

Panel on Public Affairs Meeting
October 6, 2017
APS Washington Office of Public Affairs
529 14th Street, NW, Suite 1050, Washington, DC

Members present:

F. Houle (Chair), M. Marder (Chair Elect), J. Wells (Vice Chair, *virtual*), J. Phillips (Past Chair)
R. Bandyopadhyay, S. Bare, M. Barnett, W. Collins, D. Dahlberg, D. Ginley, D. Gross (*virtual*), J. Jasinski, H. Neal, P. Taylor, E. Yablonovitch

Advisors/Staff present:

K. Cole, M. Elsesser, R. Falcone (*virtual*), L. Greene, A. Hu, K. Kirby, G. Mack, J. Russo, F. Slakey

Call to Order

F. Houle called the meeting to order at 8:02 AM.

Welcome, Approval of Minutes

A call for edits to the June 2017 minutes was made. Hearing none, a motion was introduced.

MOTION: *To accept the June 2017 minutes, as presented.*
 (J. Phillips/D. Dahlberg)

ACTION: *The motion passed, unanimously.*

General Business

An update was provided on APS Board and Council action since the last meeting. The Board Statement regarding H-1B visas was approved. There is interest in developing this into an APS Statement in 2018. The proposed statement on gun violence research was not approved, as its connection to the business of the Society wasn't apparent.

Advocacy Update – Lobbying on Federal Science Budget

APS Staff provided a review of the integrated advocacy approach the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) now employs to influence Congress. The newest campaign is centered on an agency suffering from a lack of advocacy in the scientific community – NIST. The OPA is leading efforts to build a coalition in support of NIST science.

National Security Subcommittee

HEU Report; Review & Vote

Study Chair, J. Wells provided a full review of the report, including six key findings and four recommendations. POPA members suggested revising the insets and sidebars to include less technical take-away messages. Vignettes should be rewritten to better capture the major points. The report will be sent out for external review and comment.

MOTION: *To accept the draft report, with today's comments to be considered and implemented before a final version is circulated for an electronic vote, by year's end.*

(D. Ginley/W. Collins)
ACTION: *The motion passed, unanimously*

Statements up for Consideration in 2017

APS Statement 02.1 – DOD Funding for Basic Research

- The statement provides a framework for relevant activities of POPA and PPC and, as such, it was suggested that it remain as written. POPA members suggested some reworking of the language, to bring the statement up to date. There was also a concern raised about the statement's call for an increase in DOD funding.

ACTION: *D. Dahlberg will work with B. DeMarco to make edits for presentation at the February 2018 meeting.*

APS Statement 97.2 – The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

- This statement also continues to serve a purpose for the Society's advocacy efforts and interactions with Administration officials. It was suggested that it remain as written. There was discussion on the intended future of the statement and the possibility of writing an integrated statement, in the future.

ACTION: *POPA unanimously agreed to keep the statement active, as currently written.*

Energy & Environment Subcommittee

Proposed Climate Change Study/Activity

W. Collins presented a proposal for a Green Tech Competition that would help solve current challenges in sustainable energy development and deployment. It would aim to attract teams of students (undergraduate and graduate) from colleges and universities across the country. The proposal included a political outreach component that pairs with the integrated advocacy approach of the Office of Public Affairs. POPA members were supportive of the proposal. They encouraged the subcommittee to consider industry buy-in, organizations currently working in this space, and the incentive for participating (fellowships, cash prizes, etc.).

ACTION: *The Subcommittee will continue to develop the proposal, with consideration of the comments made today, and report back in February.*

Update on Topic of Agrosequestration

E. Yablonovitch provided follow-up information with members regarding the topic of carbon negative technologies. No formal activity is suggested, at this time.

GhG Inventory Update

APS Staff provided an overview of the GHG Inventory and the Committee's recommendations for Scopes 1 & 2 (APS Daily Operations) and Scope 3 (APS Meetings Travel & Investments). Proposals included the consideration of purchasing Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to offset APS emissions, improving buildings' energy efficiencies, including GHG impact in the choice of APS meeting locations, considering offering carbon offsets for meeting travel, exploring ways to improve travel data and models, and engaging investment managers to make greener fund choices.

Ethics Subcommittee

Statements up for Consideration in 2017

The Ethics Statement Working Group provided a review of the work accomplished in consolidating the content of current ethics-related APS Statements and creating more actionable recommendations. POPA was provided an opportunity to discuss and comment on each section of the proposed, combined ethics statement document. Questions were raised about where the document will be housed, whether this would be considered a governing document or an APS Statement, which committee would be charged with reviewing and updating the statement/document in the future, etc. Potential ongoing activities related to ethics were also discussed.

ACTION: *The Working Group will continue to revise the statement document, incorporating today's suggestions, and consider broader actions; they will report back in February.*

Physics & the Public Subcommittee

Update on Open Access/Open Data

APS Staff provided an update on H.R. 3427 and S. 1701 (FASTR bills – *Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act of 2017*). The National Academies of Science “*Toward and Open Science Enterprise*” project was discussed.

New Business

APS Statement 14.1: Undergraduate Research Statement

PPC provided a statement to the APS Board regarding U.S. Student Research Opportunities at World-Class Facilities. It was suggested that POPA take a look at rewriting APS Statement 14.1 to include similar language.

ACTION: *The Physics & the Public Subcommittee will take a look at whether inclusion of new language will capture the intent of the original statement.*

Developing the Board Statement regarding H-1B Visas into an APS Statement

It was suggested that the current Board Statement on H-1B Visas be written as an APS Statement.

ACTION: *The Physics & the Public Subcommittee will take the development of a new statement up in 2018.*

Standing Ethics Committee and Living Ethics Document

A discussion ensued on whether APS should have a standing ethics committee and a living ethics document. Suggestions included looking to how other societies handle ethics infractions, the benefit of including the mentoring community, the importance of having a standing committee, and the advantages of involving younger physicists in the process.

Intersessional Minutes

- Subcommittees continued work on projects via teleconferences.
- The APS Board voted to approve the proposed H-1B Visa Board Statement.
- The HEU Study Committee sent the revised report out for external review and made additional edits based on feedback. OPA Staff reviewed the draft report for readability.

Next Meeting

The date for the next POPA meeting will be February 9, 2018.

Adjournment

ACTION: *F. Houle adjourned the meeting 2:54 PM.*