Association for Institutional Research  
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting  
June 16, 2020

Attendees: Laura Palucki Blake, Soon Merz Flynn, Marty Fortner, Michele Hansen, Braden Hosch, Wendy Kallina, Heather Kelly, Elizabeth Lee, Mary Lelik, Junelyn Peeples, David Troutman, and Eric Yang

Guests: Christine Keller, Jason Lewis, and Leah Ross, from the AIR Executive Office and Bill Charney, Board leadership consultant.

Call to Order

President Heather Kelly called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. ET. A quorum was established.

Required Approvals and Acknowledgements

Meeting Minutes

David Troutman moved to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2020 Virtual Meeting, the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting (Appendix A), and the minutes of the May 28, 2020 Virtual Meeting as amended. Eric Yang seconded.

The motion passed.

Board Self-Monitoring Report

Heather Kelly noted that the report was received from Past-President Marty Fortner and will be discussed later in this meeting.

Committee Reports

Heather Kelly thanked Board members for completing a survey to indicate their preferences for service on committees. She will follow up with a final plan for the July 2020 meeting.

Nominations and Elections: Marty Fortner shared that the committee had a transition meeting in late May and the new committee will begin its work shortly. Areas of focus will include voting participation rates and Board representation (race/ethnicity, education sector, geography, etc.) Board meeting conversation included exploration of who votes (and does not), ways to increase participation (service and voting), and potential use of alternate voting technology. Christine Keller reminded the Board of Article V of the Constitution: “Individual Board members will not represent particular regions, sectors, or specific interest groups. Acting in concert, the Board has full authority to act for and on behalf of the Association, except as otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws.”

Governance Orientation and Training: Heather Kelly noted that a survey has been administered to assess recent orientation and training events, which will be shared with the committee when finalized. Junelyn Peeples noted that in addition to evaluation of recent events, the committee will look at gaps (e.g., how do we approach governance with a social justice lens?) Bill Charney suggested that the Board can choose to go on record with its affirmative values and consideration of whether such values should be injected in the ends. He also noted that a key role for the Board is its role as a direct link between
members and the Association, including emphasis on encouraging membership renewal.

**Membership Categories:** Eric Yang explained that the purpose of the committee is to help determine the feasibility to transition from individual to institutional membership. This work has been informed by the experiences of other associations that have already made this transition. Discussion included in the possibility of implementing a purchasing consortium as part of this change. Also, the question was raised as to whether the charge is too myopic, especially in light of the current global pandemic, and whether models for various rates of membership decline have been forecast. Conversation included ways to expand the membership base beyond the traditional AIR community, including PK-12 education professionals, enrollment managers, and student affairs personnel. Christine Keller reminded the Board of the Ends’ call to serve the entire higher education community, and resources are currently directed as such. Keller indicated that membership numbers are down from last year. And the challenge for the Association is that there is so many things going on right now that we need to make sure communication is meaningful and that we highlight the value of the membership.

**Charles F. Elton Best Paper Award:** Michele Hansen shared how this committee’s charge to reconsider criteria of the award and note how fits with the Ends. Recommendations are due by December 2020 for implementation at the 2021 AIR Forum.

**Board Structure for Accountability and Effectiveness:** Heather Kelly shared that this is a newer committee, but a lot of work has been done by past Boards that provide the foundation for this work. The committee’s recommendations are due to the Board in May 2021, but Heather would like to expedite this work given its potential implications for the Association’s work.

Marty Fortner moved to recess. Eric Yang seconded. The motion passed.

Marty Fortner made a motion to reconvene the meeting. Soon Merz Flynn seconded at Tuesday, June 16 1:36 EST

**Financial Policies**

Wendy Kallina provided new board members a description of her role as the Board’s treasurer. She reviewed the Executive Limitations related to the Executive Director’s use of funds and the Executive Director’s purview in determining day-to-day operations. Bill Charney shared options for associations to approach the treasurer role, audit committees, review of financial policies, and the role of a budget to be a tool for a Board. Discussion included clarification of the difference between the Association budget (guided by Executive Limitations) and the Board budget, which includes cost of governance. Bill Charney explained that the Board’s role is to judge whether the Association’s expenditures are aligned with the Association’s policies – that is, do expenditures help achieve the Ends. The Board role is not to review line items or to micromanage individual expenses, which is counterproductive, but to ask clarifying questions that arise and ensure that the organization is lean, economical, and transparent. The challenge is to stay high-level without getting into the weeds. The question is “are these credible projections?” and not “is this how we would do it?”

