

**Massachusetts Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators**  
Annual Retreat—August 8, 2011 at *The Connors Center, Dover Massachusetts*

***In attendance:*** Bernie Pekala\*, Kendra Lider-Johnson, Gail Holt, Meaghan Hardy Smith, Bonnie Quinn, Jen Schott, Kimberly Gargano, Robert Coughlin\*, Amy Stewart\*, Colleen Burke, Christina Coviello, Iris Godes\*, David Janey, Amy Johnson, Patricia Reily, Donna Kendall, Alex Gonzalez, Jillian Glaze, Lori Moore\*, Kathy Osmond, Pam McCafferty\*, Catherine Ryan\*, Migdalia Gomez\*, Joanne Dashiell, Beth Feinberg Keenan, Cathy Nelson\*, Aaron Clark-Melcher, Debbie Gronback, Leah Barry\*, Melissa Metcalf\*

***Absent:*** Christine McGuire\*, Kori Ferris, Dan Forster, Kerry Davis-Jacob

*\*Voting Members*

**10:05 a.m.** Meeting Started

**President’s Remarks, Bernie Pekala\***

- Bernie introduced Susan Connel who gave history of The Connors Center.
- Bernie introduced the Executive Council Goals for the Year
  - ***Advance the Art and Science of our profession (with students, families, administration, elected officials and government officials)***
    - It was discussed to add: “Colleagues on campus” and “off-campus”, which can include general public
  - ***Increase engagement of members***
    - Lori Moore asked if there is “anyway to evaluate that”.
  - ***Continued commitment to high quality, cost effective training and professional development***
  - ***Update the Association’s strategic plan***
- Group completed the “Group Activity” (“Zoom and Re-Zoom”) led by Meaghan Hardy Smith and Bonnie Quinn as part of the “Welcoming”
- Introductions occurred
- Committee Structure
  - Similar to last year, committees reports will be submitted as outlined below:

<b><i>Committees (Melissa Metcalf)</i></b>	<b><i>Committees (Pam McCafferty)</i></b>
CEED College Goal Sunday Conference Development Early Awareness EASFAA	Government Relations Graduate and Professional Concerns Membership Communications Professional Development & Training (PD&T) Technology
<b><i>Committees (Iris Godes)</i></b>	<b><i>Committees (Christine McGuire)</i></b>
Award	Strategic Planning
<b><i>Committees (Bernie Pekala)</i></b>	
Finance Nominations	

- Bernie announced “Just the Facts!” is now part of PD&T.
- Meeting Structure
  - Report one week before Exec Council meeting
  - Use same format as last year
    - Word Doc
    - Include committee name, and goals and objectives on the report
    - Report is cumulative and every single month should appear in the document that is sent to Melissa and Pam, with the most recent month listed first
    - Bernie will distribute the template
    - Technology tries to post reports the week before the Exec Council
    - Electronic distribution, paper copies aren’t distributed at the meetings
  - If you want to be on the agenda you need to notify Melissa or Pam when you distribute the minutes. Anything over 5 minutes is a “long discussion”.
  - Gail encouraged members to put themselves on the agenda to take advantage of expertise at the table.
- Ground rules agreed upon at the EC retreat
  - Tents are color-coded: blue are for voting members.
  - Everyone is encouraged to participate
- Length and Location
  - 3 hour meetings (10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the Month
  - September, October, November, December, January, February, March, May and June
    - Excluded April, tentatively will schedule December, June will be tied into Year-End Event, November in Patriots Place (day before conference)
  - Booking Wellesley College for all meetings but Gail and Iris will work on trying to find two days for Worcester meetings
- Quick Parliamentary Review:
  - Keeper of the rules- Iris Godes, President Elect
  - Reasonable Robert Rules
  - Raise hands or name-tents

**11:40 a.m.     Discussion to start the meeting**

**11:42 a.m.     Break**

**11:58 a.m.     Meeting resumed**

**Government Relations: Patty Reilly & Donna Kendall**

- Committee hasn’t met
- Maintaining Goals and Objectives as the same from last year
- State House Day- worked with AICUM and public schools
- MASFAA bought the cookies that students brought to legislative aides
- Fall big project- Conference sessions –asked for input on topics and suggestions for resources.
- Discussion about looking into software that would help members communicate with the legislature (similar to what AICUM uses).

