

**ASPA Buffalo Niagara Chapter**  
**Board Meeting Minutes – February 16, 2021**  
(This meeting was held via Zoom.)

A. Call of the roll: Meeting called to order at 5:35 p.m. We have a quorum. Officers/Board Members Present: Tony Astran, Brian Bray, Makenzie Docteur, Michael Hughes, Chris Jones, Chris Marcello, Rosaleen Nogle, Brian Poliner, Mike Ramos, Gordy Stewart, Ken Stone, and Ray Wagner.

Guests in attendance: Drs. Atta Ceesay, Laurie Buonanno, and Mehwish Sarwari, SUNY Buffalo State; and Christopher Kuwik, member.

B. Approval / Changes to the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda: Chris Jones; Brian Bray seconded; passed. No minutes to approve.

C. SUNY Buffalo State – Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW):

SUNY Buffalo State – Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW): Dr. Ceesay introduced the discussion on plans for PSRW, including 4 panels, one hosted by ASPA focusing on COVID-19 impacts. She introduced Dr. Sarwari who will take the lead organizing the event for SUNY Buffalo State. Current plan is for one day, Saturday May 1<sup>st</sup>. Alternative for smaller times over several nights was discussed, consensus was to stay with one day due to class schedule conflicts. Dr. Sarwari explained the plans are to have one panel at a time and shared a tentative schedule.

Discussion ensued. Tony Astran volunteered to lead ASPA's portion. Chris Kuwick offered to help. Dr. Ceesay mentioned she would reach out to Karen at ASPA national re possible discount memberships for students.

D. Officer Reports

1. President – Tony Astran – filling out annual form for ASPA National
2. Treasurer – Ken Stone – no change, balance remains at \$1,073.96. Tony asked about when last year's rebate arrived. Ken mentioned it came in September and was reduced due to COVID-19 impacts on ASPA finances.
3. Membership Officer – Brian Poliner – will report during the committee reports. Tony noted boardmembers donated to have 10 trees planted in memory of Brian's recently departed mother.

E. Committee Reports

1. Programming Committee

- a. Chris Marcello discussed the Book Club's 1st book: Donald F. Kettl's *Divided States of America* looking at a date in April. Planning to use Ken's Zoom account. Dr. Buonanno suggested non-members/students.

Motion Ken Stone, second Gordy Stewart to open the event to all interested members of the public. Motion passed.

- b. Tony described the planned *Serving as Spokespersons for Elected Officials* Event with PRSA, tentatively the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in March.

- c. Family Feud Fundraiser – Tony discussed planning for this event and thanked board members for responding to his survey. Responses supported a target to raise \$250 - \$500 in support of Northland Workforce Center.
  - d. Dr. Bounanno discussed the PSRW conference presentation she is working on with Dr. Fred Floss focusing on fiscal crises & implications for federalism.
- 2. Communications Committee – Michael Ramos discussed developing messaging for the Spokesperson event; working on a weekly news blast with links to articles of interest; start with the board to test concept and later expand to the membership. Tony reported he created a communications folder in dropbox, including information and sign-ons. Tony made a bunch of updates to the Chapter's website, including officers and committee contacts. Also added a PA Careers page, with links to cities & towns. Tony announced that Gram Bowman was selected to attend the ASPA national e-conference as a Founders' Fellow.
- 3. Membership Committee – Brian Polinar reported that 5 people, primarily new members, attended the committee meeting last week. We now have 32 members on the roster and 4 pending not yet on the list. Hoping PSRW will generate additional members. Looking at holding a virtual “meet & greet” with a program, maybe the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May, reinforcing outreach for potential members attending the PSRW conference, reaching out to PSRW attendees. Looking for help, perhaps from the communications committee, to create a welcome packet for new members.

#### F. Unfinished Business

- 1. Open Board Member Position - Tony reported no change on the open board member position, looking at filling at then next open election.
- 2. Great Lakes PA Journal Update - Brian still having conversations to explore a platform, perhaps with Laurie and Buffalo State.

#### G. New Business

- 1. Upcoming Elections / Annual Meeting – Tony reminded he needs to appoint a nominations committee 60 days prior to the meeting. He suggested including the immediate Past President on the committee and will reach out to Brian Bray.

#### H. Adjournment

- 1. Motion to adjourn Gordy, seconded Rosaleen. Motion passed.  
Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 16 at 5:30 PM via Zoom