**Executive Office Updates**

**Incidental Information:** Christine Keller shared that the incidental report is prepared at the end of each month to summarize the activities and updates of the Executive Office. Time-sensitive incidental information is shared via email when necessary.
Overview of Major Grants Received by AIR: The document, prepared in May 2020, lists grants received and provides context for the grant work within the Association’s overall activities and plans.

Additional: Christine Keller asked Board members to help encourage community members to register for the upcoming virtual Forum. Also, the Executive Office’s move from the Centre Pointe location to the Piedmont location (the office space the Association owns) is complete. The space has been rebuilt since the 2016 fire; the Tallahassee staff are housed in the office space. Christine invited the Board to the July coffee chat that will feature conversation about diversity and inclusion.

Reflections on Policy Governance Workshop and Action Items

Board members reflected on their experiences in yesterday's policy governance training and made suggestions for continued Board education. Enhanced policy governance education was also discussed for the Nomination and Elections Committee’s work with prospective Board candidates. Audit training and development of an audit committee were discussed, in addition to overall ongoing Board education, which doesn’t need to happen when the Board is convened (to save meeting agenda time). The goal of achieving lofty oversight without micromanaging the Executive Director was explored. Bill Charney explained that the Board is not determining the KPIs, but rather, is judging whether the Executive Office’s KPIs are reasonable. If they are reasonable, but not pleasing, modifications should be suggested, in an advisory, conversational style. If the KPIs are not reasonable, the Board’s focus should be on the Ends and related specificity, not on the KPIs themselves. He also suggested five Ends monitoring reports (one each for A, B, C, and D, and one for the preamble). The alignment between the vision statement and Ends were also discussed, including incorporation of ethics and social justice in the Ends. Junelyn Peeples emphasized the importance for the board and association to center around social justice and equity. Christine reminded the board that the association just recently released a statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion in light of the current events happening in the nation. Bill Charney highlighted that the board does not have a vision statement, however the board’s role is to support the vision statement of the association.

Future of IR and Higher Education

Heather Kelly shared that this will be a standing item on each Board agenda. Discussion focused on how this time will be used and ways to identify topics for consideration, including the level of AIR’s role in advocacy. Board members provided the following is a list of possible Future of IR topics to consider discussing in future board meetings:

- Consider creating a priority list by context, at the federal, state, and institution levels.
- Determine what is the Future of IR product that we are trying to complete.
- Identify content that will assist Christine Keller and inform the board’s work.
- Find additional opportunities to collaboration with other organizations similar to collaborations with NACABO and EDUCAUSE.
- Implications for our ethical work on the federal, state, and institution.
- Empower IR personnel and providing strategies when there are tensions among institutional offices (e.g., Academic Affairs and IR).
- Expand the use of GIS data.
- Spend more and more time on integrating data and social media data.
- We need to make sure we are the voice of the membership. Focus conversations at the institutions to highlight the key areas where it will help the association.
Use AIR hub and eAIR as tools to communicate with membership and identify future IR issues.

Think about ways to learn more about our members, communities, by conducting a needs assessment. Making sure the future of IR is tied with the Association’s Ends.

**Board Self-Monitoring Reports**

Heather Kelly shared the Board self-monitoring reports that each of the past two Presidents (Michelle Appel and Marty Fortner) crafted that address five key areas regarding the Association’s well-being. Discussion included engagement of members and stakeholders. The format of the reports was also considered, and Heather Kelly explained that the Board’s goals for the year will dictate the format used to report on those goals.

**New Business**

Emphasis was placed on the link between membership and the Association’s operations and ways in which the Board can support the Executive Director in this work.

**Adjournment**

Soon Flynn moved to adjourn the meeting. Mary Lelik seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 p.m. ET.

The motion passed.