



**PRSA Board of Directors Meeting**  
[Loudermilk Center for the Regional Community](#)

40 Courtland Street, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
July 16-17, 2010

- Officers Present:** Gary McCormick, APR, Fellow PRSA, Chair  
Rosanna Fiske, APR, Chair-elect  
Gerard F. Corbett, APR, Fellow PRSA, Secretary  
Philip Tate, APR, Fellow PRSA, Treasurer  
Michael G. Cherson, APR, Past Chair
- Directors Present:** Lynn D. Appelbaum, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Kathy Nelson Barbour, APR  
Bob Frause, APR, Fellow, PRSA  
Steven Lewis Grant, APR  
Kathryn D. Hubbell, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Donald Kirchoffner, APR, Fellow PRSA (*by phone*)  
Blake Lewis, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Gail D. Liebl, APR (*by phone*)  
Mickey Nall, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Deborah A. Silverman, Ph.D., APR (*by phone*)  
Philip A. Tate, APR  
B.J. Whitman, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Gail Winslow-Pine, APR
- Senior Counsel:** Wynona Redmond
- Guests:** Richard Edelman, president, Edelman PR Worldwide  
Bill Doescher, former PRSA Foundation President  
Art Stevens, APR, Fellow PRSA, managing partner,  
StevensGouldPincus LLC (*by phone*)
- Staff:** William Murray, CAE, PRSA President & COO  
Philip Bonaventura, PRSA Chief Financial Officer  
Karla Voth, PRSA Vice President, Special Events  
Melissa Yahre, Associate Vice President, Membership  
Christina Darnowski, PRSA Director, Research & Project Mgr.  
Donna Jonas, PRSA Executive Assistant & Leadership Project Mgr.

Mr. McCormick welcomed the Board to the July 2010 Board meeting in Atlanta.

## **I. Proposed Bylaw Amendment – APR Requirement for Board Members**

Messrs. Edelman, Doescher and Stevens provided their point of view on opening up PRSA Board leadership to everyone and providing opportunities to engage young people in PRSA. They requested that the PRSA Board support this change. Mr. Edelman also commented that he believes in the APR program and PRSA needs to broaden the marketing of APR.

## **II. President and COO Update**

Mr. Murray spoke about the state of PRSA's business reflecting general economic conditions – although with a lag given the “once a year” payment cycle for most members. Despite this uncertainty, PRSA's business this year remains on a “cautiously positive” track.

PRSA is forecasting to make the 1% financial goal by year end. With respect to key areas, membership headcount has remained flat since the middle of the year – actually increasing modestly at the end of June, for the first time in over a year, and from a revenue perspective membership income is tracking with budgeted goals.

PRSA continues to manage costs aggressively which, coupled with slowly strengthening revenue numbers, has enabled it to slightly beat its six-month net financial goal. For example, sales volume at our Jobcenter exceeded budget in June for the first time since August 2008.

Registrations for Anvils (participants at the ceremony) exceeded budget, and Conference indicators (sponsorships, early registrants, early exhibition commitments) are at or above goals for this time in the event cycle. Apart from remaining focused on the core business, PRSA has taken on a wide variety of projects this year including:

- Chapter Survey Follow Up
- District Dashboards
- APR+M
- Strategic Planning Focus Groups
- New PRSSA Website
- New JobCenter Website
- New Chapter Web Templates
- New Online Membership Application
- New Member Prospecting
- Further Development of the Business Case for Public Relations
- Chapter Bylaw Templates
- Revamping the Diversity Committee
- New Member Welcome Kit
- E-Mail Volume Monitoring
- Standard Chapter Presentation for Board Members
- New Event Registration Process
- New Shopping Cart for Website

PRSA's focus for the second half of the year – apart from managing the business and delivering its initiatives – is on several major projects including International Conference, the Nomination and Election of Leadership, the Leadership Assembly, Strategic Planning, and Budgeting. Finally, in today's business environment there no longer is any meaning to the phrase “business as usual.” Day-to-day operations routinely include efforts to innovate, to cut costs, and deliver benefits in new and different ways. Identifying and implementing new ideas, however, are just the first steps, followed by measuring the impact and adjusting as needed.

### **III. Proposed Bylaw Amendment – APR Discussion Continued**

Mr. McCormick provided an overview of the initiative to remove APR as a requirement for Board service. The Board discussed the pros, cons and options. The Board agreed that Mr. McCormick will provide follow up to Messrs. Stevens, Doescher and Edelman to the effect that PRSA will support the group's efforts to reach out to members and that they must adhere to the organization's policies regarding bylaw submissions. Lastly, that the board supports the same position on this issue as was submitted to the Leadership Assembly last year for consideration.

