California Association
CAIR
for Institutional Research

Minutes for CAIR Board Meeting

November 15, 2016

Present: Kristina Powers (President), Ryan Cherland (Treasurer), Kelly Wahl (Secretary), Waddell Herron (Director), Paula Krist (Director), Ronald Lopez (Director), Brianna Moore-Trieu (Director)

Call In: Juan Ramirez (Vice President)

Absent: Bob Daly (Director)

At 10:07 a.m., Kristina called the meeting to order, and after being reviewed, the minutes for the Board's previous meeting passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Ryan presented his financial report. He described how some sponsorship fees were, as of the time of the meeting, still outstanding, but committed by the sponsors.

The balances on CAIR accounts by the end of the months should be around $130-140K. There is but a small amount left to pay for hotel, given what we have paid already. On average our organization earns $20-25K from a conference.

Looking ahead at our expected carryforwards, Kristina highlighted that we could be brainstorming ways to put these funds to use. We could enhance features of the hotel at future conferences to support additional workshops or other professional development activities. We could host entertainment during the reception and otherwise offer more to the attendees. Were we to offer small workshops, we could provide modest remuneration for the presenters, or reduce the conference registration cost for presenters, which could become an incentive that raises the quality of proposals. We could offer something regional for professional development throughout the year – it could be a drive-in event outside the conference. We could potentially bring in a known speaker – one of the more expensive ones – who would be of interest for attendees. Maybe provide scholarships to graduate students interested in IR for their conference attendance – even though we already offer a reduced rate for them, as well as the Sam Agronow scholarship (which could expand). Brianna suggested other types of scholarships, too, which would provide opportunities for recipients to keep up on their professional development: Such

an award could even supplement short term disability or medical leave support, enabling professionals to stay in our field when experiencing challenging circumstances.

The Board's discussion considered a strategic planning effort could inform the endeavors and activities in which we commit our time and money, and would best guide such spending. Regardless, our organization offers a good conference that advances the profession. Bringing new people and presenters to the conference (who wouldn't have been there otherwise) may be the best cause to support as we spend these funds.

CAIR Conference 2016 Final Updates:

Eighty sessions are offered this year. We added two rooms more than usual and will use the ballroom part of the time. Last year we used all the space, but there weren't enough seats in many of the rooms. With more rooms, perhaps we won't have that limited seating problem. The goal was to match each session with the most optimal room size. With so much to offer, people may be challenged to be in two places at once, which is a happier problem.

A couple people who had proposals selected for sessions dropped out. Proposals increased 35% over the previous year. The proposal acceptance rate was high; only a couple proposals were a bad match. Roundtables were used at past conferences, but they were conducted without leaders assigned to the discussion. This time, they were proposed topics, to take place on Thursday. Kristina noted that scheduling of some proposals at the same time may have been an issue for the CSU participants. Trying not to put sessions for the 101 series at the same time was a challenge – as well as scheduling concurrent topics, so that not all survey or assessment options were at the same time.

Kristina used a committee to review the schedule for anything that stood out. We can continue to improve the methodology of the schedule being assembled. It has been hard in the past to guess what would prove most popular, so Kristina asked the committee what sessions attendees from their segment would want most to attend.

The registration desk schedule is set, with one current Board member plus one new member (at least) being scheduled at same time. Tasks include swiping people in, and our registering walk-ins through Eventbrite. Ryan is on the schedule for much of the first day – he has a process for people who come with a paper check. Paula offered that, for the app to work properly, we need each separate person's email address collected during the registration process, instead of the email account of the administrative assistant or other staff who is registering the attendees.

Using the app, check-in goes quickly. Kelly has the name badges, and attendees can assemble their own tags into the badge-holder configuration of their choice. Conference ribbons can be added at bottom of each attendee's badge – such as Board member, presenter, etc.

The Board noted that our "invited session" language has confused people – attendees think they need to be invited to attend the session (and they don't – it was the presenters who were invited).

Each attendee will get two drink tickets at registration, and the Board members will get 10 tickets each to hand out at the reception. Soft drinks are a different ticket, and all tickets are only good for that evening's reception.

We have 350 bags to hand out to attendees, one per person, and some attendees might not take a bag. Bookmarks promoting next year's conference will be on the registration table, too.

Check in begins at 7:00 a.m. tomorrow morning. People headed to segment meetings (especially those leading them) will be at the registration desk first thing. A couple people will bring the bags down to the Tiffany Room in the morning. The Board plans to meet at 6:15 a.m. in the Tiffany Room to start work.

