has already put together a comprehensive list of potential interest areas; now need input from states/membership to help narrow. The PDS

subcommittee is interested in four potential plenary topics: 1) using big data; 2) inter-office communication across generations (maybe share with NLSSA – the NC office has identified a speaker; 3) office branding (maybe share with NLSSA); 4) panel of legislators who use our reports.

Big data. Nathalie asked about ‘big data.’ Carol explained that SAS is an NC company that sells statistical packages, although SAS is not the only package. She envisions the session would be about how to use big data to do your analyses, with a focus on various software packages. The NC office needs to do more work to develop the idea. Greg noted there was a big data session at the NCSL Summit last year.

Carol noted that the PDS committee’s aim is to identify plenary sessions that could address big topics, and later sessions could follow up with detailed, practical sessions. Dale lauded the idea, comparing it to the Pew data approach, and suggested that someone from the CA office might be able to speak to this issue, as CA uses ACL and has dealt with some massive databases in recent audits. Carol noted the NC office has lots of data folks, and is thinking of having a Data track for the PDS, or at least several sessions devoted to data issues. The NC office has a computer training room and can offer hands-on sessions. There was general discussion regarding the logistics of hands-on training, number of trainers needed, CPEs available, and need for concerted, focused advertising of the sessions.

Plenary list generally. The NC office would like to send a list of potential plenary topics to key contacts to find out level of interest and whether states have staff who could contribute as speakers. Lisa asked about timeframe; Carol intends to send out by end of month [April 2014]. The NC office has developed a survey for this purpose, which it hopes to have back by mid-May. Lisa said the idea is good, so that we can identify topics early and advertise them on our website to promote interest in attending the PDS.

- 2) **Sponsorship potential:** There was discussion of whether, how, and in what capacity to solicit the involvement and/or sponsorship of a commercial vendor. Merits of, e.g., a local vendor such as SAS, who has a statewide contract with NC, were discussed. Concerns regarding commercial sponsorship were discussed.

Precedent. Brenda was asked about NCSL’s position. She said NCSL does not have a problem with commercial sponsorship (e.g., exhibitors at Summit). She said some staff sections do accept contributions; some accept private speakers as presenters; some fundraise (e.g., NLSSA and ASLCS); NALIT has a vendor fair. Historically, NLPES has been hesitant to fund-raise from the private sector; but this is a very targeted instance that would specifically advance NLPES. As such, there is precedent for involving commercial sponsorship or contributions.

SAS specifically. Greg noted that a number of NLPES shops use SAS, so there is a logical tie-in (as with Pew in past); in addition, it is local to NC and has a statewide contract with NC.

Transparency generally. Karl noted that the real issue is whether a sponsor would influence one of our products, which he does not think is a problem here. Each state, he said, must consider its own state law requirements (e.g., Texas' prohibition against accepting any "thing of value"). Katrin suggested we could discourage trinkets/"swag," but Greg noted it is the same as the Exhibit Hall at Summit – again, each state would need to consider its own laws. Lisa noted that in the past, the Pew sessions were very clearly advertised as to what they were about. Brenda also noted that "presenting" could be approached separately from "sponsorship" (funding). **Lisa asked whether the committee was interested in letting the NC office explore SAS options. The group agreed it is worth exploring; the NC office will pursue.**

- b. Programming and budget** – Lisa said the committee needs to decide on the PDS budget so we can decide our registration fee and publish on website and with registration forms. Brenda distributed a proposed budget for the Committee's consideration prior to presenting to NCSL. The budget distributed was a full (i.e., all-inclusive – with every conceivable cost included), but another option is to start with a basic budget (e.g., no transportation or breakfast costs included) and add cost items back in as they are needed. Brenda noted this was the approach taken last year, where the EC gave authority to spend down NLPES' excess revolving fund balance. Greg moved that Brenda prepare a basic budget to present to NCSL, which the EC hereby authorizes, and that the EC will approve additional spending from the NLPES revolving account later as needed. Marcia seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.
- c. Pew stipends** – Brenda reported that we will not be receiving Pew stipends this year. Greg noted that even when we had Pew stipends, a few states couldn't accept them because of state laws.. The group agreed to thank Gary VanLandingham (Pew) for his hard work over the past several years. Lisa said she will write a card to Gary. Brenda reported that NCSL would prefer our daily PDS rate to be increased to \$175-\$200 so that it is not cheaper than the conference rate package. Dale moved to increase the daily rate to \$200; Katrin seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.
- d. Other subcommittee items** – Angus is working with his former boss, Jim Pellegrini, regarding his interest in developing NLPES training on scoping and other issues; Angus will get back to the EC when he has something more substantive. Angus also reported that Kathy McGuire (Florida) says she is interested in identifying areas to create webinars and will get back to Angus with her ideas later this month.

