

Massachusetts Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

February 14, 2014 at 10:00 am

College of the Holy Cross

Worcester, MA

In attendance: Donna Kendall*, Michael Albano, Kathy Anderson*, Diana Beaudoin, Aaron Clark-Melcher*, Christina Coviello, Joanne Dashiell*, Beth Feinberg Keenan, Alex Gonzalez*, Jeremy Greenhouse*, Katie Kelsall, Kelly Morrissey, Lynne Myers*, Cathy Nelson*, Bonnie Quinn* (by phone)

Absent: Meredith Barnhart, Jeff Bentley, William Buescher, Karensa DiFonzo, Vy Doan Callahan, Jennifer English*, Alexis Fishbone, Ryan Forsythe, Iris Godes*, Migdalia Gomez, Meaghan Hardy-Smith*, Christopher Hart, Jennifer Keenan-Jolie, Carla Minchello, Kathy Osmond, Christine Padgett, Amy Proietti, Kate Rajbhandari, Lori Seuch, Amy Stewart, Darnell Stowers, Susan Sullivan, Lisa Talbot, Janet Turner, Stephanie Wells

*Voting Members

Meeting Started: 10:10 am

Secretary's Report: Cathy Nelson*

- Minutes from January meeting were emailed previously.
- Meredith emailed corrections to FAFSA Day report and Donna provided corrections at the meeting.
- Lynne motioned to approve the January meeting minutes with corrections, seconded by Joanne, unanimous in favor, 0 abstained.

Treasurer's Report: Donna Kendall* on behalf of Jennifer English*

- Jennifer emailed reports earlier.
- Donna called for questions. There were no questions regarding the Treasurer's Report.

Past President's Report: Donna Kendall* on behalf of Iris Godes*

- Donna presented Iris' report on her behalf as Iris was receiving an award from College Board. Congratulations!
- Election results announced.
 - President-Elect - Jim Slattery, Northeastern University
 - Treasurer - Katie Kelsall, Harvard University Division of Continuing Education
 - Member-at-Large: Graduate/Professional School Representative - Diana Beaudoin, Boston University School of Law
 - Member-at-Large: Career/Technical/Proprietary School Representative – Colleen Russo, Porter and Chester Institute
 - Member-at-Large: 4 Year Private Representative - Roxanne Dumas, Wheelock College
- Thank you to all nominees for running.
- Nominating committee notified all of the candidates. Just fewer than 200 members voted. Last Year we had 250. Associate member was not up for vote so it may account for the decrease. Of the 797 members, 25% voted. On par with other years but still disappointing. Aaron commented that if someone changes employers and changes their email for membership it does not automatically transfer to the listserv. It is a separate change. Donna suggested that mail a notification to members of the separate changes. Beth asked if we can send an email to the membership using the membership emails instead of the listserv to let people know that it is a separate email change. Jeremy asked if we can add a note to the membership page noting that

people need to make the additional change. Lynne agrees that we need something to prompt the second email change for those changing their membership information. Mike said that Technology Committee will add a message/alert. Alex asked if the sector representatives could send an email to their sectors reminding them to vote. Lynne asked if voting will be the same time frame.

- Iris' report noted that the Graduate/Professional School Representative voting had a low turn-out. Donna checked and 70 members identified as Graduate/Professional. Almost half of the members who identified as Career/Technical/Proprietary voted. Once elections opened everything went smoothly. Membership was making updates to memberships that had blank sectors. Iris thought that the timing of the election process to secure nominees starting in August was time-consuming as each candidate is asked one at a time and we push to try to get it all done by the Conference. She thought this was a reason to move to elections to December/January. Many candidates who did not run said they were interested in future. Con is momentum from conference. Donna asked for feedback on timing. Lynne thought that the closer to the conference the better due to momentum and suggested that we work on two or three nominees at a time and first two to say yes, would be the nominees. Lynne suggested that we allow voting at the conference and provide 'drink ticket' or another incentive to vote. Jeremy suggested entrance in a raffle. Jeremy said that people can even vote through their smart phones. Jeremy agrees with Lynne regarding the conference momentum. Jeremy agrees with the sectors but is concerned that we have a very small number of Career/Technical/Proprietary to run. Asked if we can change by-laws so that if there is a low number, we can change it to generalist. Donna indicated that Iris actually had the difficult time for the 4-year private candidates. Lynne thinks the change in the Emerging Leaders program should address the low number of people willing/able to run. She hopes that expanding the Emerging Leaders program will help with the number of candidates. She also indicated that we included in the by-laws, if we cannot find a candidate, the position would be a generalist. Beth indicated that we had a problem this year but that it may be because it is a new process and if their sector representative can increase membership in that sector, it may be easier. A low number that is engaged may not be an issue finding candidate. Donna highlighted Lynne's comment that our process may be inefficient in that we wait for a candidate to get back to us before pursuing the next candidate. Alex asked if we gauged the 200 voters as to when they voted. If they voted when we first opened vs. toward the end. This may help us tell if there is additional momentum from conference.

