

MEETING MINUTES
21/22 MASFAA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 24, 2021

Meeting started at: 10:11am

Motion to start: Dawn Bachelor

Second: Amy Staffier

Welcome/Officer Reports: Ebony Marsala

- Discussed Robert's rules regarding meeting guidelines in order to have an orderly and successful meeting.
 - Meetings are to begin with a motion to start and a second
 - Motion needed to vote
 - Motion needed to end meeting
 - Raise hand (virtually) when speaking
- Motion to approve previous meeting minutes: May 2021, Retreat, and September 24, 2021 minutes will be available for voting at next meeting.
- Voting members for this meeting are the current, past and future presidents, secretary, members at large. Committee co-chairs are not voting members.

President

- Membership communications will be sent out to members regarding open membership positions. Ebony will be emailing communications to past presidents in order to encourage participation at retreats as presenters. Members will also receive communications encouraging participation in committees and as co-chairs.
- Members at Large communications to be sent out to sectors for recruitment. Immediate need for Member at Large from 2-year public school and from a proprietary school

Finance Committee – no update available

Past President: Monica Blondin

- EASFAA
- Next executive council meeting is scheduled for October 17-19 in Maryland and is open to members virtually or in person. Monica will be attending virtually and will give an update at next MASFAA Executive meeting.
- EASFAA announcement: New York Financial Aid Administrators group will be offering a FAFSA training on October 8, 2021. The training is free to anybody and geared towards helping families complete the FAFSA form. Monica will be sending this information out to the MASFAA community.

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President Elect: Amy Staffier

- Award nominations- will research handbook
- Amy read out loud the guidelines for executive council members. These guidelines tie into conversations had at the retreat around energizing and motivating members. It is important to be advocates, talking up and being visible especially when recruiting new MASFAA committee members.
- Amy is the only member of the Awards Committee
 - 4 awards presented at the conference
 - Achievement
 - MASFAA Presidential Award
 - Edward Kennedy Public Service Award
 - Jack Sheehan Distinguished Achievement Award
- Ebony:
 - An email is sent to a listserv asking for recipient recommendations
 - List of nominees is distributed to exec council for review and voting.
- Monica: re-use established email and send email out as soon as possible
- Sarah and Jeff- created survey form for website

Treasurer: Beth Feinberg Keenan

- No numbers available due to bank system being unavailable
- Half of the committees submitted budget requests. Assuming that committees that did not submit budget, requests are ok keeping budgets the same as it was during the past year.
 - Still ok to request budget changes.
 - Not many changes due virtual events and meetings
- Beth: asked who will be handling the Auburndale mailbox key and mail processing.
 - Ebony: additional vote was supposed to be taken at today's meeting regarding key and updating handbook. Key was supposed to go to secretary but the committee has decided update this rule.
 - Monica: currently has key and will be mailing it to Ebony.
 - Ebony: will have key and will be responsible for mail
 - Beth: should be a check from Edward Jones in the mailbox that needs to be deposited into the MASFAA account. Phone bills, tax information and other checks are sent to the mailbox.
- Beth: Would like to Invite Edward Jones contact to October or December meeting to speak about financial strengths and goals.
 - Ebony: agrees that this would be a great plan. No objections from committee.
 - Beth: asked if meetings will remain virtual or in person?
 - Ebony- meetings will remain virtual

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Old Business

Phone bill

- Ebony: MASFAA receiving phone bill for MCI for landline. Landline was previously used for FAFSA day.
 - Amy: MEFA has been providing phone support for the MASFAA landline and has been answering phones for FAFSA day support
 - Beth: College Coach previously answered phone line. The phone line was routed to College Coach from MCI. We need to make sure that the landline is routed to the new phone service once selected.
 - Mike: will check with Jennifer at MEFA regarding all phone line questions.
 - Ebony: Not urgent to decide right away regarding phone line. Other options will be researched
 - Jeff: phone number is not on the website. Ok with discontinuing MCI service and researching other options.
 - Ebony: continued discussion during next meeting

Storage Unit

- Ebony- storage unit is in Auburndale and will be getting a lock.
 - Jeff: combo lot would be best option
 - Ebony: will get a combo lock
 - Monica: Ben, previously on executive council, had boxes for storage. Monica is currently storing 11 boxes at her home and has gone through and inventoried contents.
 - Ebony: need consistent record keeping, inventorying and ways to bring items to the storage unit. Will look for shelving units to place inside unit