### **Graduate and Professional Concerns (GPCC): Jen Schott & Kimberly Gargano**

- Committee will meet in September
- Will continue with Symposium in January
- Presenting two or three sessions at Conference
- Discussion about all-encompassing Financial Literacy Resource kit

### **Past-President: Gail Holt on behalf of Christine McGuire\***

- Nominations/Elections
  - Elections kick-off in November
  - will need nominations very soon for offices, Treasurer (3 year term), President, Rep-at-large.
  - Nominations are encouraged

### **President-Elect: Iris Godes\***

- Awards
  - Bernie mentioned MASFAA is looking for 4 or 5 nominees, encouraged Exec Council to make nominations
  - Need to remember to order the plaques
  - Public Service Award might be hardest, last year was the first-recipient.
  - Nominations are emailed directly to President-Elect
  - Past award recipients are all online.

### **Secretary-Migdalia Gomez\***

- Edits were made to May minutes
  - “Motion to accept amended minutes” was made by Bernie, and second by Cathy N. Motion passed with 10 votes to accept the minutes.
- June minutes were accepted as they were

**12:32 p.m. Lunch**

**1:36 p.m. Meeting resumed with Bernie turning the floor to Cambridge Hill Partners**

### **Cambridge Hill Partners: Ed & Jen**

- Distributed “Strategic Planning Initiative- August 8, 2011” PowerPoint presentation
- Gave background on Cambridge Hill Partners
- Have 3 or 5 key strategic priorities that would guide MASFAA’s work
- Cambridge Hill Partners will:
  - hold focus group today, and with past members,
  - attend November 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference to perform interviews with membership
  - summarize everything in a Planning Brief
  - work with Council to develop a plan
- Broke into groups discussion: see Cambridge Hill Partners Section on pg. 6

**3:33 p.m. Bernie called for a break.**

**3:50 p.m. Meeting resumed**

### **Secretary-Migdalia Gomez\***

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- Passed around contact list/ will send updated contact list
- Inventory inquiry: MASFAA stationary
  - Create electronic template with MASFAA logo to replace letterhead?
  - Lori Moore will forward a copy she created
  - Christina Coviello will lead effort in designing electronic letterhead template
- Edits to handbook:
  - Remove year in body of the handbook and use dates in header or footer only
  - Christina Coviello will find out if we archive older versions
  - Bonnie Quinn will get current membership numbers to Migdalia
  - Add Christine McGuire to Past-President list
  - Updating “website” consistently throughout
  - Leah and Migdalia each have one copy of the mailbox keys. Keys will officially be passed to Secretary and Treasurer unless someone is in closer proximity to mailbox.
  - Gail following –up with Tony Erwin to get voicemail login information.
    - Iris Godes motioned to eliminate voicemail
    - Melissa Metcalf seconded motion
      - Leah will follow-up to make sure that FAFSA Day will still have a phone line and how many calls we have received in the past
    - 10 members approved, no opposed, no abstained.
    - Bernie – Motion passed
  - Newsletter committee is changed to Communications Committee in handbook
  - Change language about letterhead in handbook to electronic letterhead.
  - Electronic letterhead will be made available to Exec council and committee chairs upon request.
  - Newsletter published two times per year
  - Changed conference location selection example to past-tense and removed “fall”
  - Editor of MASFAA newsletter will be updated to “Members of the Communication Committee”
  - Past recipients of MASFAA volunteer of the year updated to Joanne of PD&T and Alex G Early Awareness
  - Updated handbook will be distributed to exec council to review

### **Treasurer’s Report: Leah Barry\***

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- Budget is under \$16,000
- Distributed copies of MASFAA’s budgets
- Submit any pending invoices to Leah by Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>
- Walked us through budget
- MASFAA made state supported gift to NASFAA and it will be made its own category.
- Discussed reimbursement process, turn around time is usually twice a month.
- Pam made a move to accept treasure’s report; Iris second motion. No discussion. 10 yes votes. Motion passed