President's Report: Donna Kendall*

- Donna explained that AICUM was trying to get aid folks to meet with Senator Donaghue regarding student debt. On January 27, Donna Kendall, Jim Slattery, Iris Godes and Eileen O'Leary met with Senator Donaghue. Iris was great addition as she was the balanced voice from a public college/university given that the others attending were from private colleges/universities. Rich Doherty from AICUM opened by giving statistics regarding state aid provided to students. Good conversation. Rich from AICUM tried to get feedback regarding the direction of the sub-committee. Early financial literacy and state tax benefit for saving in 529 plans seem to be Donaghue's direction. They think final report will address these issues. The Senator's staffer, Emily Lockhart, is very knowledgeable of state aid issues and aid directors attending were given her contact information for further comments.
- Eileen O'Leary sent email to MASFAA regarding NASFAA award. She also liked the pamphlet Government Relations developed for legislators for award. The paper may not be finished in time for this year so may nominate for next year's award.
- Donna asked about article from Chronicle regarding how schools explain the financial aid application process on their websites and if it impacted any schools. Justin Draeger reached out

to all the schools in list on behalf of NASFAA to let them know that NASFAA is trying to get meeting with the Department of Education and Senator Cummings to meet regarding the article. Justin heard from many schools thanking him for reaching out and indicating that they are updating their websites to make it clear that students only need to file a FAFSA for federal aid. Justin included the amount of aid that schools on the list provide to their students. Feedback was that the Department of Education was most likely not going to pursue this issue because most schools updated their websites. Donna is interested in seeing Senator Cummings reaction to the updates made by the schools. Donna suggests that for the conference, we have session on how we communicate certain information on our websites to make sure that we are above board. Lynne thinks that the session should be geared towards how financial aid has to cover other requirements and cannot have it in cute marketing language. Lynne asked about the loan indebtedness sessions and if they talked about how the message in the news about loans scares our target populations (low income). Emily Lockhart asked about shopping sheet and Iris pointed out that one-size does not fit all. Emily talked about having different shopping sheets for different types of schools but they did not talk about the loan message being in the news.

Conference Committee Report: Donna Kendall* on behalf of Conference Committee

- Donna presented the Conference Committee's report. End of year Conference Committee meeting feedback. Last meeting they talked about survey results and trying to plug holes. The venue will be in Lowell at the UMASS Lowell Conference Center, November 13 and 14 (Thursday/Friday). The MASFAA Council meeting will be held there on November 12. The contract is signed and they seem to be really good to work with. Kathy A. said new location will have more vendor space and traditional conference/session space. Hotel is half dorm but we will have the hotel half. We will be the only group. The hotel has 31 rooms for us and there is the Courtyard Marriott near. Those staying in the hotel will have complimentary parking but on-site parking is only \$8 a day for those commuting to the conference. Kathy A. said survey results indicated that people wanted more food/heartier fare. Food this past year did not have the same quality as past years.

GPCC's Report: Diana Beaudoin

- GPCC held symposium last Friday. They had 65 attendees. Preliminary review of evaluations showed positive results and they are working with presenters to get presentations online. Meeting next month to go over evaluations and start talking about next year. Donna thought keynote presenter, Steve Hughes, was great on giving presentations. Katie agreed that symposium was great.

Government Relations' Report: Lynne Myers

- State house day is Monday, February 24. Donna is making the cookies to be passed out. Stephanie will help Donna wrap and tie cookie bags. Donna is making cookies for cost. Emails have been sent. House Speaker DeLeo and Senator Linda Dorceno Forry will speak. Bookmarks have been ordered. Katie explained that Early Awareness is also working with Anthony to order additional bookmarks for Early Awareness. Reaching out to get schools to attend. Jeremy asked if we could put State House Day on the MASFAA website calendar.

PD&T Report: Christina Coviello

- PD&T is meeting next week. Jim Briggs presented at Wellesley College last week. His presentation in Worcester was moved to February 19 due to inclement weather. They have not received any feedback from attendees regarding date change. They have a waitlist if attendees cannot make the new date.

