



**AMERICAN COUNSELING  
ASSOCIATION**  
*counseling.org*

**Governing Council Meeting  
November 19, 2020 | 1-3pm ET  
Conference Call**


**Minutes**

The ACA Governing Council meeting was called to order on Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 1:01 pm ET. The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom. President Sue Pressman presided.

Governing Council members present for all or part of the meeting were as follows:

Sue Pressman, President  
S. Kent Butler, President-elect  
Heather Trepal, Past President  
Mike Walsh, Parliamentarian  
Melanie Drake Wallace, Process Observer  
Judy Daniels, Special Advisor to the President  
Richard Yep, CEO, Ex-officio  
Wendy Killam, Governing Council Representative, AADA  
Donna Gibson, Governing Council Representative, AARC  
Hayley Stulmaker, Governing Council Representative, ACAC  
Stella Beatriz Kerl-McClain, Governing Council Representative, ACC  
Monica Osburn, Governing Council Representative, ACCA  
Marty Jencius, Governing Council Representative, ACES  
Mark Scholl, Governing Council Representative, AHC  
Carlos Hipolito-Delgado, Governing Council Representative, AMCD  
Paige Nicole Dunlap, Governing Council Representative, ARCA  
Elizabeth O'Brien, Governing Council Representative, ASERVIC  
Christine Suniti Bhat, Governing Council Representative, ASGW  
Edil Torres Rivera, Governing Council Representative, CSJ  
Paul Peluso, Governing Council Representative, IAMFC  
Dannette Berksteiner, Governing Council Representative, MGCA  
Seneka Arrington, Governing Council Representative, NECA  
Jane Rheineck, Governing Council Representative, SAIGE  
Jason Marotzke, Governing Council Representative, Midwest Region  
Summer Reiner, Governing Council Representative, North Atlantic Region  
Elizabeth Forsyth, Governing Council Representative, Western Region  
Laura Pignato, Student Governing Council Representative

6101 Stevenson Avenue, Suite 600  
Alexandria, Virginia 22304  
**ph** 703-823-9800  
800-347-6647  
**fx** 703-823-0252



Cirecie West-Olatunji, Treasurer; Leigh Falls Holman, Governing Council Representative, IAAOC; Lisa Severy, Governing Council Representative, NCDCA; Hillary Press, Governing Council Representative, Southern Region were not present.

Others in attendance at the meeting as staff or observers include:

Christian Chan, sitting in as Southern Region Representative (non-voting)  
Anaid Shaver, President's Grad Assistant  
Dave Jackson, Chief Financial Officer  
Natasha Rankin, Chief Operations Officer  
Angela Thompson, Chief Human Resources and Diversity Officer  
Lynn Linde, Chief Knowledge and Learning Officer  
Brian Banks, Director, Government Affairs and Public Policy  
Brandi McIntyre, Governance and Executive Office Manager  
Amy Smith, Governance Administrator

### **Welcome and Chair's Remarks**

President Pressman welcomed everyone to the call and called the meeting to order. Parliamentarian Walsh reviewed Robert's Rules for the meeting.

### **Approval of Agenda**

- It was moved by M. Jencius and seconded by K. Butler to approve the agenda as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Financial Report**

CFO Jackson updated the Governing Council on the financial statements through September 30, 2020. We are about \$233k ahead in revenues from what our budget was projecting. A large part of that is membership dues; as of September, we are about \$100k above what our budget was projecting. We are about \$76k under budget in expenses through September. This leads to a total net operations of \$309k better than what our budget projected. Overall, we are looking very good financially. Yesterday, the Financial Affairs Committee reviewed the October financial statements, and they continue to tell the same story. At the end of October, we are around \$500k better than what our budget projected.

A question was raised regarding whether the insurance payment for the canceled conference was applied to last fiscal year or this fiscal year. CFO Jackson replied that it was applied to last fiscal year (FY2020).

## CEO Update

CEO Yep gave an update to the Governing Council on the following:

- Membership
  - Individuals - As of the end of October, membership stood at 51,688. Last year at this time membership was at 51,476. For the last 6 months we had been experiencing some small gains. In terms of membership, in the past month, it did decrease by about .48%, not something that we are concerned about yet, but we want to watch.
  - Revenue – We budgeted to be at \$2.249m at the end of October. We are at around \$2.375m at the end of October. So, we are doing better than we projected.
  - Retention – Our goal for this year is 62.5%. There was a stabilization at about 65% six months ago, and then a slight increase after that. In September we had a slight decrease of .45%. We are doing okay for right now.
- Financial Health
  - After first four months:
    - Net operating gain is \$380,000 (this is \$500k better than budget).
    - Print and eBook revenues are ahead of where they were last year.
    - Advertising is slightly ahead.
    - Certificate sales are ahead.
    - Affinity programs are ahead.
    - Expenses are under budget by \$154,000.
- Virtual Conference – heaviest lift this year because we are using all new technology and trying to introduce a different type of event for ACA.
  - Overall program framework – We selected a platform that will tie to our learning management system. Long after the virtual conference is over, we will still be using this particular platform because its going to house our webinars and continuing education courses.
  - Registration –
    - Registration was launched on November 17.
    - The tagline is “Wherever You Are, Whenever You Can”.
    - The program will begin on April 5, 2021 and run live until April 30, 2021.
    - Registrants will have the entire month of May to go in to view sessions on-demand.
    - Early registration will run from November 17, 2021 through March 2, 2021 with rates of \$149 for members and \$99 for students. Then on March 3, 2021 the rates will go up by \$50.
  - Education
    - There will be over 400 education sessions offered.
    - Some sessions will have a live Q&A.
  - Features
    - We are trying Live Quick Chats which are 15-minutes live conversations Mondays through Fridays on timely topics.