### **Committee to Enhance Ethnic Diversity: David Janey**

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- Hopes to meet in September
- Has draft of Committee Goals and Objectives
- Thinking about a name change- reenergize and refocus- fold into mix a few other concepts
- Catalyst to spark conversations about issues affecting higher education

- Potential name change: Access, Inclusion and Diversity (AID)

**Monday's homework:**

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- Bernie will distribute template and reminder about [www.freeconferencecall.com](http://www.freeconferencecall.com) and Doodle.com
- Aaron needs pictures, elected members can use the same pictures from last year.  
[Aa.clark@neu.edu](mailto:Aa.clark@neu.edu)

**4:59 p.m. Pam motioned to adjourned, Cathy second. No discussion. 10 yes.  
Bernie adjourned the meeting.**

## ***Notes from Discussion led by Cambridge Hill Partners***

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- Broke into groups to discuss: **What organizational strengths and assets that can be leveraged moving forward?**
  - Diversity of members
  - Small State with a lot of colleges
  - Strong volunteers
  - Offer a lot of training opportunities
  - Strong relationship with NASFAA
  - Great resources
  - Strong networking relationships
  - Legislative community
  - Strong financial assets/money well managed
  - Common mission
  - Concentration and longevity of institutions
  - Expertise within the membership
  - Passionate members
- Broke into groups to discuss: **What organizational challenges and opportunities that can be leveraged moving forward?**
  - Current membership structure (individual vs. institutional)
  - Possibility of revenue loss
  - Developing alternative ways for memberships to become involved (other than committee)
  - Can be seen as intimidating, and clique
  - Challenge to gain more members – see them at Annual Conference but nowhere else.
  - Mentors
  - Support from leadership to become involved
  - Getting information to everyone especially non-Exec Council members
  - Have more of a presence in the media
  - Volunteer structure of organization
  - “Building bridges” – internally and externally –
  - Protecting financial resources
  - Challenge to be heard on a state and federal level
  - Challenge to get new people involved
  - Time-commitment restraints- takes away time from real jobs
  - Timing not consistent with different organizations
  - Cuts in training budgets
  - Diversity at times makes it hard to reach consensus
  - Visibility and exposure of financial aid office on campus
  - Volunteer nature of MASFAA – personal versus professional volunteerism
- Broke into groups to discuss: **What are some trends we need to be cognizant of because they might affect our future?**
  - Immediate response
  - Focus on job and not on education
  - Communication through technology
  - Need to understand financial literacy (parent level)
  - Greater accountability within your office on how you are spending your money or your time.
  - Increased costs but less funding—doing more with less.

- Ultimate consumers—families that will complain until they get what they want
  - Demographic shift—families we will be serving will be different
  - Students shifting where they are going.
  - Financial impact on enrollment.
  - Feeling of entitlement
  - Value vs. Cost of Education
  - Vendor relationships within our industry
  - Communicating with students and families— what's next?
  - Financial aid isn't just financial aid. More similar to financial planning.
  - At risk-populations require more time, resources, expertise, etc. thus they tend to be cut off from getting the help they need.
- Broke into groups to discuss: ***Two new ideas that may be out-there but there is something exciting about thinking about them.***
    - MASFAA establishes its own financial literacy institute
    - MASFAA becomes New England Association
    - Free membership and training
    - Professional certification
    - Have every high school of Massachusetts assigned a MASFAA member to be their go to for financial aid
    - Educate every high school counselor about fin aid
    - Have MASFAA determine Pell eligibility
    - Have MASFAA have paid staff-NASFAA model
    - Create mandatory financial literacy program for parents as they file their taxes
    - Create MASFAA scholarship to those going into the profession
    - Create peer review program to serve as internal consultants for each other.
- **Information/Data Needed**
    - Discussion about increasing engagement and developing a measurement tool to evaluate engagement
    - What are other organizations doing? – New York, Pennsylvania, SASFAA,
    - Potential financial options
    - Other funding sources
    - What does the membership want us to do with our money?
- Cambridge Hills Partners asked Executive Council members to write on index cards: ***What are three top strategic initiatives you personally want the new strategic plan to entail?***

