



**Executive Board Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2026
Virtual Meeting**

Present

Melissa (Moose) Alperin, EdD, MPH, MCHES
Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Jessica Boyer, MPH, MSW, *Vice Chair*
Monique J. Brown PhD, MPH, FGSA
Shontelle Dixon, MPH, CHES, *Chair*
Aaron Guest, PhD, MPH, MSW
Brett R. Harris, DrPH
Claude A. Jacob, DrPH, MPH
Robin Kimbrough-Melton, JD
Laura Rasar King, EdD, MPH, MCHES
Megan Weil Latshaw, PhD, MHS
Cynthia N. Lebron, PhD, MPH
Ashley S. Love, DrPH, DHSc, MPH, MS, CPH, CHC
Nandi Marshall, DrPH, MPH, CHES, CLC, CDE
Anas Khurshid Nabil, MPH, MSPH
Shirley A. Orr, MHS, APRN, NEA-BC
Donna-Marie Palakiko, PhD, MS, APRN
Kaye Reynolds, DrPH, MPH
Jimmie Smith, MD, MPH
Melissa Toledo-Ontiveros, MA, MCJ, MPA
Deanna J. Wathington, MD, MPH, FAAFP
Brittan Williams, MPH, CHES

Unable to Participate

Gopal Sankaran, MD, DrPH, MNAMS, CHES
Cathy L. Troisi, PhD, MS

Monday March 9, 2026

Welcome & Roll Call – Shontelle Dixon, MPH, CHES, Chair

- **Approve Meeting Agenda**
- **Approve Consent Agenda**
 - **New Agency Members**
 - **APHA Leadership Appointments**

APHA Board Chair Ms. Shontelle Dixon called the meeting to order, called roll and established a quorum. Ms. Dixon requested a motion to approve the Executive Board’s March meeting agenda. The motion was moved by Ms. Boyer and seconded by Dr. Smith, and with no further comments, a vote was called.

Motion: To approve the Executive Board’s March meeting agenda.

Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

Ms. Dixon then called for a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda which included the New Agency Members; and APHA Leadership Appointments. The motion was moved by Dr. Alperin and seconded by Dr. Marshall and hearing no discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a vote.

Motion: To approve the consent agenda. Items on the consent agenda included New Agency Members; and APHA Leadership Appointments.

Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

At the conclusion of the vote, Ms. Dixon introduced the next agenda item.

Governance Update – Jessica Boyer, MPH, MSW, Vice Chair

- **Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures update**

Ms. Boyer shared that during the March meeting, the Governance Committee reviewed edits to the APHA Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures document, which is reviewed at a minimum of every three years. Its last review was July 2024. It is anticipated that the next version of this document will be brought to the full Executive Board in May 2026.

Ms. Boyer also reminded the Executive Board that at its January 2026 meeting, the board took action to remove the Socialist Caucus’s recognition due to not meeting its MOU obligations (e.g., submitting a membership roster indicating 25 current APHA members) for multiple consecutive years. The Socialist Caucus submitted its membership roster to



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

APHA prior to the letter informing them of the board’s decision. The roster was submitted late. Ms. Boyer presented three options to the board:

- Uphold removal of the Socialist Caucus’s APHA recognition.
- Rescind the Executive Board’s decision and allow the Socialist Caucus to continue its recognition but reinforce sanctions as outlined in the MOU for the Socialist Caucus and other Caucuses that have submitted rosters late or not at all during the most recent submission period.

The board had extensive discussion. A motion was made by Dr. Guest to uphold the removal of recognition of the Socialist Caucus and submit the letter to the Caucus; and seconded by Dr. Jacob. After additional discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a vote.

Motion:	To uphold the removal of recognition of the Socialist Caucus and submit the letter to the Caucus.
Outcome:	Did not pass.

A motion was made by Mrs. Boyer and seconded by Dr. Latshaw to rescind the Executive Board’s decision and allow the Socialist Caucus to continue its recognition but reinforce sanctions as outlined in the MOU for the Socialist Caucus and other Caucuses that have submitted rosters late or not at all during the most recent submission period. Hearing no additional discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a vote.