- Continuing Education
  - Update on 15 fee CE re: Telebehavioral health – We had more than 33,000 counselors sign up for that and we made it available to both members and non-members. From that we got 700 new members and of those 33,000, 15% were new to ACA.
  - Areas of focus/packages – We have produced several ACA educational campaigns and packages this year with topics to include:
    - Climate Change
    - Opiates
    - Self Care
    - College Student Anxiety
    - Counselors of Color & Microaggressions
    - Ethics
- Interstate Licensure Compact
  - Drafting is complete.
  - Advisory Group is reviewing.
  - ACA will be creating a toolkit for members.
  - On track for 2021 state legislative sessions.
  - Goal is ten states opting-in before commission is formed.
  - We've spent \$121,000 and have \$472,000 remaining.
- Government Affairs
  - Advocates – in the first 4 ½ months of the FY we had 757 ACA members who were first time advocates. The total number of actions taken by all of our ACA Advocates is over 1,200.
  - Briefings
    - We hosted a legislative briefing on racism and mental health legislative proposals. We had a bipartisan group of legislatures, staff from state and federal governments, and Aisha Mills who is a CNN political commentator to moderate for us. We had over 1,000 people register for the event.
    - We drafted the post 2020 election analysis, which was posted in ACA Connect.
  - Veterans Affairs – S785, Commander John Scott Hannon Veteran Mental Care Improvement Act of 2019, did pass both Houses and was signed by the President, and we did provide an update to our members. It will do a number of positive things relative to veteran affairs and mental health services.
  - Medicare – In the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress we had more members of the House and Senate cosponsor the bill than ever before. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, the bailout bills, and the Supreme Court Justice Nominee, nothing else was really moving through the House or Senate. We are going to gear up for the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.
  - Rehab – We did confirm Title 38 Hybrid Category with the Department of Veterans Affairs.
  - Coalitions & Partnerships –
    - We partnered with the American Association of Art Therapy and did a legislative presentation.

- We attend NCDA's monthly Public Policy Committee meeting.
    - We met with ASCA so we could agree on how we could collaborate on future policy issues.
  - Looking Forward
    - We are going to develop our strategies for the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.
    - We are going to continue to work on the Interstate Compact.
    - We will be doing a lot of introductory types of meetings with newly elected members of Congress.
- Publications
  - Print – Sales are about \$82k over projected budget. Digital sales are about 9.5% over FY20. We did just negotiate a 20% increase in our Wiley digital book royalties.
  - New releases
    - Distance Counseling and Supervision
    - Suicide Assessment and Treatment Planning
- Social Media – Our goal is to meet or exceed 5% in growth from what we did in FY20.
  - Facebook 125,992 (+3.1%)
  - Twitter 46,738 (-.1%)
  - Instagram 17,406 (+14.6%)
  - LinkedIn 90,415 (+13.0%)
  - Suicide Prevention Month
    - Total impressions 958,000
    - Total average daily reach during that month was 19,000.
    - Total engagement (unique people that came to look at material) 43,000.
- Media and Public Relations
  - Relevance
    - Minority Mental Health Month
    - Updated the ACA Press Room over the last few months.
  - Public Affairs
    - What's a Counselor – public awareness campaign. This was to heighten awareness around the role of a professional counselor. The campaign resulted in around 110,000 impressions and 6,000 points of engagement.
- Partnerships and Affinity Programs
  - Partnerships
    - We continue to partner with PESI and Psychotherapy Networker.
  - Suicide Prevention Month
    - We hosted an event with PESI and Psychotherapy Networker called Treating and Preventing Suicide a Conversation with the Experts. We had almost 3,000 registrants, with an additional 200 placed on a waitlist. The training featured ACA members who are experts in the area.
- Staff Development & Recognition
  - Employee Engagement- We do surveys of our staff every quarter to see how engaged our staff are. Our goal this year is to hit 74%, and we are at 76%.
  - Employee Engagement Activities-

- We volunteered to participate in Alexandria's Holiday Sharing Program where we adopted a family of five and collectively, we raised \$700.00.
- On October 12, we hosted a virtual appreciation luncheon for the staff.
- The Workplace Committee did a virtual Halloween lunch with decorations and a costume contest.
- We did a Zumba class.
- We did a cooking class.
- We did a lunch and learn on Breast Cancer Awareness.
- We closed on November 3<sup>rd</sup> so that staff could vote.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - We had everyone participate in a three-hour workshop on how to be inclusive in the new virtual workplace.
  - The DEI Committee on staff did something on Hispanic Latinx Heritage Month which included all sorts of fun things as well as informative events.
  - We also did a virtual Homecoming Celebration recognizing HBCU's because we have several staff that did attend HBCU's.

