

ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTANTS CHICAGO CHAPTER

BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

Present

Matthew Matczynski, President
Thomas DiLisio, Treasurer
Cynthia "CJ" Carter, Program Director
Frank Moy, Education Director
Alexandria Hayden, Newsletter Editor
Olga Gesell, Website Director & Historian
Raul Nieto, CGFM
Elaine Igelman, President-Elect
Eddie Jones, Community Service Director

Present

Amanda Cross, Awards Director
Rick Urbanowski, Chapter Recognition

Absent

Janet Knauff, Membership Director
Steve Whitecotton, Job Referral
Julio Cestero, Early Careers & Accountability

SUMMARY OF MEETING

❖ Quorum

- Matt mentioned that a quorum has been reached as there are 10 voting CEC members participating in the meeting, in addition to Matt.

❖ CEC Member Benefits/Compensation

- CEC member benefits/compensation has been an ongoing issue that arose last chapter year. At last month's meeting, this topic was discussed and tabled as more time needed to be devoted to resolving this issue.
- Matt requested that the executive committee try to reach a decision and said he hopes whatever decision is reached will stay in effect for the entire chapter year. Although Matt said he is not opposed to revisiting previous decisions that were made, he believes it would be best for the decision made to remain in effect for the remainder of the chapter year, and the following year's executive committee can always revisit the issue next chapter year.
- Matt mentioned that in speaking to and communicating via email with various CEC members regarding this topic, it appears that three decisions need to be made. They are: 1.) What CEC member benefits/compensation (if any) to provide? 2.) Which CEC members qualify to receive the benefits, or do all CEC members qualify for the exact same benefits, and 3.) Performance standards need to be set so benefits are provided to only those CEC members who earn them.
- Regarding performance standards, Matt mentioned that there are CEC members (more than one) who believe that if the chapter provides any benefits, the chapter needs to set performance standards so that poorly performing CEC members receive reduced or no benefits. Thus, there appears to be interest in setting performance standards, and this issue will need to be resolved if we provide CEC member benefits.
- Matt mentioned that the chapter is under no obligation to provide CEC member benefits, and there are other AGA chapters that do not provide benefits/compensation to their executive committees, and thus their executive committees run on a pure volunteer basis.
- Matt discussed his knowledge of what other chapters provide. Some AGA chapters provide no benefits/compensation, others provide lunches at executive committee meetings, one of the Indianapolis chapters provides a discount to executive committee members on their annual chapter PDC, and one chapter was considering offering I Pads / I Pods to new CEC members. Matt mentioned that this chapter was having a difficult time recruiting younger CEC members and there was a concern by this chapter that once the current executive committee members retire/leave, there would be no one from the newer generation to replace them. Thus, the I Pad / I Pod benefit was an attempt to target and attract younger professionals to join their executive committee. Matt mentioned one of the chapters who provides no CEC member benefits does not have the financial resources to do so (so it was not that they did not want to provide benefits), plus the chapter has few if any vacant positions.
- Matt mentioned that the Chicago chapter can end benefits, reduce benefits, keep benefits the same, or do something different, such as target a certain group like the I Pad / I Pod example.

SUMMARY OF MEETING-Continued

❖ CEC Member Benefits/Compensation (Continued)

- Matt mentioned that in the past other CEC members expressed concern that by paying CEC members, it in effect creates a contract between the CEC member and the chapter for the CEC member to perform his/her duties; another concern raised is the tax consequences of CEC member benefits; another concern was the appearance issue / concern some chapter members might strongly object to us spending chapter money on such benefits, and another concern was despite the benefits we provided CEC members in the past, whether the benefits made a difference in recruiting new CEC members and retaining existing CEC members.
- Tom mentioned that the chapter spent approximately \$1,400 last year on dues reimbursement. It was mentioned that lunches provided at CEC meetings varied depending on attendance, but was roughly \$40 and no end of year CEC member dinner was held last year, but in previous years was around \$1,000.
- The newer CEC members were asked for input on CEC benefits and whether it impacted them in joining the executive committee. A CEC member mentioned that she was not aware of the CEC benefits being offered until after joining the executive committee, so it had no impact on her decision to join, and another CEC member mentioned that although the benefits are nice, the CEC member did not expect the benefits and would have joined the executive committee and will continue serving on the CEC without benefits.
- Frank mentioned that he considered the past CEC benefits provided to be excessive and could raise issues with some of our chapter members, and believes the benefits should be reduced.
- Another CEC member mentioned that he was not aware of any other AGA chapter or even any other professional organization where the executive committee gets its dues reimbursed plus receives other benefits.
- Another CEC member mentioned that she believed that only the chapter president and certain other key CEC members should be compensated, and would be in favor of having different benefits for different CEC positions. It was mentioned in the past that some CEC members obtained full dues reimbursement, and other CEC members obtained partial dues reimbursement.
- Tom mentioned that CEC benefits should be viewed as a thank you to our CEC members, and not as a contract. Tom suggested that at the end of the year, if the year was successful, we could hand out to our CEC members something like gift cards, or AGA merchandise such as shirts with the AGA logo.
- Raul mentioned that he would prefer that if CEC benefits are provided, that all CEC members be given the same benefits.
- A CEC member mentioned that if benefits are provided, it should be on the condition that the benefits will be reduced / eliminated if the chapter's financial condition deteriorates.
- It was discussed that in lieu of agreeing to provide CEC benefits up front, the CEC at a later date could hold a less extravagant dinner at the end of the year, depending on the chapter's financial condition. Such a dinner could be voted on at a later time. It was suggested that planning for the next chapter year and/or an awards ceremony be done in conjunction with the dinner. It was also mentioned that instead of a dinner, as previously mentioned gift cards or AGA merchandise could be provided at the end of the chapter year.
- Additional discussion was held. No consensus seemed to be reached on the benefits to be provided, which CEC members would qualify for the benefits, and what type of performance standards to set.
- A CEC member mentioned it would be difficult to establish performance measures for our situation, and we could spend the next year discussing this topic.
- Tom suggested that the CEC hold votes on dues reimbursement and CEC lunches to move the decision making process forward.
- Rick made a motion to not provide dues reimbursement for the chapter year. Motion was seconded. Motion passed with all those voting in favor, except for one CEC member who voted against.
- Matt made a motion to do away with chapter paid meals at CEC meetings. The motion was seconded and passed with all those voting in favor, except for three CEC members who voted against.