A film crew will be in Gallery Bar today and tomorrow, including the hallway by Emerald Room. The contract with this filming crew was signed without considering our needs and the hotel's prior commitment to us. This change will put our group in an alternative area. The hotel will station people to direct our attendees to the fountain lobby area. The situation does not make the Board happy. The hotel will bring us drink tickets – we'll have 200 tickets. From 6:00 to 8:00 we'll have the reception hosted by current and new Board members – one drink offered per attendee who comes to the reception, not two. Everyone can connect with people who've come early, then go to dinner. We can see how it goes and have people leave for dinner on their own – if no one comes until 7, the reception can close early.

At 5:00 the Board will meet at a good spot and hang out there prior to 6. We did not advertise the free drinks.

Local Arrangements:

Waddell's local arrangements committee assembled a great list of restaurants for attendees, and he thanked Paula for incorporating it into the app. Ronald had a surge of last-minute volunteer facilitators for sessions otherwise unassigned.

Eventbrite:

Brianna noted that 358 attendees registered – and she posed the question as to whether there have been any issues? Any things we should do differently next year? She mentioned that a couple people tried to get student status for part-time study. She found that asking people to sign something saying they were not fulltime employees somewhere dissuaded attendees from claiming the student status when it didn't apply to them.

Ryan suggested embedding a link to the invoice for registration. If attendees must use a purchase order, they must email someone to get the invoice (they register by way of a form being

filled out). Timing of checks can be awkward, too – they don't arrive prior to the conference, etc. Documenting a good process for the invoice distribution would be worthwhile.

With 600 rooms at this hotel, we have been spoiled a bit. Our estimates for room nights have been under in the past when looking for conference hotel sites.

Kristina will add, after the conference, what we should have ordered for food, for our records. We went up to 200 orders for break food this year.

Sponsorships:

Juan mentioned that this year, there are 13 sponsorships total: 7 are at the gold level, 1 at platinum, 3 at silver, 2 at bronze. This tally exceeds last year by one. We had more issues this year than in the past with the sponsor contracts – at least three sponsors wanted to change contract language. We had to go back to legal more than once to check the changes proposed. We need to take a close look at the contract again – as well as other examples of contracts – and talk to sponsors themselves, to better understand what the issues are. Sometimes the situation depends on the particular attorney reviewing the contract for the sponsors. Questions have arisen about what we're offering sponsors in terms of complementary registrations. The Board plans to consider this further next year.

Considering the practices of other regional groups and AIR, the Board may review what it offers sponsors as a package. There could be an incentive to have sponsors sign up early (by offering a break in what they pay?). The people who come to CAIR to represent the sponsors are not the in-house staff that arranges payment. We could, for example, offer comparable numbers of registrations per level of sponsorship, given the count of complementary registrations our regional peers provide.

One sponsor's payment will become a credit for next year – it came in at the last minute. The sponsor can't send someone this year and wanted to back out, and asked for a refund. We don't give refunds, so we arrived at a compromise in hope of maintaining our relationship with them.

After the conference this year, we could offer a discount to this year's sponsors if they prepay by a certain date for next year.

The Board recommended that its directors visit every sponsor to thank them for coming and to ask them if they need anything.

Conference App:

Paula's main note is that we jumped the gun on putting up the app – we should have first solidified the schedule, which can be our practice in the future. We need the presenter list

finalized, and even though the schedule will move some, we can sync all that a bit better next time. It might have had to do with travel plans on the team this time – trying to get it ready early, with pre-testing. The goal in the future can be to let presenters see the schedule for a couple weeks, and then chime in if they won't be available on the day they for which they have been scheduled.

One thing we need to address: The app shouldn't sort presenter names by first name (alpha). Regardless, we should stay with the company, because the app is robust and does what we need. For example, we could post the Excel sheets we needed to post (the local restaurant list), which was a nice feature. Half-way through October is a good time frame for making the app available.

Paula has already experienced knowledge transfer regarding the app, since Bob is leaving the Board. There can be only one person logging in. Paula logs in as Bob. We should try to make the new login something neutral – cairapp @ cair.org. It's truly a one-person job.

Conference Program Construction:

Brianna mentioned that coordinating updates of the app and the conference program would be best, including more conversation as things change. Maybe next year we can have something on the google drive that can be updated by everyone. Currently our process makes it hard to note that someone is a presenter if they haven't yet registered. Waiting to create the program and update the app could eliminate that issue. There were 50 changes – rooms, title, presenter, etc. They had to be handled with the work of several people on the project. It adds up.

Brianna described her great committee for the conference program. There were creative ideas from Ryan, Ian, and Jesse. An app review committee was not necessary, as the program proposal committee checked it out and helped find things to fix.

Ronald implemented the session evaluation surveys as part of the app, using the prior year's Qualtrics form. As a consequence, he was an additional person to loop in regarding schedule changes, as room changes need to be communicated to him as he sets up the surveys. Ron set up our surveys for all sessions – and the overall conference evaluation – in Qualtrics.