### **ACA Office Lease**

CFO Jackson gave a report to the Governing Council on the lease options for the space located at 6101 Stevenson Avenue. Right now, if we do nothing, our lease will end on 11/30/2025. When we signed the lease, we included an option to terminate early if it would be in the best interest of the association. If we choose, the lease will end at 6101 Stevenson Avenue on 11/30/2021, provided we give one year's notice.

About a year ago we started looking more in depth at this option with our real estate advisors.


Right now, we have about 22,000 sq ft in our lease, and when we reassessed what our office needs to be, we think we could have a much smaller footprint and be just as if not more productive with our staff and be more efficient with ACA's resources. Looking at what is available in the DC area with our real estate advisors, we assessed that we would breakeven in five years, and over a ten-to-twelve-year period, we would save ACA between \$1m to \$3m currently to what we are on pace to spend. This assessment was performed for a space with a smaller footprint.

- It was moved by M. Jencius and seconded by E. Forsyth that ACA shall exercise its early lease termination option for the existing office space. The association will fund the financial penalty from Long-Term Reserves.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **MGCA Exemplary Practices Document**

President Pressman reminded the Governing Council that during the last Governing Council meeting it was agreed to send the document to a small committee for some language updates in order to address concerns. A small committee was put together comprised of President



Pressman, Dannette Berksteiner, Mike Walsh, and Richard Yep. The document was reviewed, and changes were made that addressed suggestions.

- The Governing Council voted to accept the MGCA Exemplary Practices document as amended.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Human-Animal Interactions Interest Network**

President Pressman stated that this item is being brought back to the Governing Council after being tabled some time ago pending an evaluation of our interest networks by a work group that was formed by our immediate Past President Heather Trepal. The review of this work group found that Human-Animal Interactions Interest Network affects the practice support area of the strategic plan, specifically area 2.7 which is the area creating communities of counseling specialties that facilitate professional peer to peer discussions leading to exemplary practice.

The previous motion made was to support the statement on emotional support animals as proposed by the Human-Animal Interactions Interest Network.

A discussion took place among the Governing Council.

No motions were made.

### **Anti-Racism Action Plan Task Force update**

President Pressman announced that the Governing Council will hold a special meeting to discuss the Anti-Racism Action Plan Task Force. A doodle poll will be sent to schedule the meeting and will be the only item on the agenda for that meeting.

### **CEO Employment Agreement Review**


The Governing Council went into Executive Session for this discussion by consensus. All staff were asked to leave the call.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, staff re-joined the meeting.

During executive session, the Governing Council discussed the CEO employment agreement.

- It was moved by H. Trepal and seconded by S. Reiner that a new policy be created whereby the Executive Committee is provided with a yearly overview of the CEO's contract for informational purposes. The new policy shall read as follows: The Executive Committee will be provided with an overview of the Chief Executive Officer's contract for informational purposes.

**MOTION CARRIED**

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- It was moved by D. Gibson and seconded by C. Hipolito-Delgado that the above motion be amended to read that the contract be provided to the Executive Committee during their first meeting of the fiscal year.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ACSSW Organizational Affiliate**

President Pressman recalled this item from old business. This organization is interested in becoming an Organizational Affiliate of ACA.

Discussion took place among the Governing Council which included concerns of this organization using this as a steppingstone to become a division.

- It was moved by J. Reiner and seconded by D. Berksteiner that ACSSW becomes an Organizational Affiliate of ACA.

**MOTION WITHDRAWN**

Motion needs to go to Financial Affairs Committee before it can be voted on.

**Climate Change Task Force Report**

J. Daniels discussed the Climate Change Fact Sheet. There were questions about where this document would live, which ultimately staff will determine. The Governing Council did not feel that this needed a motion.

**Human Rights Committee Motion**

Due to time constraints of the Governing Council meeting, the Human Rights Committee Motion will be moved to the next Governing Council meeting.

**Consent Agenda**

- It was moved by C. Hipolito-Delgado and seconded by K. Butler to accept the consent agenda as presented.

**MOTION FAILED**

Concerns were raised about accepting the Consent Agenda and the inclusion of Executive Committee minutes included therein.

**Process Observer**

M. Drake Wallace presented observations from the meeting.

**Adjournment**

- It was moved by C. Hipolito-Delgado and seconded by C. Bhatt to adjourn at 3:08 pm ET.

**MOTION CARRIED**