MASFAA President Running Term

- Ebony: there has been previous discussions about that fact that for the past couple of years the committee has not been following the vote that was put forth to membership about adjusting the President's term. Language from the 2018 (or so) vote states only the President's term is impacted and the term will run from July 1st to June 30th. Ebony and Amy will discuss how this vote will affect their presidency terms.
 - Monica: keep in mind elections are normally in November but have been currently running in spring due to delays. Need to keep focus on timing of elections

Cloud Storage

- Ebony: based on committee discussion we will be moving forward with google structure. Ebony will work with Jeff and Sarah on building google shared drive.

Zoom Accounts

- Ebony: committees needing access to the MASFAA zoom account should reach out to Monica.
 - Monice: two committees have requested zoom accounts, PD&T and FAFSA DAY.
 - Monica: will be changing email address to the MASFAA tech email address and billing address to the MASFAA mailbox address.

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- Dan: would like to make sure there is zoom access for upcoming Financial Literacy Symposium on 10/14.
- Ebony: the main zoom account is available for committees to use
- Ebony and Jeff discussed zoom licensing

Updating the Handbook

- Vote on updating the handbook regarding changes we are making regarding the P.O Box key.
 - The Handbook currently reads that the Secretary is responsible, as part of their duties, to take ownership of key with each successive administration and is also responsible for checking the mailbox on a regular basis.
 - This vote is to remove this as a Secretary responsibility and to make it an Executive Council Member responsibility. The Executive Council Member residing closest to the P.O. Box in Auburndale would be responsible for the ownership of the mailbox key and responsible for checking the mailbox on a regular basis.
- Ebony: Verbalizing edit to handbook
- Motion for a vote: Amy moved to motion for a vote
- Second: Monica
- Voting Members:
 - Monica
 - Dawn
 - Lauren
 - Beth
 - Amy
 - Lauren
 - Ebony
 - Received 7 votes to make adjustment, which is the majority. Vote has passed to update the handbook regarding mailbox key and mail responsibilities.

- Ebony: opened the discussion about the possibility of incentives that might encourage people to be committee chairs or co-chairs.
 - Beth: Feels that someone should volunteer because they are passionate about it and they want to do it. Not to receive incentives in order to volunteer.
 - Ebony: Asked for ideas on how to get new members to join a committee?
- Jaron: feels that current members are able to volunteer due to the support of their managers.
 - Awareness is lacking
 - Time commitment can be an issue
 - Could be better at promotional materials and outreach w/in universities in Massachusetts
 - Incentive may be helpful to recruit entry level members, especially younger generation
- Beth: MASFAA could have conversations with management about encouraging employees to get involved with MASFAA and being supportive of employee involvement. Asked if a financial incentive would be a one-time offer or continued?
- Ebony: Discussed benefits of a one-time incentive
- Julie: Financial incentive. MASFAA membership may not be desirable especially since organizations pay for memberships.

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- Lauren: Discussed budgetary issues and a possible lottery benefit for people that are on a committee or a chair. Appeal to higher level people to encourage and support participation as a MASFAA member.
- Jaron: possible 1styr free membership will help get people to join so they can see the value of their MASFAA membership and will want to be more involved.
- Amy: Does not think monetary incentive is a good idea. Doesn't benefit person, but will benefit organization. Referred to directives in the handbook. Personal connections and direct person to person conversations and outreach with letters would be more beneficial than a monetary incentive.
- Dan: Suggest a stipend would assist with removing barriers to entry for committee members in order to help with committee incurred expensive.
- Ebony: Continue this conversation throughout year regarding recruitment ideas and participation. As a group we don't agree incentive is currently a good idea

Break: 11:18- 11:30am

Committee Reports and Goal Setting

FAFSA Day: Mike Goodwin

Mike Goodwin Williams
Jennifer Bento-Pinyoun MEFA
Lindsey Lewis Nichols
Amy Staffier: Simmons
Kris Smole: UMASS- grad student