FAFSADay Massachusetts' Report: Kelly Morrissey

- FAFSA Day held successful events at 26 locations. One was affected by weather and had to be rescheduled. The other event was a virtual FAFSA Day and could not be rescheduled. They have six more FAFSA days remaining; mostly at community colleges. So far, January numbers are similar to last year. Hoping February dates will push numbers higher than last year. FAFSA Day held a press conference regarding Senator Warren and FAFSA Day. Big event with really nice FAFSA Day football jerseys. This week National College Goal Sunday is promoting nationwide event to get students to complete the FAFSA. Would have been nice if National event was before our primary event. Some from steering committee may volunteer for national effort. Began looking for new chair as Migdalia is rotating off. They have been working with Kathy A. to appoint Keith Curtis as new chair in charge of marketing for FAFSA Day. He has already begun working with Migdalia. They will be looking at sites to renew contracts for next year right after they complete February events as publications are delayed by site contracts not being returned in a timely manner. They expect to begin site contracts in March. In addition to press releases and other free opportunities for publicity, they spent \$615 on Facebook campaign and increased their number of likes which generated buzz. They are well staffed for February sites but if people will still like to volunteer, they are welcome. Donna experienced a high school site that seemed to have a preference for students from their school. She asked if others had a similar experience. Joanne was concerned that if they are focused on their students, they may not be promoting the program outside their school. Joanne suggested looking at regional/technical high schools that have a regional focus. Kelly received feedback that in many cases, students are savvy at completing forms online including the FAFSA. They will come to FAFSA Day after already having filed the Profile. Donna wants to make sure all attendees feel welcome.

Old Business:

- Donna requested that we continue discussing membership fees. She explained that the handbook of standing rules says that membership dues are payable to treasurer of \$50 or annual amount recommended by the Executive Council but voted on by membership. Other states range from \$25 through \$75. MASFAA dues have been \$50 for at least ten years. We have lost revenue from vendors, we are trying to cover conference/trainings, etc. on a reduced budget and costs have increased for food and sites. Wanted to throw out having two fees, one for Associate members and one from colleges. Donna asked for thoughts on having different fee structure. Aaron thinks we should not be the most expensive and stay around \$60 or \$65. She is not sure if it makes sense to cause uproar over an additional \$10 to \$15 per person, but with 800 members, it adds up. Lynne said we will get pushback but if we provide list of reasons for increase focusing on the additional/innovative training opportunities, we may reduce negative feedback. Kathy A. asked if we would consider a flat vendor rate for Associate membership. Lynne thinks we may get more revenue if it is a flat fee for vendors. Donna clarified that it would not be an organizational membership for vendors. Kathy A. suggested that we look at a budget using possible vendor membership to see if we would need to also increase individual membership dues. Kathy A. is thinking that if we use this year's budget and determine how vendor membership would change overall budget. Katie agrees that we should not be the most expensive nor raise dues needlessly but given our size and schools included, a higher fee may be justified. Mike was concerned about timing in announcing increase as schools have to budget. Joanne wondered if as we are looking at opportunities throughout the year for vendors to sponsor events/trainings to increase revenue. Christina commented that if we have vendor sponsorship for programming, some members may not be able to attend due to their college's rules on accepting

gifts from vendors. Donna liked Kathy A.'s idea of doing mock budgets before proceeding and will move it on to the finance committee.

- Donna indicated that schools hiring new employees wanted former employees' memberships transferred to their new employees. After checking the handbook, Donna and Carla notified the institution know that even though the institution may have paid for the membership, it is the individual's membership. Donna recommended that we make the handbook clear regarding the individual membership.
- Donna revisited the idea of a late spring membership drive. Christina and Lynne indicated that their schools would not consider late memberships. They would wait for renewal/regular membership drive in June. Donna looked at schools that may not have members. She thought she would have good information today, but school name is free form text on the membership form and members list the names of their schools differently. She will provide additional information at a later meeting to discuss membership drive.
- Donna wants to revive conference registration scholarship. Requests thoughts and suggestions on how to create process to award registration scholarship for next conference. Lynne is not sure how to assess a school's ability to cover a registration fee. Katie asked if we have done this in the past. Kelly remembers that we had one but did not know the process or why it was discontinued. Kathy A. asked if it would be something for which someone would apply. Kelly said that it was applied for and chosen with the recipients of the awards. Donna was thinking that nominations can come from the individual or someone else familiar with their situation. Kathy A. thinks that timing would be close to the conference like calling for nominations in September. Joanne asked about having free conference registration as a raffle for signing up for membership. Use it as an incentive. Donna said it would need to be worked in to budget.

New Business:

- Alex announced that the Year End Event has been set for Jerry Remy's in Boston near Fenway in the Dugout Area of the room. Date is Wednesday, June 11. Redsox will be away. Working with them on food options. Looking at 4:00 to 7:00. Asked what media needs will be needed (i.e. microphone). Donna wants to look at a different way to thank and recognize volunteers without having to talk over everyone. Joanne asked if we could use screens to list the names of volunteers. Alex will look in to it. Donna said we will need microphone for volunteer of the year.

Aaron motioned to adjourn, Lynne seconded, unanimous vote to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:30 pm