

## **VASFAA 2008 Conference Committees Minutes**

December 12, 2007

**Attendees:** Jeanne Holmes, Pam Rambo, John Beard, Stephanie Clements, Tamy Garofano, Hope Jackson, Wincy Jackson, Janee Knippenberg, Linda Mashack, Tom Morehouse, Susan Moyers, Chardon Myricks, Rebecca Parker, Paula Rafferty, Patricia Redwood, Ashley Sailer, Wanda Spradley, Ericka Washburn, Donna Taylor, Elizabeth Desi

The initial teleconference meeting of the 2008 VASFAA Conference and Training Committees was held December 12, 2007 from 3:00 pm until 4:15 pm. The agenda for the first meeting included the following twelve major discussion topics:

- Committee Membership and Contact Data Confirmation
- Review and Discussion of Draft Conference Preplanning History and Rationale
- Mission Clarification
- Review of Conference Budget
- Revision/Approval of Draft Conference Promotion for Winter VASFAA Voice
- Conference Lodging
- Discussion of Conference Food Service/Menu
- Clarification of Conference Entertainment
- Determination of Conference Speakers
- Conference Decoration Ideas/Resources
- Conference Bag Ideas
- Conference Audio Visual Arrangements

### **Conference Committee Membership and Contact Data Confirmation**

The Conference Committee has 26 members including the committee co-chairs augmented by Donna Taylor and Elizabeth Desi from Training. Conference committee members are:

Jeanne Holmes, Co-Chair

Pam Rambo, Co-Chair

John Beard

Willy Carey

Stephanie Clements

Carla Cline

Tamy Garofano

John Gordon

Hope Jackson

Wincy Jackson

Patrice Johnson

Linda Mashack

Tom Morehouse

Susan Moyers

Chardon Myricks

Rebecca Parker  
Paula Rafferty  
Patricia Redwood  
Vera Riddick  
Ashley Sailer  
Wanda Spradley  
Kathi Turner  
Joanne Via  
Carolyn Ward  
Erick Washburn

Phone numbers and email addresses were reviewed and corrections were made.

### **Review and Discussion of Conference Pre-Planning History and Rationale**

Prior to this meeting, Conference Committee co-chairs held several meetings with the VASFAA President over the summer to discuss the conference theme and to discuss preferences of the president and anticipated financial challenges due to conference budget. To save costs, prior to the selection of the co-chairs, the VASFAA President had pre-selected major conference menus.

Additionally, conference committee co-chairs met with the Marriott conference planner and VASFAA President to review the conference contract and discuss costs. An additional meeting was held between conference co-chairs and the Marriott conference planner to clarify electricity hook-up and audio visual costs and menu lock-in prices and what prices would be charged if there was a desire to change any pre-selected menu item.

A draft conference agenda was prepared by co-chairs based on prior year general models for discussion purposes with the hotel, the previous year conference chair and the VASFAA Board to determine any logistical issues with the hotel, strategies, costs and other issues from previous conferences and board wisdom and preferences for the 2008 conference. Issues that co-chairs worked around as the conference agenda draft evolved included:

- meeting guaranteed hotel minimum reservations for the conference
- delivering a highly professional conference focused on relevant professional content
- working within a limited conference budget
- realistically anticipating conference attendance levels on a daily and function basis
- planning the conference to accommodate both resident and commuter attendees
- managing transition from general to concurrent session logistics for the hotel

The draft conference agenda presented to the Conference Committee was a result of discussions at the meetings with the president, board, hotel conference staff and prior year conference chair.

### **Mission Clarification**

It was agreed that the mission of the Conference Committee is conference planning and logistics and general sessions while the Training Committee mission is concurrent sessions.

### **Conference Budget**

Conference co-chairs met with the VASFAA Board to discuss budget issues and board preferences for any reductions needed in food and other amenities to remain within budget. The board clarified that the budgeted amount is a guideline and that there were funds that could be carried forward from the prior year conference. The board increased the 2008 conference budget from \$56,000 to \$63,000. Additional funding will be applied to conference expenditures from the Training Committee for audio visual costs. The board gave the Conference Committee permission to deviate from traditional conference catering, as necessary, to remain within budget. Additionally the Board gave the Conference Committee permission to hold the banquet as a luncheon to increase participation. Conference Committee co-chairs in consultations with prior conference chairs determined that the evening banquet would be preferable to meet hotel minimums. A bridge activity was added to the agenda to provide a focus for commuters prior to the banquet and the banquet is being held in the early evening.

The Conference Committee has consensus on the commitment to complete the conference within or under budget. Conference Committee members made no revisions to the draft agenda during the first meeting.