Listserv Announcements:

Kristina described how conducting the announcements regarding the conference via MailChimp worked out well. The announcements looked more attractive, instead of being just a bulk email. They were simple to create, too. Kristina saved materials related to this effort in the 2016 folder.

The Dashboard:

Brianna worked on the CAIR dashboard with support from Waddell, Mark Pavlicek, and Michael Le. It was a good group offering valuable perspectives.

Sustainability is Brianna's concern – she wants to make the dashboard easy to update. The primary focus should be to make keeping this current a seamless process. Currently there's maneuvering given the various data sources we have. Since we now use Qualtrics for the evaluation, that data will be coming in differently.

Moving forward, Brianna asked what other data points we would like to add, such as those collected from the registration. The Board is considering items to add.

One other thing: Right now, we have a link on the CAIR webpage that points to the Tableau Public site. Brianna mentioned that it was helpful to have this history when we were looking for the 2018 site – the information was critical in finding the best match for the conference. Accessing these data is paramount. And for sponsors: when they see that it's a large conference (and growing), that attracts them. Looking at reasons people come to conference would be helpful anyway, and we can bring this to the attention of the sponsors. This year's vendors saw the dashboard. The Board briefly discussed migrating to another platform (not Tableau), which was offered by one of our vendors. We are open to ideas – but for now, was are in great shape.

Kristina described how Scott Henley of Rapid Insights asked if their company could partner with us more – he offered a free webinar to the listserv. It was about student success research, a valuable topic to our organization.

Rapid Insights has pledged to be a sponsor already for next year. They have offered in their partnership deal $10K worth of benefits for CAIR. Perhaps CAIR could use the Rapid Insights tool for managing the data we collect for the conference – we could exhibit this use at CAIR events. We could host webinars or have a drive-in conference during the year. The Board agreed that this is a creative way for sponsors to do something different and appreciates Rapid Insight's support. As Brianna works with sponsors next year, she can offer such a premiere sponsorship opportunity to others. Rapid Insights is not requiring us to be exclusive to them.

From Rapid Insights, Sheryl Kovalik visited the Board meeting for a few minutes to introduce herself, to tell the group more about the company, and to describe the company's tools and products.

Information Technology:

Juan talked about our website. This year, it was a matter of gaining the ability to make simple changes – and now we have that option. Some restrictions have come into play. Design of the website remains the issue. We can manage all our page content – update text, etc. – using

Wordpress. Juan, Kristina, and Kelly have been using this content manager. The left-hand navigation of the website, however, is something we cannot access. To make changes to that area of our webpage, we must use the company we hire for web work.

Juan thinks we should look at the website from top to bottom with a committee. Carl is in Juan's office, and he's got web experience. He'll be on our web group. Basically, we need to determine whether we need custom elements on our site; if they weren't custom, we could update more things ourselves. The availability of our site on mobile devices is something to work through, too.

We will be sifting through our options over the next year – evaluating options when we find them. Juan thinks looking at the website and how it should be built is part of the mix. Relying on a company to do the work has created issues. We need to break down components of the website to figure out what we need and what we don't, so that it no longer matters who the host is, because we'll be better in control of it.

Kelly mentioned that our Linkedin group is growing, with our listserv members added.

Proposal Submissions by Fee-for-Service Organizations:

Kristina described how she convened a group of Paula, Kelly, and herself to review how our organization addresses when organizations that charge a fee for their services or products want to submit a proposal for a session at our conference. The sponsorship level gold or higher includes a presentation on the program as a benefit of being a sponsor. Other sponsorship levels don't include such time on our program.

Paula, Kelly, and Kristina discussed the options, in light of how other organizations consider such submissions. At AIR, proposals indicate that they are coming from someone at an organization that has a fee for service, and there is a review of such proposals.

The special committee recommendation is that the individual or representative of a company (profit or non-profit) that charges fees for services, regardless of way they collect such fees, can still submit a proposal, but these proposals must come to the Board for review and for a vote regarding the session's value to attendees as research of interest in our field. The review is thus wide (including all sectors) given the Board's composition – it's not merely a committee review – and it brings the proposals to a higher level of review to ensure there aren't issues or a construal that this is an opportunity for someone or an organization/company to avoid sponsorship fees and yet present a promotional session. We didn't want to create a precedent, for example, for a silver sponsor to sneak in with a sales pitch. The Board can convene via email to review such proposals to be sure that it consists of an informative presentation for the conference attendees.

Juan wondered whether this opportunity would be advertised to sponsors, considering that all might submit proposals. If the primary presenter were a user of the product and this use case were the proposed session, it was suggested that there would be no problem.

We currently have consultants who are formerly of our segments, and thus they could have something of interest to present. The Board's desire to bring good research forward is what drives this. Our goal is not to limit presenters to those working at higher education institutions.