The committee recessed for lunch and a tour of proposed PDS facilities, including the State Legislative Building and the Legislative Offices Building. Meeting reconvened at 3:00pm.

5. Subcommittee reports.

- a. NLPES Fund Balance Ad Hoc Committee** – Wayne reported we have about \$30K available to spend down. The subcommittee feels it should not be spent all at once, but over time and to the benefit of NLPES members as a whole – i.e., not for the PDS registration fee; the subcommittee feels that is reasonable as is. On average, our PDS has cost \$15K/year for the past 3 years. The subcommittee suggested the money could

help the host state (NC) in dynamic programming, and/or for PDS overages. Could also be used for webinars, and/or for guest speaker(s). The subcommittee does not want to spend the money too quickly, because we may want to expand PDSs back to the full 3 days (as it used to be). Wayne noted that the EC has already approved using our fund for overages for this year's PDS (NC), and that the subcommittee suggests capping that authorization at \$5K. Marcia asked whether speaker costs vary wildly; Greg said yes. Wayne noted that if we use the reserve for stipends, we will deplete it very quickly. Angus said he had not previously thought of using the money for a speaker, but was open to the idea. **Marcia moved that the EC authorize Brenda/NCSL to spend up to \$5,000 on any PDS overages, and that if we need to spend more, the EC will need to make an additional authorization. Wayne seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the committee.** Lisa noted that, by these minutes, the EC records its intention regarding how to spend our revolving fund money and posed that, therefore, there is no need to amend our bylaws. The group agreed.

Greg asked whether we should advertise in the newsletter how we are spending the money; the committee agreed that recording it in these minutes is sufficiently transparent. Katrin noted that if we end up with even more overage following our PDS, we may need to develop a new plan to spend down our excess funds. Dale commented that we might as well see how the PDS works out and then revisit. If balance grows, then take new action; if it shrinks, then the plan Wayne has proposed is appropriate. Karl noted we should let Carol Shaw (NC host) know there is money for speakers. Lisa posed that we could also use the money for webinar speakers; and that we can revisit this issue at Summit, when our PDS numbers will be better known. Marcia asked what costs are included in "speaker fees;" Wayne and Greg said they can include travel, an honorarium, accommodation, or whatever. Lisa tabled the ad hoc committee for now, and will revisit this issue later as needed.

- b. Awards** – Marcia reported there is a good distribution of judges this year and that a good timeline has been established (who will call winners and inform not-winners, etc.) Kathy McGuire (FL) has again offered for OPPAGA to do a podcast of the winners. Everything is to be done and judged by May 31. Brenda said she needs the names and pictures of winners ahead of the Summit (for Achievement and Excellence awards) – needs the name, at least, by 5/30. Marcia will send an email to the relevant people re their duties and the deadlines. Marcia asked Brenda to clarify the submission guidelines for the Excellence Award on the website. Specifically, Marcia asked Brenda to replace the word "appendices" with the word "attachments" for uniformity.
- i. Outstanding Achievement Award** – Marcia reported there are no nominees for this award, and asked the group whether the award can be posthumous. Wayne noted there is nothing prohibiting it. Marcia would like her office to consider nominating SC's former director (deceased). Lisa will send an email, as chair of this award, to member offices to ask them to consider nominating someone. Lisa will need to appoint a committee to judge the award.