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***In attendance:*** Bernie Pekala\*, Leah Barry\*, Gail Holt, Meaghan Hardy Smith, Bonnie Quinn, Jen Schott, Joanne Dashiell, Robert Coughlin\*, Amy Stewart\*, Colleen Burke, Christina Coviello, Iris Godes\*, David Janey, Amy Johnson, Donna Kendall, Kori Ferris, Jillian Glaze, Lori Moore\*, Kathy Osmond, Melissa Metcalf\*, Migdalia Gomez\*, Catherine Ryan\*, Kerry Davis-Jacob, Beth Feinberg Keegan, Catherine Nelson\*, Aaron Clark-Melcher, Debbie Gronback, Alex Gonzalez, Kendra Lider-Johnson.

***Absent:*** Christine McGuire\*, Dan Forster, Pam McCafferty, Patty Reilly, Kimberly Gargano

\*Voting Members

***9:40 a.m. Bernie started the meeting***

***College Goal Sunday: Joanne Dashiell, Beth Feinberg Keenan, Migdalia Gomez\****

- Steering Committee meeting is being held on August 19, 2011
- Looking to work more closely with faith based organizations
- Seeking to reinstate the scholarship program
- More responsibility for Site Coordinator to market their event
- Utilizing expertise of Steering Committee more
- Hosting simultaneously events while CGS is occurring
- Sites will need online access as all surveys need to be completed online
- Requiring that sites have Co-Site Coordinators
- Site Coordinator contracts have gone out
- Discussion about scholarship proposal
- Cathy Nelson and Beth will seek professional advice regarding liabilities around scholarship
- More exploration needs to given to the scholarship proposal and brought back to MASFAA
- Idea to use email database to market to other students

***Conference: Meaghan Hardy Smith, Colleen Burke, Jillian Glaze***

- Committee has already met at Patriot's Place
- Draft of logo was distributed "Achieving the Balance- the Art and Science of Financial Aid"
- Two full days: One day "Art" day and one day "Science" day
- Second day- Jeff Baker
- Joe Russo- Director of Student Financial Strategies at Notre Dame
- Justin Draeger- President of NASFAA
- Two hotel options \$79 in Holiday Inn (has a shuttle) and Sharon Renaissance \$185
- Sessions have been chosen
- Technology will email MASFAA listserver to seek photographers to take pictures of MASFAA events (not just Conference).

***10:21 a.m. Chipmunk entered the meeting***



### **Early Awareness: Alex Gonzalez, Kendra Lider-Johnson**

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- Looking to
  - expand more
  - reduce number of booths to improve quality
  - involve parents more either during day or at a night event
  - have more MASFAA members volunteer
- Last year it was a challenge getting more participants in Springfield's Carnival of Learning
- November's carnival will be in Holyoke
- Spring's carnival will be in New Bedford
- Gail suggested expanding the get involved link on homepage would link to volunteer opportunities
- Will speak with committee about creating a pilot program where each member would be assigned a high school to work with.

**10:54 a.m. Break**

**11:13 a.m. Meeting Resumed**

### **Development: Lori Moore\***

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- Considering reaching out to consultants
- Vendors have many options to explore
- \$2,000 vendor fee (same as last year) and potentially 1 comp (discussion tabled)
- Budgeted for 12 vendors this year, hoping for more
- EASFAA has master list of vendors
- Conversation about MASFAA creating a vendor survey
- Discussion about creating an attendee list to post on website

### **EASFAA: Gail Holt**

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- 2012 conference hosted in May in Maryland
- 2013 conference in Massachusetts
  - Keep Gail posted on volunteering for EASFAA 2013 Conference Committee
- President's focus on Veterans Affairs and Processing
- EASFAA considered changing membership from individual membership to institutional membership. Due to by-laws institutional membership has been tabled until further notice.
- Hill initiative to bring two EASFAA members to visit the Hill; EASFAA will pay for trip—more information to come.
- Financial Aid Day will continue this year: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in October annually. This year Wednesday, October 19, 2011.
  - Day will be added to the MASFAA calendar and email will be sent to listserver
- EASFAA was going to create a list of training programs for regions