After discussion, the following policy was proposed:

Whenever somebody who charges any type of a fee for service (a sponsor, sponsor representative, or not) submits a proposal, those proposals will go through the regular submission process, then be advanced to the Board with notes and ratings. The Board will then consider whether each such proposed session adds value to the profession of institutional research as generalizable knowledge. The Board would either accept each proposal, reject it, or request revisions.

Brianna moved to accept the proposed language, Waddell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

For future submission processes, we will need to change the form in Qualtrics so that the fee-for-service question can record an answer, instead of bumping people out of the system.

CAIR Conference 2017:

Juan led the discussion regarding next year's conference. First, he mentioned CAIR's presence at the WSCUC ARC. Paula plans to attend the CAIR group session. New Board director Kris Krishna plans to be there, too, as does Kristina, as additional support. If Paula's session interferes on the ARC schedule, Kristina will be able to attend the meeting. Juan will be in the WASC ALO session and will not be able to attend the CAIR Sig meeting.

The 2017 conference will be in Concord, California. Juan considers it useful to focus on the idea of different committees that CAIR has in place, particularly which ones were effective and which didn't work as well. With that background, we could consider adding new committees to the list.

First, it would be practical to add a sponsor contract committee, with the goal of making sure that it's a competitive contract and that the language is appropriate and accomplishes what both the Board and sponsors need.

A full local arrangements committee might not be needed for this conference in Concord, because restaurants are readily available across the street from the hotel. Waddell suggested talking to the hotel to see what they have available to offer hotel guests in terms of local dining

suggestions. He agreed that a list will need to be created, but as a quicker task with the hotel's help.

Eventbrite doesn't need to become a committee; Brianna was the lead and did it on her own. Waddell mentioned that we will need a facilitator coordinator, a program committee, and a proposal review committee. Kristina offered that the marketing committee was okay, but we could cut the committee, and nobody would notice. It was good for sharing info, but it didn't leverage Facebook or Linkedin. There seemed to be no natural gravitation or interest drawing the organization into these social networks.

Juan mentioned that the technology committee will be working on the web. The app committee – one person, with a shadow – will be effective again. Having an awards committee is fine. Regarding the "About CAIR" committee: Given interest in the organization's history, there remains work to be done by this group. Bob Cox plans to bring the historical documents he has to the conference this year. Juan plans to receive these materials, and Kristina will scan the financial documents she has received in paper form, as well as the CAIR historical documents.

The dashboard committee and conference assessment committee worked well. This year, we can take the Qualtrics data and perform an analysis. Ron will pull the data set for Paula. Paula would like the committee to do something more advanced with it – a lot of people on this committee were interested in using these data.

The Board nominations committee found the skills matrix very informative in making its recommendations for new Board members. The Board discussed whether the timing of the VP selection might be out of sync for the next site section – is that officer of the Board involved early enough to ensure an appropriate time frame for hotel availability? The Board also discussed evaluating the conference planner formally and considered undertaking that in January.

Financial and Administrative Management:

Kelly mentioned that the listserv is growing.

Among other projects, the Board discussed how our bylaws may need attention, as a process of putting things in order. When we revise the Board manual and add strategic planning information,that might be a good time to review the bylaws. All projects reflected on the committee list (responsibility list) as well as officer responsibilities could be provided in the documents. Because the transition to new committee leadership should involve transfer of knowledge, offering time frames per committee, regarding actions to take, etc., would be helpful, as well as suggesting how-to's.

Other Topics:

Kristina suggested that the new Board members attend the afternoon portion of November Board meeting to hear what their roles are going to involve. This afternoon session would be tailored to sharing background and looking toward the next year.

Recommendations for the Special Roles for Alternates Not Selected for Board Membership:

With a larger Board, more directors are available to assign projects, and thus Juan asked the Board whether there will be enough to assign Board members, if we make assignments for special projects to any very promising Board applicants who aren't selected for a director position. The cost of such of having so many additional attendees to the meetings may be off-set by inviting these adjuncts to the Board to participate via phone in at the Board meetings, instead of having them attend in person. Paula thought we could look at the matrices of this year's alternates, and make specific assignments, such that there isn't a need for meeting presence. The Board decided to consider these factors as we move forward in the new year.

Site Selection for CAIR Conference 2018:

Brianna explained that six hotels were on the list that the site selection committee considered – three in San Diego and three in Anaheim/Orange County. Brianna intends to narrow the list down to finalists and to get the best proposals from each, which she'll circulate.

The subcommittee members discussed the pros and cons of each site location.

Brianna asked the Board to provide input to the site selection committee. The next steps are to give a list to Todd sometime this week, then go back to the hotels for their best offers. The goal is to choose the site and sign a contract by early December. Southern California is an easier region for this planning, as there are more options and there is greater competition among the hotels. It should be an early contract signing this year.

Next Board Meeting: Friday, January 20, 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.