Motion:	To rescind the Executive Board’s decision and allow the Socialist Caucus to continue its recognition but reinforce sanctions as outlined in the MOU for the Socialist Caucus and other Caucuses that have submitted rosters late or not at all during the most recent submission period. Caucuses that didn’t meet the submission requirements outlined in the 2025 MOU will lose 1 session at the 2027 Annual Meeting.
Outcome:	Approved by acclamation

Evidentiary Review Committee – Appeal Hearing

- **Thomas (Tom) Doker, DVM, MPH, DACVPM (Epi.), CPH, Chair Elect; and Melissa Bartick, MD, MS, MPH, MCH Section**

Ms. Dixon introduced the next agenda item. Dr. Bartick shared with the Executive Board that the MCH Section submitted a policy brief titled “Maternity Care Deserts: An Urgent Public Health Problem in Need of Multipronged Solutions” which was rejected by the ERC. The Section has been trying to submit this policy (now “brief”) since February 2024. In 2024, they missed the deadline; in 2025, APHA did not accept any submissions; and in



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

2026 the Section used the wrong format resulting in the brief being rejected. Dr. Bartick attended the board meeting to appeal the ERC’s decision. She stated the policy/brief’s submission history and shared the importance of this topic. At the conclusion of her presentation, board members asked Dr. Bartick questions with Dr. Guest reminding Dr. Bartick and the board that appeals are intended to address procedural irregularities not the importance of specific topics. Dr. Doker then had an opportunity to address the board in his role as the ERC Chair-Elect. The board then asked Dr. Doker questions. Hearing no additional discussion, Ms. Dixon, thanked Drs. Bartick and Doker for attending the Executive Board meeting.

Ms. Dixon called for a motion for the Executive Board to enter a period of executive session to further discuss the appeal. The motion was moved by Dr. Marshall and seconded by Dr. Alperin and hearing no discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a vote.

Motion: For the Executive Board to enter a period of executive session.

Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

After additional discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a motion for the Executive Board to exit the executive session. The motion was moved by Dr. Marshall and seconded by Dr. Jacob and hearing no discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a vote.

Motion: For the Executive Board to exit the executive session.

Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

A motion was then made by Dr. Guest and seconded by Dr. Marshall to deny the appeal. Ms. Dixon called for the vote.

Motion: To deny the appeal.

Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

Ms. Dixon introduced the next agenda item.

Association Update – Georges C. Benjamin, MD, Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Benjamin began his presentation sharing with the Executive Board his personal history with Rev. Jesse Jackson. He then asked for a moment of silence to remember Rev. Jackson. Dr. Benjamin shared reminders of the following three upcoming events:

- National Public Health Week: April 6-12, 2026
- Policy Action Institute: June 9-10, 2026, + Optional Hill Day on June 11, 2026



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

- APHA 2026 Annual Meeting & Expo: November 1-4, 2026
 - Submission Deadline for Abstracts: March 28, 2026

Dr. Benjamin shared that the Association is ahead of where it was last year in both booths sold (up by 37) and abstracts submitted (up by 215). Registration and Housing will open on June 1 (and May 28 for VIP and Disability).

Dr. Benjamin provided updates on APHA's advocacy efforts. This included litigation to:

- Challenge unlawful funding freezes and executive overreach (National Council of Nonprofits v. OMB; APHA v. DOGE)
- Defend science-based vaccine recommendations (AAP v. RFK Jr.)
- Push back on improper grant terminations and mass layoffs (APHA v. NIH; AFGE, AFL-CIO v. Trump)

Other advocacy activity includes:

- APHA and several health leaders say endangerment finding repeal disregards health harms.
- APHA and others sue EPA over illegal repeal of climate protections
- Discussion of the harmful health impacts of aggressive immigration actions

Legal actions include:

- Defend challenges to EPA's clean cars rule via Clean Air Task Force
- Defend challenges to EPA's clean trucks rule via Clean Air Task Force
- Defend EPA's updated Mercury and Air Toxics standards via Southern Environmental Law Center
- Opposed industry challenge to stay EPA's rule for greenhouse gas emissions from the power sector via Clean Air Task Force
- Petition challenging EPA's Part 1 chrysotile asbestos rule via ADAO lawyer
- Amicus Briefs
 - Support the CMS Medicare Rx drug negotiation rule
 - Preventive health benefits of ACA
 - EMTALA challenge
 - Medicaid enrollee access to reproductive health care from their provider of choice
 - West Virginia appeal on vaccine mandates

Dr. Benjamin discussed the AJPH's webinar (State of the Public Health Union); coordination meeting of national coalitions that support health; Families USA Health Action Conference; Dr. Susan Polan's participation at the Stand Up for Science rally; and work that Dr. Celeste Philip is doing on behalf of APHA.



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

Dr. Benjamin also shared a graphic entitled “Confidence in Custodians of Public Health” making the point that non-profit organizations are trusted to provide the public with truthful information about public health.

The board engaged in discussion with Dr. Benjamin. Hearing no additional discussion, Ms. Dixon introduced the next agenda item.