### **Conference Promotion**

The committee suggested revisions and approved the Winter VASFAA Voice conference promotion article and suggested that the link to the city center site be included.

### **Conference Lodging**

The conference room block is 35 for Saturday, 110 for Sunday and 127 for Monday and Tuesday. The committee and board are uncertain about conference attendance projections due to budget cuts and because many people commute when this conference is held on the Peninsula. **Pam Rambo** agreed to scout possible additional hotels in case there is any overflow. Room registrations are scheduled to begin after SASFAA although the committee can start earlier if desired. The committee needs to consider that ATAC requires 4-6 weeks to set up the registration website as it determines when registration is to begin.

### **Review of Conference Food Information and Discussion of Projected Conference Attendance**

Menus for the banquet and luncheon were locked in by the VASFAA President in an attempt to keep costs low. The food minimum for the conference is \$30,000. Conference food contract minimums are \$14++ for continental breakfast, \$17++ for full breakfast, \$23++ for lunch and \$31++ for dinner. Coffee breaks are \$5++.

A subcommittee was formed to review food needs and propose menu items and project attendance. Food Subcommittee volunteers are: **Linda Mashack, Wincy Jackson, Joanne Via, John Beard and Wanda Spradley.**

Conference Committee membership agreed that conference attendance levels vary during the three day conference and that meal projections should reflect those historic patterns. Specifically, attendance is somewhat less at the beginning of the conference as attendees arrive, it is low during evening functions due to commuters leaving and it is low on the final half day of the conference as some members leave early for long drives back home.

How the bills for meals are determined was discussed. Members questioned whether meals are billed by projection or actual count or a combination of the two. **Jeanne Holmes** will check with the Marriott to determine how billing is determined for meals.

#### **Conference Music/Entertainment**

**Tamy Garofano** agreed to speak with **Mike Abernathy** about providing music via IPOD.

**Tom Morehouse** confirmed that this would be possible because VASFAA pays the B&G music royalty fee each year. Committee members were asked to think about college jazz ensembles or music groups that might be asked to perform at the President's Reception. The CNU music dept. was suggested as a source.

**John Beard** agreed to be in charge of Bingo.

**Pat Kelly** is in charge of a presidential skit for the banquet. **Tom Morehouse**, as a past president, agreed to be the committee liaison for this activity.

A slide presentation of past conference photos will be presented at the banquet. **Holly Rison** and **Gerene Carter** are working on this.

The period between sessions and the banquet on Tuesday is set aside presently for networking for commuters and others who remain at the hotel during that time. It was suggested that sodas and popcorn be served and that picture taking be provided.

#### **Conference Speakers**

General sessions will be held Monday morning, Tuesday morning or afternoon and Wednesday morning. Speakers will be VASFAA Board members Monday Morning with election candidates followed by **Greg Martin** for the Federal Update Monday morning and **John Miller** from the state legislature at lunch on Monday. No speaker has been selected yet for Tuesday. **Lee Andes** will speak for SCHEV on Wednesday.

**Hope Jackson** and **Tim Freeman** from the Diversity Committee will chair the conference speaker committee to get the remaining speaker for Tuesday. It was

agreed that the additional speaker will speak on a motivational theme and possibly include information about the millennial generation that VASFAA serves. Additionally, it was suggested that the new NASFAA president be invited to attend and address the conference at a general session.

### **Conference Decorations**

**Paula Rafferty, Erika Washburn, Hope Jackson, Jeannie Holmes** and **John Beard** volunteered for the conference decoration subcommittee. Ideas from the committee included using a birthday party theme (VASFAA turns 40) for the banquet, a garden theme (renewal) and sixties decorations (VASFAA began in 1968). **Paula Rafferty** will use her greenery for conference decoration.

### **Conference Bag (BYOB)**

Rather than providing a conference bag in 2008, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference will feature a contest to see who can bring the oldest VASFAA conference bag. A prize will be awarded. Conference attendees will be given a VASFAA folder rather than a bag.

### **Conference AV**

Conference AV is covered by Training. VASFAA has 4 LCD's. The Marriott is providing video carts free of charge. Marriott catering is providing projector tables for general sessions free of charge. There will be no charges for AV plug in because that was not in the contract although the hotel has such a charge.

### **Future Meetings**

The committee agreed that 3pm is a good time for teleconferences. **Pam Rambo** and **Jeanne Holmes** will schedule a meeting for January. Among future items for discussion are updates from volunteers, assignment of additional volunteers for conference gifts for the contest and speakers and liaison for picture taking during the networking break on Tuesday afternoon.

Minutes submitted by Pam Turner, December 14, 2007.