

Massachusetts Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
Executive Council Meeting, November 16, 2015
Cape Cod Resort and Conference Center, Hyannis, MA

In attendance: **Shawn Morrissey***, **Michele Kosboth***, Kevin Deruosi, **Meredith Stover***, **Diana Beaudoin***, Ben Parsons, **Jim Slattery***, Brendan Furey, Brooke Barbieri, **Katie Kelsall***, Jill Marr, Emir Morais, **Susan Sullivan***, **Stephanie Wells***, Bonnie Quinn, Jolene Coakley, Anthony Crowe, Keith Dimilanta, **Sabina Yesmin***, **Jamie Dergay***, Ebony Carter, **Kathy Anderson***, Kevin DeRuosi, Shannon Eagan, Josh DeMaio, Wenimo Poweigha

Guests: Monica Blondin (WPI), Kristin Hmieleski (Elms College)

Absent: **Alex Gonzalez***, Kristi Pierce, Bill Buescher, Greg Chick, Brendan Furey, Mike Albano, Alcira Zadroga, Jason Marsala, Christina Coviello

Bold italics * = voting member

Meeting started at 2:30 PM

Secretary's Report: **Meredith Stover***

- Review of minutes from October meeting. No additional updates. Motion was put forward by Susan and seconded by Shawn to approve the October minutes.

Treasurer's Report: **Katie Kelsall***

- Reviewed income and budget information to date. We're a little down in revenue from where we were last year. Membership and conference attendee numbers down.
- Filed taxes on time for the association, transitioned to new computer and software.
- Certificate of tax exemption status updated with the state of MA; need to do this yearly as officers change moving forward.
- Will deliver annual report at annual business meeting (11/18/15)

Comments:

- Jim: conference numbers are lower than we would like – somewhat of a risk going the Cape location. Need to determine – is this still a viable location? Also, a date for the conference at the end of the week might help. Room numbers are higher for the hotel so we did meet those numbers.
- Emir: was the filing date for taxes late?
- Katie: No, deadline was 11/15/15 – taxes for non-profits are due 5 months after end of year.

President Elect: **Shawn Morrissey***

- All set for annual MASFAA awards to be presented on Wednesday, 11/18/15.
- Heidi Gilmore, Chuck Jones' widow, will be present at the ceremony. This is the 25th anniversary of presenting this award – kudos to her for being a part of the presentation and process all these years.

Past President's Report: **Kathy Anderson***

- See update under *Technology Committee* regarding website vendor transition.
- Nominations for 16-17 Executive Council have been submitted – making good progress, Jennifer English is assisting with outreach. Hope to have slate of candidates soon.

President's Report: **Jim Slattery***

- Welcome to everyone from Jim.
- Sits on OSFA Advisory Board, attended recent meeting. Minutes from the end of last year's OSFA Advisory Board meeting mentioned the ongoing issue of notification of denial of MASS Grant awards to students. Jim brought it up

at meeting – MASFAA membership would like more response from OSFA in dealing with this issue moving forward. Maybe we should propose specific language?

Comments:

- Susan: community colleges put something together 6 months ago – not sure where that stands.
 - Shawn: should they eliminate the letter for certain constituencies? For example, graduate students.
 - Susan: perhaps a proposal as to why they should not send the letter in certain cases?
 - Sabina: maybe try a more proactive approach in advance of the 5/1 deadline instead of after the fact.
- Jim introduced guests Monica Blondin (WPI) and Kristin Hmieleski (Elms College) who attended the meeting to present to Executive Council the idea of a Financial Literacy Committee.
 - Monica Blondin: Thanked everyone for the opportunity to present. Is this right for the organization? Let's open it up for discussion. Recently attended the National Summit on Collegiate Financial Awareness in Indiana. The idea is to create a support network to help members promote awareness and programs on their campus. MASFAA is committed to financial literacy – Kathy Anderson sits on the MA Treasurer's task force.
 - Katie: Harvard has a financial literacy program – lots of work but no specific outcomes. Need to keep in mind that we have association members who create/market literacy programs. This would not be creating our own program but supporting efforts. May help to create a greater comfort level among members with certain topics.
 - Michele: Lasell purchases product but have trouble with students opting in to use it. Committee could help many schools with this issue – have purchased a product, now what?
 - Emir: helped to create a program at BU. Part of the issue is catering a product to your audience – different needs for law, medical, etc. Worked with Student Government, IT, and college's communications team.
 - Kristin Hmieleski: consistent messaging to students is important along with gaining reach and buy-in across campus
 - Susan: even with a product, still need to do things on your campus to support effort. Students don't always realize they need it. Would help to learn from best practices at other schools. For many of us, this is an annual goal in our own offices so more information would only help us in that effort.
 - Katie: would be interested in having schools share more information on specific outcomes, not just products or engagement. Can't always have valuable conversations without the right resources at your school.
 - Michele: having documents of outcomes would help in justifying the investment of resources.
 - Jim: are there resources at the state level we could also tap into?
 - Diana: any information available from other state organizations with similar initiatives?
 - Monica Blondin: seems like more initiatives in place at west coast schools. Agreed that the outcomes piece is important – lifelong process, constantly evolving. Debate on how best to measure – some faculty research underway to determine.
 - Emir: hard to measure long term, maybe an annual questionnaire – see what is working short term. Some efforts will work better than others.
 - Brooke: what types of specific sessions? Students or aid professionals? Training our members would be helpful – would alleviate having to come up with your own training on campus. Mentioned the Institute for Financial Literacy as a possible resource (<https://financiallit.org>).
 - Jim: seems like the focus for the committee would be to serve members for now – could be programming for students down the road.
 - Anthony: seems like a great idea, would be some overlap with Professional Development and Training but that has been beneficial in many cases.
 - Katie: sometimes a challenge to recruit new committee members, especially with membership down.
 - Anthony: could be a potential magnet for schools who might not otherwise commit.
 - Jim: do not need an official vote but based on comments, everyone embraces the idea. Will talk offline to determine mechanics of announcement to membership. This is a serious need and somewhat late in coming to New England schools – we have performed fairly well overall in terms of default issues but we owe it to our membership to support them in their literacy initiatives. Thanks to Monica and Kristin for coming to the Cape and presenting to us on this topic.

Committee Updates

Conference: Kevin Deruosi and Shannon Eagan

- Welcome! Number of attendees is lower, 277 as of right now, some issue with website and registration.
- One session presenter is not confirmed. Working on back-up option with Sue Sullivan.

Comments:

- Shawn: Is breakfast served on Tuesday? Not clear on agenda.
- Jim: there is a breakfast on Tuesday with general welcome and lead-in to Megan McClean from NASFAA.
- Katie: maybe an email to the membership would help clarify?
- Jim: reminder that networking and Birds of a Feather sessions will take place until 8:00 PM this evening.
- Michele: some registrations for council members are not processed but have been paid for? Michele, Diana, Brooke, Shawn, Emir, and Keith --- more follow up next week between Katie, Kevin, and Membership to reconcile.
- Stephanie: mentioned that Sallie Mae overpaid one registration?
- Kevin: website issues have been a problem with registration. Also, some shifting of sessions due to schedules. Vendor area looks great.
- Stephanie: 3 vendors are not paid yet. Supplies have been shipped to hotel, can set up any time after 7:00 AM. Tables are selected. \$3K short of \$27,600 goal. Some vendors from last year did not return. 15 in total for this year. Stephanie will provide thank-you notes and candy to vendors. Please be sure to visit the vendors during the conference.

Technology: **Kathy Anderson*** for committee

- Kathy Anderson provided an update for committee.
- Proposal from web vendor expected today. Back up options in place with Noetic for now, will send update as soon as they know more.

Comments:

- Stephanie: Will Jim address website issues during conference?
- Jim: Yes – will provide update. It's been hard getting responses/estimates from vendors – not sure if they don't think we're serious or why they hold back? End result will be worth the effort – this will be beyond a "refresh". Be fair to committee members – lots of heroics in the background.
- Anthony: any change to branding?
- Jim: Not at this time – could eventually consider rebranding options once we have product but not at this point.