### **Membership: Amy Johnson & Bonnie Quinn**

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- Updated membership goals
- Monitoring unpaid membership and expired memberships who have not renewed
- Seeking new committee members
- Over 750 members as of March 2011

- As of yesterday: 300 paid members 199 registered but not paid
- Remember to remind committee members to register and pay for membership; recommended that you contact membership to find out if members are paid
- June 1<sup>st</sup> start processing new membership.
- July 1<sup>st</sup> official start of the fiscal year and start term for Officers and Co-chairs.
- September 1<sup>st</sup> switch to new database
- Discussion about sending emails to non registered members in August reminding them about membership

### **Communications: Christina Coviello & Kori Ferris**

- Distributed committee members to Co-chairs
- Discussion about developing a Press Kit
- Cathy Kedski is working on archiving materials that are in her basement
- Will reach out to Co-chairs about liaisons
- Discussion about members volunteering but not being assigned
  - Requested that date members volunteer is listed on excel sheet

**12:30 p.m. Break for lunch**  
**1:12 p.m. Meeting Resumed**

### **Professional Development & Training: Kerry Davis-Jacob, Kathy Osmond, Dan Forster**

- FISAP Friday August 19<sup>th</sup>
- Over 30 members and more are being added
- Emerging Leaders and Just the Facts! merged under PD&T- Incorporate all three groups together
- Goal to diversify committee members
- Opportunity to have better more focused special topic sessions
- NASFAA has two trainers dedicated to New England area
- Recommendations to
  - train current leaders that never attended Emerging Leaders but are in position of leadership
  - present a “Building your technology toolkit” session
  - have a training on “Buddy to Boss” for members that go from co-worker to supervisor
- Suggestion to provide listserv with a tentative calendar of events
- Keep membership informed of structural changes to committees

### **Technology: Aaron Clark-Melcher, Debbie Gronback**

- Updated goals and objectives
- Potentially will have 5 new members
- Researching new technology options for MASFAA
- Will assign technology liaison to each committee—CC chairs in all emails to liaisons.
- Requested that committees submit last 10-11 report if haven’t already done so.
- Continue to update Technology about members, and objectives also requested:
  - Updated committee lists
  - Upcoming meetings

- Headshots
- Updated Policies and Procedures document
- Will work w/Noetic to enhance volunteer button and membership
- Discussion about mobile app and/or a QR code that links to MASFAA website. Will continue to research more ideas.
- Discussion about listserve and changing your email
- Discussion about adding a FAQ to the website

### **Unfinished Business**

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- Bernie will write better emails
- Monthly emails to the community after Exec Council meetings
- Resource list of expertise-Developing mentor/referral service/database for those seeking help
- More PR especially regarding award winners getting press out,
- Connecting with high schools- resource for them.
- Outreach to colleges-Open to expanding to new members - level of involvement vs. not involved
  - Discussion about trial free membership- 1 year one-time
- Invite more members to EC meetings as all ideas are welcome
- Social activities- comfort level in meeting people in a social setting vs a structured more threatening setting
- At the conference introduce yourself to at least 2 people you don't know and report at the next meeting
- Meet new members or 1<sup>st</sup> time attendees, exec council, emerging leaders (sm. Group social event)
- Maintain vendor count- bring in more- something special with those individuals

### **Committee Homework:**

- Check that current committee members are paid.

### **Bernie's Homework:**

- Monthly report template to Pam and Melissa
- Letters
  - Website
  - Conference
  - Vendor
- Summary of EC meeting & invitation to Exec Council
- President's Welcome

### **New Business**

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- What are the ramifications of voting by email? Table until next meeting.

**2:40 p.m.      *Closed meeting—Motion to close by Lori, Melissa Second. 9 in favor.  
Motion passed***