### **IV. Financial Matters**

Mr. Bonaventure provided an overview and analysis of the dues structure of the organization.

### **V. Advocacy**

Mr. Murray discussed the current state of the advocacy initiative and the outlook moving forward to evolve and enhance the current model by year end.

### **VI. Governance/Leadership Assembly**

Ms. Darnowski discussed the pros and cons of considering popular voting for the organization. Costs to implement would be considerable. Adding to the complexity would be the logistics of contested elections.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Frause and seconded by Ms. Fiske that the PRSA Board table the initiative to pursue popular voting due to complexity, staffing and costs to setup and operate. A position paper will be posted for member understanding. The motion passed.

### **VII. Membership**

Ms. Yahre discussed upcoming improvements in online membership renewal and recruitment; enhancements to benefit delivery, development of leaders, member recognition, and engagement techniques and tactics.

Board Meeting Adjourns.

## **Saturday, July 17, 2010**

Board Meeting Reconvened at 8:30 a.m.

### **VIII. UAB – APR Discussion**

Mr. Lewis discussed accreditation models and marketing tactics, including APR+M and a Tier 1 model focused on young people. Marketing the mark and the program was the subject of a robust discussion among the board.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Ms. Appelbaum that the PRSA Board authorize a task force to work with the UAB to analyze the current APR model and assess actions to enhance its viability and application. Motion passed.

### **IX. Focus Area Discussion**

Mr. Frause led the discussion of Advocacy and the current gap with respect to the strategic plan. Alternatives have been discussed to strengthen the initiative and re-energize the Advocacy Committee and its programs.

Mr. Murray discussed the PRSA "Business Case" initiative and the next phase of the program. Phase one was education of members about the program. Phase two is to take the initiative out to a broader community employing chapters to roll out the plan on a wider basis.

Mr. Tate led the discussion on Communities including mentoring, Section activation and PRSSA. Mr. Nall discussed mentoring including initiatives at the Job Center, College of Fellows and working with other organizations. Ms. Winslow Pine discussed programs and tactics to encourage Sections to step up involvement with Chapters and Districts. Ms. Barbour discussed initiatives with PRSSA including conversion to PRSA and introducing students to relevant Sections like the New Pros.

Mr. Corbett outlined the Diversity initiatives, including strengthening relationship opportunities to reach out to the broader public relations community, sharing best practices among PRSSA, Chapters, Districts and Sections and tracking metrics for progress in diversity at both PRSA and PRSSA.

Ms. Fiske led the discussion on the state of PR education, the initiatives that have been undertaken this year that will continue in the ensuing year, and issues related to lack of practical experience by PhD level educators.

### **X. Strategic Planning**

Ms. Fiske discussed strategic planning and provided an update on discussions with senior-level pros as part of the development of a new three-year strategic plan for PRSA. Key areas of focus should be on Value, Ethics and Diversity delivered through Advocacy, Business Case, Communities, Diversity Initiatives and Education.

### **XI. Foundation**

Mr. McCormick discussed the dynamics of the PRSA Foundation today and their role with respect to PRSA at large.

## **XII. International Conference**

Ms. Voth discussed the status of the upcoming conference. So far 80 professional development sessions are in place, the lineup of keynotes is nearly complete and sponsorships are ahead of last year.

## **XIII. Other Business**

**College of Fellows.** Motion: Mr. McCormick moved for the approval by the Board to accept the list of 2010 candidate recommendations for election to the College of Fellows. Motion passed.

### **Review of Committee Reports and Action Items**

**Motion:** Ms. Barbour moved and Ms. Winslow Pine seconded the approval of the June 3 PRSA Board conference call minutes. Motion passed.

**Motion:** Mr. Tate moved and Ms. Fiske seconded approval the charter applications of Berry College, Mount Berry, GA; Waynesburg University, Waynesburg, PA; Xavier University of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA. Motion passed.

### **PRSA Nomination Process**

Mr. Murray provided an overview of the role of the President & COO in the Nominating Committee process, which will be to monitor only and provide information.

## **IX. New Business**

Motion: Ms. Winslow Pine moved to eliminate notation of late to board meetings as a process. Motion was seconded by Mr. Nall. Motion passed

**Board Meeting Adjourned at 1:19 p.m.**