- c. **Communications** – Dale reported the following:
- i. **Achievements.**
- (1) **Continuity with the newsletter.** We have continuity on with publishing the newsletter; Dale thanked Rachel for spearheading that effort and Brenda for posting it to our website.
- (2) **Spring outreach campaign.** The subcommittee succeeded in drafting and sending out a Spring Outreach email blast to key contacts. The subcommittee would like to know whether/what impact it had, but we have yet to figure out how to measure that. Nathalie and Marcia said they were unaware the email went out, as they did not receive it.
- ii. **Website.**
- (1) **New box.** Brenda distributed proposal to add new box to our website’s homepage in which we can post important events/announcements. Subcommittee to come up with a calendar/schedule of items to appear in that box at certain times of the year (e.g., links to current newsletter, announcement of PDS, Summit, awards, LSMI, election results, webinars, etc). We can put one or more links in there at a time. Subcommittee to coordinate with Brenda.
- (2) **Website monitoring.** Subcommittee is still trying to get this happening regularly. We would like to get Charles involved with routine monitoring. If the subcommittee encounters significant problems or proposals for change, it will bring it back to the full EC for consideration; for mundane problems, we will go directly to Brenda. Rachel provided a list of her ad hoc website edits to Brenda to facilitate.
- iii. **Question of the Month (QOTM).** Also still ongoing, but stalled (with Dale). Dale won’t be at Summit, but may be able to submit something to the full committee by proxy or by the PDS.
- iv. **Newsletter.** New item – sharing media articles related to reports issued – Rachel to follow up. Might be done in conjunction with Report Radar. Rachel informed the EC that she cold-solicited New Hampshire (Stephen Fox) and Mississippi (Max Arinder and James Barber) for contributions to the upcoming newsletter (State Profile and Staff Profile, respectively), and that all were kind enough to contribute.
- (1) **Continuity/succession planning [general].** Lisa asked whether Rachel has shared her newsletter procedures and information with Brenda for continuity purposes. She noted this would apply to the Awards Committee and other committees, too. Brenda said she would be happy to collect and file such information for continuity and succession

purposes. Lisa asked the subcommittee chairs to provide information regarding processes, timetables, etc. to Brenda. Marcia asked whether we have an historic list of EC members; our website lists past chairs but not members. Brenda said she is sorting and culling this information for herself but can share with the rest of EC. Karl suggested there are really two issues here: 1) general processes – e.g., committees, elections, etc. – that need to be documented and should be passed on from one chair to the next; and 2) historical documents/data that should be provided to Brenda for safekeeping. Karl noted, for instance, that the PDS process for NC this year is totally different from what Texas did last year. Brenda confirmed she keeps all NLPES information on a shared drive, not her own C:/ drive, so that other NSCL staff also have access to the shared drive.

- d. **Peer Review** – Brenda reported she is putting together a peer review team for WA. It has been difficult to find reviewers for the week they want the review done. Nebraska is due for a review again. Utah is considering a review in 2015. Maine may be interested in having a review. Dale asked whether we advertise our peer review services; the answer is yes, via our website and the ‘key contacts’ email we sent this spring. Brenda reminded us that number of peer reviews is also a matter of capacity – Brenda cannot take on more than about two reviews per year; maybe three if they are spread out throughout the year. Also, it can be challenging to find reviewers. Lisa noted that NASACT states are also eligible to participate as reviewers. Brenda noted that NLPES does not do the NASACT approach of using a peer reviewer ‘bank.’ The process, Brenda described, is that she asks the state who they want as reviewers, then approaches those states to see if peers can travel and their availability. Peers have to be more senior people.
 - i. **Peer review marketing ad hoc committee.** Lisa asked whether we should create an ad hoc committee to document the peer review process, to potentially reduce Brenda’s workload. Dale recalled that James Barber prepared such a foundational document; Brenda concurred. Greg and Katrin said they are interested in being on such an ad hoc committee. Lisa suggested we could include NLPES members other than EC members, such as Leslie McGuire (GA), Tim Osterstock (UT), James Barber (MS); and maybe Angus Maciver of the EC. Lisa will contact these people and schedule a conference call prior to NCSL Summit.
6. **Elections.** Karl reported there are 4 seats open and 5 candidates in this year’s EC elections. Aside from the incumbents, the candidates are Linda Triplett (Mississippi) and David Kirchner (Minnesota). April 11 is the deadline to postmark ballots. Per NLPES bylaws, elections must be complete by April 15 each year. The process is that Brenda gives final tallies to the NLPES chair (Lisa); the chair informs each of the candidates of the result; then the results are publicly posted via the listserv and newsletter. Brenda confirmed that winners take up their positions at the Fall PDS. Brenda has received ballots from 8 states so far, some by whole office and some individually. The committee thanked Brenda for her work in this area.