FAFSA Day: Keith Dimilanta

- 260 registrants to date, still early – 3,000 last year. On par with where we were this time last year.
- Need a boost in volunteer numbers
- Connecting with guidance counselors, Boston Public Schools – trying to promote via retweets.
- MEFA will offer webinar for families who cannot attend FAFSA Day.

Comments:

- Anthony: With USA Funds no longer sponsoring, need of new sponsor? Good with reserves for now but will need to bridge gap at some point.
- Jim: MASFAA could choose to sponsor again at some point

EASFAA: Bonnie Quinn

- Attended recent EASFAA meeting in Hartford, CT.
- Trying to plan hill visit in DC this spring – reps from Government Relations might attend?

- Lots of discussion about combining efforts on training – some overshadowed by MA and other states. What do states want from EASFAA? Need to re-establish their role. Professional and career development are high on the list.
- States do not seem to want in-person EASFAA training, not enough attendees for recent events. Moving forward with more webinars.
- Has a copy of EASFAA's annual audit – in good financial shape. Will provide copy to Jim to make available to council members.
- Institutional vs. individual membership – would they consider tacking on EASFAA membership with state organization membership? Would be difficult in terms of logistics and tracking. Need to focus more on PR – promoting training and also invite other constituents: business offices, registrar, enrollment management. A broader audience would also bring more attention to financial aid concerns at schools. Perhaps offer new membership categories?
- For the upcoming spring conference, MASFAA typically donates a gift basket representing MA that can be raffled. Anyone have knowledge of what we have done in the past? Shawn suggested a Legal Seafoods gift certificate for \$100. Jim - if someone is attending, an actual gift basket would be nice – more follow up at future meeting.

Comments:

- Brooke: have they considered a survey? Bonnie – not as of now, relying on feedback from state reps to start the conversation.
- Shawn: was previously EASFAA rep years ago. Difficult dilemma since you have such strong states involved – hard to choose EASFAA over state conference if finances are restricting conference attendance and membership fees. NASFAA is yet another option – same issue for schools.
- Jim: EASFAA is making a good decision to focus on schools and training – different niche than NASFAA.
- Emir: Concentrate efforts toward states that might need more help in terms of membership?
- Michele: agreed with more PR efforts – would also like to see MASFAA do more of this.
- Jim: confirmed that some NU attendees to this year's MASFAA conference were not financial aid office staff – lots of overlap opportunities.
- Stephanie: MA Bursars offer membership 2 meetings per year, June and December. They set up day-long trainings with a focused topic – no membership fees. Agenda for each meeting is based on membership input. Not sure they would join a fee-based group and participate in trainings and conference?
- Bonnie: Registrar's Offices are another potential option.
- Kathy: fee-based training? Could invite folks to attend without having to be members.
- Susan: agreed with Kathy – hard to belong to all groups. Community and state colleges also have their own groups to support as well in terms of meeting attendance, etc.
- Stephanie: suggested more targeted invites by EASFAA to various groups.

Membership: Jolene Coakley and Ben Parsons

- Up to date with membership numbers.

Professional Development and Training: Jim Slattery on behalf of Christina Coviello

- All programming is great and on track!

Carnival of Learning: Jill Marr and Wenomo Poweigha

- Fall event was held today in New Bedford, MA.
- Great event confirmed by those council members in attendance! More follow up and planning for spring event at future meeting.

Development: **Stephanie Wells***

- See updates under Conference Committee

New Business:

In reviewing minutes from last year's meeting at this time, need to start thinking about end of year event. Need suggestions for timing, location, type of venue? Have been using public places (restaurants, pubs), NU hosted in 2015. 40 attendees, usually 80-100. Could be a variety of factors – date, location, timing of when we promoted it to MASFAA. Do we try another school location or go back to public space? City vs. suburban location – have not tried suburban location in recent years.

Comments:

- Bonnie: researched many locations two years ago – hard to come up with ideal location that covers many bases.
- Susan: in some years, the event has been tied to other meetings (EASF AA one year for example) – that helps to drive up attendance.
- Stephanie: the Corporate Challenge in Boston was the same date last year which may have impacted attendance.
- Susan: first year of leadership academy graduates this year – could tie in with that?

Diana motioned to adjourn, Michele seconded. All in favor to adjourn at 4:30 PM.