- Held a site coordinator meeting on 8/19/21. Approximately 24 attendees from across state.
- Virtual session October-February then assess if more sessions are needed
- Sessions will be recorded and used as a resource
- 1st session is scheduled for 10/13/21 from 7-8pm.
- Power point presentation going line through line through FAFSA
- Volunteers available to answer chat questions in zoom
- Question and Answer option at end of session
- 10/18 MEFA will have a FAFSA Festival, breakout sessions for families from 4-8pm. One on one help be will be offered.
- Events November-February. Registrations are available on the website
- MEFA hotline for questions
- Google Site for people to send questions
- Volunteers needed to help with sessions
- November-February sessions will be in Spanish
- fafsaday.org is up and running
- Updated toolbox w/ October session and add a question and answer option
- Amy: Sessions in November, December and January will have breakout rooms attached. Helpful for people to have one-on-one FAFSA guidance

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Access, Inclusion and Diversity Committee: Javon

- Meeting on 9/13 with a focus on event planning and identifying topics that needed attention
 - Student enrollment and concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine mandate
 - Impacting everyone in all aspects of life
 - Impacting school choice decisions
 - Asked how other schools are being impacted.
 - Ebony: No noticeable decrease in enrollment at BC due to vaccination issues
 - Jennifer: spoke with Jason Zeleski- MWCC- issues with student enrollment due to State vaccine mandate. Long Island CC- losing students due to vaccine mandate.
 - Javon: Impact of relationships between vaccinated and non-vac students. There is a dissociation between the groups.
 - Leanne Zemrock- a parent recently removed student from their classes because the student was being ostracized in the classroom due to vaccine issues. Feels vaccine mandate will become a big issue as moving forward.
 - Javon: varying opinions based on vaccine and COVID-19 experiences can cause negative impacts on groups of students. Working on an event that will enlighten people and bring people together.
- Javon: Committee has discussed a financial aid mentoring program.
 - Long term focus on first generation and low-income students and families
 - Conflict of interest with advising/mentoring students from other schools
 - Continuous support with financial aid /wellness counseling throughout a student college career
 - Javon asked the group about possible conflicts this type of program would present
 - Ebony: A mentor calling another institution and trying to advocate on behalf of someone may cause a conflict of interest. The exchange of knowledge or the empowerment of a student to be an advocate or to understand financial aid works will allow students to learn from each other. As aid administrators it would be ok for us to exchange factual information with students.
 - Amy: Difficult to say, great idea, but one concern is to try to take this on when we already have a concern with trying to acquire more volunteers. The MASFAA level of volunteerism is already challenged. Does not feel advising students from other institutions would be a conflict of interest.
 - Javon: Create a task force and it would be committee's responsibility to extend it out.
 - Identify a high school network of guidance counselors that are FAFSA/College Counseling knowledgeable. Concern for conflict of interest. Ongoing project.
 - Amy- asked if this was connecting with high school students and/or current college students
 - Javon- incoming students
 - Amy- another idea is to create framework to provide to schools so that high schools/organizations can pass the information on to targeted student groups. Could also pass on to financial aid offices and organizations that will assist in providing information and support to students.

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Development Committee: Donna

- August- gold/silver level vendor packages for November Conference
- Sent communications to 45 vendors on 9/14.
- Currently have 18 vendors signed up.
- \$19,000 fees invoices pending, 10 have paid by credit card, the remainder have been issued invoices.
- Question for council, is there a plan to go virtual if necessary?
 - Ebony- discussion for conference committee
 - Donna: If virtual, are we willing to refund half of the exhibitor fees for those that have signed up?
 - Ebony: asked if conference committee would share info about current registrations and what indicators would result in a possible virtual conference?
- Julie: Have begun publicizing and offering incentives.
 - Hopeful that people will still be attending.
 - Suggest that members register as soon as possible so there is a better indicator of how many will be attending.
- Monica: Is there a conference refund policy if someone registers for the conference but is unable cannot attend?
 - Many members are waiting to register due to school travel restrictions
- Julie: No virtual back up option
 - Hoping and planning for in an in-person conference
- Donna: questioning if virtual pivot will there be vendor refunds
- Ebony: discussed the possibility of a tiered refund schedule
- Jeff: not aware of refund policy
 - Hold onto checks and can return if person does not attend
 - Registering with an off-line option to pay in order to get registration numbers up.
- Donna: vendors are signing up to vend but not paying right away.
 - November 10th vendor payment due date
- Monica: asked if we have a refund policy for people that are unable to attend?
- Monique: Do not have a refund policy set up. Could look at individual cases.
- Monique: Only planning an in-person conference
 - No plan in place to pivot to a virtual conference for the November Conference
- Ebony: asked if there is no virtual conference option then will refunds be processed?
- Julie: conference committee made necessary adjustments with hotel and the schedule to accommodate a lower attendance rate due to current circumstances this year.
 - Makes sense to discuss a refund policy for future events
- Donna: has had questions regarding cancellations and refunds due to implemented travel restrictions
- Melissa: If conference is cancelled due to COVID-19 then everyone should get a refund however; If a school implements a travel ban shortly before conference, we shouldn't refund for last minute changes.
- Ebony: agreed it makes sense to have a refund policy in writing