7. **Other business.**

a. **NCSL Summit participation.** Brenda distributed the draft NCSL Summit schedule and noted there are 6.0 hrs. scheduled for staff sections. She asked whether the EC is interested in coordinating sessions with NALFO and/or LSSS. The EC discussed the merits and timeslots being proposed. Dale, Katrin and Karl will not be at the Summit. The EC agreed to:

- Cosponsor the Compensation Analysis session (Tue, 8/19 3-4pm)
- Meet as a committee on Tue, 8/19/14 4-5:30pm [next EC meeting]
- Skip the Weds 7:45-8:45 timeslot
- Cosponsor the Forecasting session (Thu, 8/21 3:45-5:30)
- Cosponsor the Powers of the Purse session (Fri, 8/22 9-10:15am).

General concurrence that we are happy to cosponsor as much as possible.

b. **LSCC update** – Wayne reported the last LSCC meeting was in Austin.

- i. **Super-PDSs discouraged.** LSCC staff section chairs do not prefer “super-PDSs” because of the logistics. NCSL also wants us (NLPES) to send the agendas for our last two PDSs to the chair of the relevant LSCC committee to see whether cross-training would be good.
- ii. **Dues.** Some staff sections pay dues (e.g., the Clerks & Secretaries). Brenda noted that only two staff sections pay dues, ASLCS and NLSSA, and this is because each existed before NCSL and have been grandfathered in as the only sections that are allowed to charge dues.
- iii. **Webinars.** Wayne said that per Karen Hanson, there is plenty of money (e.g., \$1,000 per) for webinars; staff sections are highly encouraged to submit ideas to NCSL and NCSL will handle the majority of the details. There is a webinar on writing coming up on 4/25/14. Lisa noted this webinar should be listed on our website along with the Stenersen writing webinar. Wayne commented that LSCC is also still working to get the Turcotte webinar redone.

c. **Ensuring the Public Trust offer from OPPAGA.** Lisa reported that Kathy McGuire (Florida) wants to know if we want OPPAGA to redo the *Ensuring the Public Trust* (EPT) publication. The committee agreed EPT is a good resource and is happy for OPPAGA to redo it if it is willing to do so. Lisa said she will let Kathy know.

d. **2015 PDS location and out-year locations.** Greg volunteered that Denver is willing to host, and maybe in the (old) longer format (i.e., 3 full days rather than 2.5 days). Wayne said Utah could do 2016 or 2017; but he is willing to push back a year, so as not to be right next to Colorado. Per Marcia, SC is a possibility, but we might not want to do that so soon after NC. She noted that SC hosted the PDS in 1993, but it was not held in the capitol city; next time, the PDS would be held in Columbia (it was too difficult scheduling a conference in a city the hosts do not live in). Rachel offered that Hawai'i is still open

to hosting and could do so in 2016. The group discussed the issue that, regardless of the economy, perception is always going to be a problem for Hawai'i, as some will always view it as a junket. Nathalie said that Virginia might be interested in hosting, but timing is an issue as late September/October are the busiest months for VA. If VA held the PDS, it would have to be earlier, like beginning of September. For 2015, 2016, and 2017, the Summit will be held the first part of August. Dale offered to explore again the potential of California hosting.

Potential sites

2015 – Colorado [agreed – see below]

2016 – South Carolina, Hawai'i, Virginia

2017 – Utah (or 2016). Per Wayne, UT is quite interested but happy to wait until 2017.

Greg offered that on behalf of OSA (Office of the State Auditor, Colorado), he is authorized to invite NLPES to hold its PDS in Denver in 2015. **The committee unanimously agreed to hold the 2015 PDS in Denver.** Greg said he will explore ways to advertise the 2015 PDS site at the 2014 PDS.

- e. **Date and location of next meeting.** At NCSL Summit in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Tuesday, August 19 at 4:00pm).

- 8. **Adjourn.** There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm.