



**Science Board Business Meeting @ APHA Annual Meeting  
November 8, 2009  
Philadelphia, PA**

**Minutes**

Present: John Santelli (Chair), Michele Bloch, Miryam Granthon, Stephen Hargarten, Sonja Hutchins, Omar Khan, Christy Lawson, Geraldine Perry-Allen, Rosemary Sokas, Joan Stelmack, Stan Weiss, Toni Yancey

Absent: Elizabeth Bancroft, Vicky Cardenas, Gilbert Gee, Camara Jones, Suzanne Kupiec, Maureen Lichtveld

- I. Call to order and introductions. John welcomed new member Toni.
- II. Minutes Approval. Spring meeting minutes approved. It was requested that draft minutes are distributed as soon as possible after the meetings while thoughts and ideas are still "fresh".
- III. Overview of Science Board Charge. At the request of new member Toni, John gave a brief overview Science Board activity: 1) To ensure scientific integrity of APHA policies (both membership-driven and staff-initiated); 2) Recommend themes for the annual meeting. 3) Promote activities that stress the science in public health, including scientific sessions at the Annual Meeting.
  - a. Stephen asked about the developing APHA Center for Public Health Policy and working relationship with Science Board. Tia will work with Sue Abramson (policy director) to have her Speak with SB members at spring meeting.
- IV. Examination of Policy Process.
  - a. General consensus among SB members that the process could be improved; highlighted by recommendations from the Medical Care section upon appealing for one of the policies.
  - b. SB members noted were the stark differences between APHA's policies/policy process and those of medical and other public health associations.
    - i. Geraldine noted that at times APHA is able to take a position beyond/more radical than other agencies (i.e. FDA)
    - ii. Omar noted the pros of having an open forum, but suggested that a note from leadership on the priority policy areas would be helpful.
  - c. Also consensus among SB members that many policies lack scientific integrity and SB recommendations are often ignored.
    - i. Joan mentioned the contention among JPC members in taking SB recommendations. She also questioned the need for two separate meetings of the JPC and SB. She recommended one collaborative meeting and science board reviewer for every policy.
    - ii. Geraldine noted that a standalone SB meeting is necessary for consensus among SB and take strong science recommendations. She also stressed that SB chair should emphasize to the JPC whether or not policy has scientific integrity. Joan rescinded her recommendation.
  - d. Many SB members expressed the need for authors to receive all review comments
    - i. Stan recommended that primary reviewer from SB should synthesize comments and a section for this should be apart of review form.

- ii. Michele brought up the important role of the sections in reviewing policies; Geraldine noted that in the form approved 4 years ago there was a field to input if the policy was approved/endorsed by a section. Tia will try to locate previous activity and work with staff to create new review form.
    - iii. Stan – input from sections is necessary; staff should circulate list of policy priority areas, identify those areas relevant to section leaders.
    - iv. Sonja recommended SB synthesizes section comments and sends them to authors; increase visibility of science board. John reiterated this point saying SB should be vigilant about getting reviews to authors.
    - v. Michele noted that the culture of APHA allows for authors to cherry pick comment to benefit passing of policy; APHA's policy process is very "bottom up". John suggested an educational opportunity.
  - e. Recommendations
    - i. SB would like policy improved and defers to previous comments and document prepared by Chair.
    - ii. Science board reviews should go to authors.
    - iii. Rosemary suggested the SB have presence at the intersection council; SB Chair should be on the agenda at the Saturday meeting.
    - iv. Michele-if APHA does not want to require authors to obtain approval of a section/SPIG before submitting a proposed policy, it might consider recommending that authors to seek section/SPIG approval, and inform the SB/JPC whether or not they were able to do so.
    - v. Geraldine- There should be a session on scientific writing; Tia suggested making a webcast/podcast/ CDC presentation available/mandatory before policy process initiates.
- V. Executive Board Review from John: Budget not quite balanced; membership decline; Annual Meeting pre-registrations at 10,500 (higher than expected); and additional 2,000 expected to register onsite.
  - a. Miryam asked about requirement of Exec Board to contribute; Geraldine noted mention of efforts to increase contributions from Governing Council.
- VI. 2010 Planning
  - a. JPC – John, Joan, Michele, Sonja, (Omar as an alternate)
  - b. 2012 Theme Subcommittee – Miryam (Chair), Stephen
  - c. 2010 Scientific Session Subcommittee – John, Michele, Rosemary, Sonja<sup>1</sup>
- VII. Other Business
  - a. Announcement of Spring Meeting: April 19-20, 2010 in Washington, DC.
  - b. John recognized the service of departing Science Board members: Geraldine, Stan, Deborah and Suzanne.
- VIII. Adjournment

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<sup>1</sup> In subsequent meetings, the subcommittees were revised as follows: JPC-John, Michele, Sonja and Rosemary; 2012 Theme: Miryam, Stephen, Toni, Vicky and Elizabeth; 2010 Scientific Session: John, Maureen, Omar and Camara.