

Association for Institutional Research
In-person Board of Directors Meeting – Chicago
March 24-25, 2025

Attendees: Craig Abbey (Parliamentarian), Yenny Anderson, Angie Bell, Bethany Crowell, Brent Drake (Chair), Jonathan Gagliardi (Past President), Adrea Hernandez, Debbie Phelps (Vice Chair), Wen Qi (Secretary), David Rudden

Absent: Karen Egypt, Karen Vance (Treasurer)

Guests: Christine Keller, Jason Lewis, Miguel PineiroVigo and Leah Ross from the AIR Executive Office

Monday, March 24

Call to Order

Brent Drake called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. CT. A quorum was established.

Required Approvals and Acknowledgements

Meeting Minutes

Jonathan Gagliardi moved to accept the minutes of the February 10, 2025 Board meeting. Angie Bell seconded.

The motion passed.

Debbie Phelps moved to accept the minutes of the March 10, 2025 Board meeting. Craig Abbey seconded.

The motion passed.

Off-Cycle (Out of Meeting) Voting

On Feb 14, 2025, the Chair proposed to delay the Financial Planning Monitoring Report. An electronic vote was held, and the Board unanimously approved the proposal to postpone the Report until the end of March.

Craig Abbey noted that a process is needed to document off-cycle votes to codify the Board's internal policy. Brent Drake and Craig Abbey will form a working group to bring language to the Board to review.

Board Treasurer's Report

In Karen Vance's absence, Brent Drake led a review of the Board budget to date. Discussion included the need to be prudent with dollars, but as costs increase, there may be need to increase the Board budget.

Governance Orientation and Training Committee Report

Debbie Phelps reminded the Board of the training required of AIR's governance policies. A review of 2024 training was provided to plan for 2025 training. Virtual training will be complete before the in-person training at the 2025 Forum. The in-person training will include content presented by Craig Abbey as Parliamentarian and greater focus on knowledge needed as new Board members are onboarded.

Financial Planning and Board Discussion

Christine Keller presented on financial planning for 2025 and beyond. Focus is on plans to mitigate challenges in light of changing circumstances in the federal government for the 2025 budget and in preparations for 2026.

Changing circumstances that affect AIR's work include federal and state policies that prohibit "DEI" efforts; dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education, including the loss of NCES staff; uncertainty on future of federal datasets and tools (IPEDS, NPSAS, etc.); status of the IPEDS data collection and training; and financial circumstance of AIR member institutions.

Christine reviewed the financial policy and processes (EL Policy IV, particularly policies A, B, and I) and limits (EL Policy V) in achievement of The Ends to provide context for this discussion. AIR serves three constituency groups: higher education professionals, especially AIR members; higher education institutions; and the higher education community. New considerations include creation of new revenue; reduction of costs while maintaining capacity; monitoring of and adaption to the financial situation at higher education institutions; and monitoring of and response to (if possible) the uncertainty around federal data sets and tools, including IPEDS.

New and expanded revenue sources include those previously planned and in motion (e.g., consulting services and training to institutions and expanded educational offerings) and those that are longer term or that have external dependencies (e.g., additional external funding, increased engagement of new organizational members, and company partnerships and sponsorships).

Future Thinking Exercise

Adrea Hernandez and Brent Drake led the Board in a strategic thinking exercise. Board members discussed foresight thinking questions in small groups and then engaged in full-group conversation. Topics included the importance of data and evidence within growing uncertainty; the need to engineer the future and growth of the analytics function; the need for legitimization of the IR function for the success of institutions; the institutions that are "haves" and "have nots" and the reality that some schools are not able to pay for services and training; the need to emphasize the value of IR for higher ed and of AIR's products and services; the importance of IR doing what it does well and the need to do more of it; the balance between IR's compliance reporting role and other roles, and potential implications for changes to mandatory reporting; identification of best practices in roles beyond compliance; the need for large-scale data regardless of what the federal government supports; the risk of varied standards for ethical practice when national-level systems aren't used; leveraging organizational membership contacts for messaging, which may require the identification a new role within organizational membership (vs. the current administrator and delegate roles that currently exist); the idea of including higher education professionals outside of IR on the AIR Board; and the potential value of shared services (myriad models).

End of Day

Brent Drake recessed the meeting at 4:20 p.m. CT.

Tuesday, March 25

Call to Order

Brent Drake called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. CT. A quorum was established.

Election of Chair

Christine Keller explained the process for election of the chair, and Craig Abbey (Parliamentarian) reminded the group that the election is majority of votes (i.e., 6 of the 10 Board members present) and that no second is needed for a nomination.

Nominations

Debbie Phelps and Yenny Anderson nominated Brent Drake. Brent Drake nominated Debbie Phelps who declined the nomination. Jonathan Gagliardi nominated Adrea Hernandez who declined the nomination.

Q&A of nominees

The Board had opportunity to ask questions of the nominee.

Election

Brent Drake was elected to serve as Chair.

Election of Vice Chair

Nominations

Brent Drake and Yenny Anderson nominated Adrea Hernandez. Jonathan Gagliardi nominated Debbie Phelps who declined the nomination. Brent Drake nominated Bethany Crowell who declined the nomination. Brent Drake nominated Craig Abbey who declined the nomination and seconded Adrea Hernandez as nominee. Jonathan Gagliardi nominated Angie Bell who declined the nomination. Brent Drake nominated David Rudden who declined the nomination.

Q&A of nominees

The Board had opportunity to ask questions of the nominee.

Election

Adrea Hernandez was elected to serve as Vice Chair.

Executive Director Updates

Christine Keller shared that all the 2025 AIR Award winners have been selected. Winners will be contacted by Brent Drake (Chair) by phone and letters will be sent to all nominees in April. Winners will be celebrated at the

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2025 AIR Forum and announced on the AIR website.

New Business

Jonathan Gagliardi asked if it would be prudent to share Board vote tallies in the spirit of transparency. Craig Abbey confirmed that Robert's Rules of Order specifies that tallies are shared, but noted that the Board can specify its preferences; he suggested that tallies should likely be shared for contested elections and that the ballot should include an option for "abstain". The executive office keeps the vote records for an audit trail.

Christine Keller noted that the Board will need a new Secretary and Treasurer as Wen Qi and Karen Vance's terms are ending.

Adjournment

Craig Abbey moved to adjourn the meeting. Debbie Phelps seconded.

The motion passed.

Brent Drake adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m. CT.