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Early awareness: Katelyn

- Now Committee Chair- looking for assistance, event will be all hands-on deck
- In the process of determining if the event should be in person or remote
- Event is in the planning stages and still being researched
- More information should be available next month
- Open to ideas, feedback, and assistance

Financial Literacy Committee: Jennifer Traumann

- Committee met on 9/22/21 to discuss plans for the Symposium
- Symposium will be held on 10/14 and will be titled, Maintaining Financial Wellness Programming in Uncertain Times, Strategy Programming and Compassionate Communication
- Key note speaker: Jason Zaleski, MWCC, Best Practices in the New Normal
- Student Panel of 1st generation students or students who are working on programs for 1st generation students on their campus'
- Mindful Communication (humanizing financial aid). Session title: A Case for Compassion, Leading with Empathy in the Financial Wellness Conversation. Amy, Kevin, Helen
- Virtual Platform
- Dan working on registration link and zoom session
- Leanne is going to make flyer
- After all details are confirmed will be sending out the publication and registration link
- There are 3 sessions on the agenda for the Financial Wellness Track for the November conference
 - Increase number of sessions in order to obtain the certificate from 3 to 4, symposium counts as 2 sessions
 - Would like to recognize 8 people that received certificates last year at the November conference
 - Webinar in the plans for December. Speaker from SNU that has a session on student emergency loans
- Dan: This year the theme is focused on 1st generation students and the urgency for financial wellness for our most vulnerable students.
- Jennifer: will be talking with Diversity and Inclusion for establishing a vernacular that will be helpful when speaking with diverse groups of students.
- Jennifer: sending out recruitment letter- cross referencing previous symposium attendees

Government Relations: Not available

Grad and professional concerns committee: Not Available

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Membership and Technology: Jeff and Sarah

- Events drive membership numbers
- Currently have 291 paid members, new and renewals
- New members from Just the Facts
- Continue to work with committees for page updates
- Keep committee pages updated and current and tech committee will continue to be a resource if needed
- Ebony: Please make sure to keep pages updated and accessible
 - Convey work committee does
 - Committee meeting minutes should be posted on committee pages

PD&T: James

- Just the Facts is happening in October and November
- Sent out first call for participants
- Virtual platform this year
- Spread out over 4 weeks, 6 topics will be presented
- Good presenter response this year
- Lauren and James available to moderate
- Grateful to committee for outreach
- Talks with Robert about tax training in December, virtually. Hard to find location that will allow in person events
- Robert reducing sessions from 4 to 3
- Work with Jeff and Sarah to get sessions on calendar. Sign up will be through MASFAA website.
- Business tax session, smaller audience, will be virtual, share costs with group from another state.

Communications: Leanne

- October newsletter ready to go out next week
- Note from New President
- Plans to keep Facebook updated
- Schedule for current times posts
- Call to action for additional volunteers to add to newsletter

Conference Committee

- Monique: Previously discussed

EASFAA

- Monica: Previously gave EASFAA update

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Members at Large reports

- Ebony- in need of filling 2-year public and career/tech positions
 - Send out communication for recruiting
 - Special Elections
- Jennifer Sheehy: sending letters to cohorts for a call to action for additional volunteers

MISC

- Ebony: Next meeting questions and concerns?
- No other items

- Ebony: Motion to adjourn
- Jennifer Sheehy
- Second: Monica

- Meeting Ended