

Panel on Public Affairs Meeting
June 2, 2017
APS Washington Office of Public Affairs
529 14th Street, NW, Suite 1050, Washington, DC

Members present:

F. Houle (Chair), M. Marder (Chair Elect), J. Wells (Vice Chair), J. Phillips (Past Chair)
R. Bandyopadhyay (*virtual*), S. Bare, M. Barnett, W. Collins, D. Dahlberg, B. DeMarco, E. Gates, D. Ginley, V. Grassian, D. Gross, M.D. McNeese, H. Neal (*virtual*), M. Tamor, A. Taylor, P. Taylor, E. Yablonovitch

Advisors/Staff present:

K. Cole, M. Elsesser, L. Greene, R. Falcone, A. Hu, K. Kirby, G. Mack, J. Russo, F. Slakey

Guests:

Crystal Bailey, William McCurdy

Call to Order

F. Houle called the meeting to order at 8:02 AM.

Welcome, Approval of Minutes

A call for edits to the February 2017 minutes was made. Hearing none, a motion was introduced.

MOTION: *To accept the February 2017 minutes, as presented.*
(J. Phillips/D. Dahlberg)

ACTION: *The motion passed, unanimously.*

General Business

An update was provided on APS Council action since the February meeting. The proposed APS Energy Statement was approved and APS Statement 17.1 - Addressing the Global Energy Challenge: Accelerating the Transition to Carbon-Neutral Energy Sources is now an official position of the Society.

Advocacy Update – Lobbying on Federal Science Budget

APS Staff provided an update on advocacy efforts of the Office of Public Affairs. There have been deep cuts to the federal science budget. OPA has found that the most effective way to influence Congress is to have a constituent tell the story and make the case for science funding – through op-eds and district visits. By using this integrated advocacy approach, legislators are hearing from the people they represent – and paying attention.

Ethics Subcommittee

Statements up for Consideration in 2017

APS Statement 02.2 – APS Guidelines for Professional Conducts

- *Certain areas need updating.*

APS Statement 02.3 – Policies for Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct

- *Statement is still relevant.*

APS Statement 02.4 – Improving Education for Professional Ethics, Standards and Practices

- *Should be re-examined & updated, if needed. APS should say more here.*

The Ethics Subcommittee took a broad look at all ethics related statements of the society, including those listed above with the addition of Statements 99.6 and 04.1 (*neither need modification*). The Subcommittee suggested a discussion and review of the Society's stance on detrimental research practices including plagiarism, conflict of interest, and the handling of allegations of misconduct. A working group including D. Ginley, L. Greene, W. Collins, S. Bare, M. Marder, J. Phillips, F. Houle, and J. Wells will refine the charge and report back at the October meeting.

Energy & Environment Subcommittee

Proposed Study on Agrosequstration

Members were presented with a formal proposal for a possible study on whether safe burial of agricultural cellulosic biomass could remove enough carbon from the atmosphere to reverse the climate change crisis. After discussion, members were not persuaded that POPA is the appropriate group to take up such a study.

Physics & the Public Subcommittee

Proposed Statement on Gun Violence Research

S. Bare provided background and a revised version of the statement that was suggested at February's meeting. The revision focuses on the research aspect of gun violence and calls on Congress more directly. The committee discussed a few word changes and whether the statement should come from the APS Board or the Society as a whole.

MOTION: *To accept the revised statement, with modifications, as a proposed APS Board Statement.*

(J. Phillips/S. Bare)

ACTION: *The motion passed, unanimously.*

The committee would like to work towards an APS Statement on this issue, in the future.

APS Assessment of the Open Data Policy

APS Staff provided an update on activity surrounding a recent assessment of the OSTP directive for open data implementation; APS is formulating its recommendation for open data policy.

Statements up for Consideration in 2017

APS Statement 02.5 – Against the Call to Boycott Israeli Scientists

- It was agreed that the statement should remain active, with one minor change – remove reference to “some European academics”.

APS Statement 97.4 – Open Flow of Scientific Information

- It was suggested that the statement be retired and archived. The general consensus was that the statement needs so much updating that an entirely new statement should be considered. There is a lack of certainty on the issues of Open Access and Open Data. POPA may consider bringing in experts (possibly Robert White) to further consider the possibility of drafting a new statement.

- MOTION:** *To recommend archiving APS Statement 97.4 until such time as POPA can develop a new statement that comprehensively describes APS' position on Open Data.*
(D. Gross/W. Collins)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, unanimously.*

H-1B Visa – Board Statement

POPA reviewed the latest version of a proposed Board Statement on H-1B visas. Suggestions were made to strike a better balance between recognizing the need for H-1B reform and preserving the H-1B program.

- ACTION:** The statement was reworded and POPA approved sending it to the APS Board for consideration.

Guest Presentation – Overview of Career Programs & Workforce Related Issues

APS Staff, Crystal Bailey, provided an overview of the career programs her department is engaged in. The topic of discussion was defining the physics graduate in a 21st century workforce. Most physics graduates are going into the private sector. Around 40% of graduating physics bachelors will enter the workforce after graduation. 61% of these will be in the private sector. Her department is raising student awareness of non-academic paths through APS career webinars, providing APS physicist and job prospects profiles, a Physics InSight careers slideshow, and multiple events at the APS annual and division meetings.

Energy & Environment Subcommittee

APS GhG Inventory Update

W. McCurdy and APS Staff provided an update on the progress that has been made since February. Scopes 1 and 2 calculations were completed and verified by Cameron-Cole, a third-party verification organization. The results have been sent to The Climate Registry, a non-profit, GhG reporting organization. Progress on Scope 3 calculations continues. Scope 3 focuses on APS meetings and APS investments. An inventory of GHG emissions resulting from travel associated with APS's six national meetings has been conducted. APS has access to general membership data (member affiliation/home institution) for approximately 17,500 members who attended the DAMOP, DPP, DFD, DNP, and March & April APS annual meetings in 2015. Emissions calculations were generated using a methodology that included key assumptions. An average-data methodology, appropriate for APS's portfolio of mutual funds, was used to approximate emissions from the APS investment portfolio. An initial discussion on potential actions ensued.

National Security Subcommittee

Update on HEU Study & Report

Study Chair, J. Wells provided an update. A study workshop was conducted in April. The workshop was webcast so that interested members of the community could listen in on the discussion. Several key findings and recommendations emerged; these were shared with the committee. The final draft report should be ready for presentation at the October POPA meeting.

Statements up for Consideration in 2017

APS Statement 02.1 – DOD Funding for Basic Research

- Some minor contextual changes were suggested; the intent remains the same. Discussion ensued regarding the plus up of defense funding and how we could justify the current wording. APS Staff indicated that Congress is looking for ideas on how to use the appropriations. APS can provide guidance.

ACTION: *Additional discussion and vote tabled until October meeting.*

APS Statement 97.2 – The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

ACTION: *Discussion tabled until October meeting.*

Update on Proposed National Lab Study

This proposal has been tabled; it may be revisited sometime in the future.

Intersessional Minutes

- All POPA Subcommittees held ongoing business teleconferences between June 2nd & October 3rd.
- The APS Board voted to approve the proposed H-1B Visa Board Statement.
- The HEU Study Committee finished writing assignments August. Editing ensued and it was sent to committee members for internal review in September.
- The Ethics Working Group held a videoconference on August 23rd.

Next Meeting

The date for the next POPA meeting will be February 9, 2018.

Adjournment

ACTION: *F. Houle adjourned the meeting 2:54 PM.*