APHA Strategic Plan Update – Monique Brown, PhD, MPH, FGSA, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee; Celeste Philip, MD, MPH, Senior Public Health Advisor – Health and Medical Affairs; Liz Scott, PhD, Chief Executive Office, Brighter Strategies, LLC

Dr. Scott provided the board with a brief overview of the APHA strategic plan, five strategic priorities, and the 2025-26-year long road map. She then staff driven nature of the plan’s implementation sharing that each strategic priority has an associated workgroup which meets on a regular basis; all APHA staff members serve on a workgroup; each workgroup has a team lead and a senior staff liaison; Brighter Strategies team works closely with each workgroup based on need; and the Executive Board Strategic Plan Committee provides guidance when requested. Dr. Scott then discussed each workgroup and 2025-26 year-to-date successes.

Report of the Treasurer – Shirley Orr, MHS, APRN, NEA-BC

Mrs. Orr provided a FY 2026 financial update as of January 31, 2026. Mrs. Orr reported that the total revenue is \$18,936,005 (77% of budget), which is under budget by \$215,075 and under prior year by \$103,955. Total expenses are \$18,152,731 (67% of budget), which is under budget by \$137,699 and over prior year by \$91,965. The areas of revenue shortfall include convention revenue; book sales; advertising; and subscriptions, fees and royalties. The Association has exceeded projected revenue in the following categories: contracts and grants; miscellaneous; and interest income. Prior to the board’s next meeting, the FY 2027 Budget documents will be available for the board’s review. This document includes budget by strategic goals; historical budget to actual; where it comes from and where it goes chart; budget by line item; budget by functional areas; list of unfunded items; list of funded items; and pending grant proposals.

Mrs. Orr ended her presentation with the following takeaways: board members can anticipate that FY 2027 budget will require the use of reserve funds to meet the needs of the association; APHA staff are working to conserve resources where possible without compromising mission and outcomes; the use of reserve funds will be strategic; membership, annual meeting, publications are key areas; and board engagement is essential.

Report of the Speaker of the Governing Council – Aaron Guest, PhD, MPH, MSW



Due to longer discussion than anticipated on other agenda items, Dr. Guest pointed the board to meeting materials for Speaker updates. Of note:

Mid-Year Meeting

- Monday, June 8, 2026, 2-4:30 p.m. ET
- Deadline for Agenda Items: March 31, 2026

Governing Council Orientation

- Orientation 1: APHA Structure and GC Roles and Responsibilities, March 17th, 1-2 PM Eastern
- Orientation 2: Parliamentary Procedure, May 14th, 1-2 PM Eastern

Proposed Policy Brief Listening Sessions

- Proposed Policy Briefs Public Hearing #1, March 24 and 25th-Time TBD (will be publicized by 3/11)

Governing Council Speaker Series #2

- GC Speaker Series #2: Proactive Member Unit Engagement, April 16th, 1-2PM Eastern

Caucus to Forum Transition Process: The process has been delayed due to competing priorities, staffing constraints, and ongoing discussions. We received feedback on draft materials from three Caucuses and partnered with Membership Affairs to identify governance challenges and opportunities, key needs, and pathways forward. We met with the ISC to discuss transitioning Topical Committees to Forums. The ISC has since assumed leadership of the process and is collaborating with Membership Affairs to advance the proposed changes. We will meet with Caucus Collaborative Leadership next.

APHA Ad Hoc Committee to review the APHA Code of Conduct and the APHA Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures: The committee has held two meetings. Linda Rae Murray was elected Chair and Tom Kane was elected Vice-Chair. They requested clarification on the language that created the Ad Hoc Group which was provided

To establish a study group for the Governing Council to review the Code of Conduct and policies and procedures and to make recommendations to the GC prior to the AM 2026. Results: Adopted (Yea-110 (68%); Nay-51 (32%).

Dr. Moose Alperin has agreed to serve as the liaison between the Executive Board/Governance Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee. The committee has broken up into three working groups:



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

- Working Group 1: Create an instrument that can be used by APHA Staff to summarize allegations and outcomes under the APHA Code of Conduct in a manner that does not expose details.
- Working Group 2: Create a schematic flow diagram of the steps created in the APHA Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures.
- Working Group 3: Conduct a brief scoping review of similar organizations and their Policies & Procedures.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment – Shontelle Dixon, MPH, CHES, Chair

Ms. Dixon made announcements. And called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Dr. Jacob and seconded by Dr. Marshall. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Dixon called for a vote.

Motion: To adjourn meeting.

Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the APHA Executive Board will take place May 3-5, 2026, in Washington, DC.