❖ Deborah Kinsey Resigning

- Deborah Kinsey provided Matt with notification that she was resigning from the executive committee effective immediately due to work and other priorities. Matt contacted Deborah and got assurance that Deborah was not resigning due to any disagreement she had with the CEC or the chapter.

❖ Community Indicators Consortium (CIC)

- The AGA national office contacted Matt asking him to promote this conference to our members, as it is being held in Chicago on October 17th and 18th. The national office mentioned that in the past, AGA national office staff have attended and spoke at this conference; however, it is currently unknown if any AGA staff will be speaking and/or attending this year's conference.

SUMMARY OF MEETING-Continued

❖ **Community Indicators Consortium (CIC)(Continued)**

- An email was sent out to all chapter members advertising the event. This item was put on the agenda for today's meeting because Matt was obtaining questions from other CEC members as to why the chapter was promoting this event.
- A CEC member proposed seeing if we could help sponsor the event. Discussion was held; however, no CEC members expressed interest in attending this event.
- Follow-up discussion was held regarding the Midwestern Intergovernmental Audit Forum (MIAF) being held in Milwaukee, WI later in the week. As of present, it is unknown if any CEC members will be attending that event.

❖ **Audio Conference Selection**

- As discussed and voted on at last month's meeting, the chapter decided to purchase 4 audio conferences under AGA's bulk purchase program. As a result, the chapter got a 10% discount off each audio conference.
- The 1st audio conference selected is the fraud audio conference, which will be held the following day and which will be the September Continuing Education Seminar.
- Elaine currently is working on a speaker for the October Continuing Education Seminar. Elaine mentioned that the speaker is from Truth In Accounting.
- There is currently no speaker scheduled for November's Continuing Education Seminar. Matt suggested that if no speaker is able to be scheduled soon, that the CEC consider having another audio conference.
- Matt mentioned that the two audio conferences are Data Analytics on November 6th and How to Stay Cutting Edge in Tough Financial Times on November 20th.
- Discussion was held. A CEC member mentioned that November 6th might be too early in the month. Another CEC member wanted to know how close to the Thanksgiving Holiday the November 20th audio conference was (it was mentioned that Thanksgiving will be November 28th this year). Another CEC member mentioned that it was his preference that the chapter alternate audio conferences with speakers to add variety and so that the chapter does not use up all its speakers or all its audio conferences and then have to rely on the other for the remainder of the chapter year.
- Consensus is that the chapter should hold an audio conference for the November Continuing Education Seminar and select the Cutting Edge audio conference on November 20th.
- Matt asked for volunteers who would be interested in hosting the audio conference. Eddie mentioned that he would check to see if DHS-OIG's conference room is available to hold the audio conference.

❖ **Recruitment Scholarship**

- Janet was successful in obtaining a recruitment scholarship of \$172 for use by our chapter for recruitment activities.
- Our chapter has received this scholarship for at least the past two years. The past two years we applied the recruitment scholarship to help offset the cost of holding the holiday reception where recruitment of new members was done. At previous holiday receptions, we reached out to the local universities and invited college students to attend. This was deemed an appropriate use of the recruitment scholarship for the last two years.
- A question was raised on when the scholarship money needs to be spent by. Janet, who obtained the scholarship and would be the best person to know, was not in attendance. However, it is believed that the funds need to be spent by December 31st. It was mentioned that this was why the scholarship was used for the holiday reception in past years as there was a short deadline to use the money by.
- Discussion was held regarding the scholarship. A CEC member proposed using the funds for a different recruitment activity; in particular, one that targets early career and college students. A CEC member proposed that the chapter consider using the scholarship to purchase a table at a job fair, such as UIC's job fair. It is estimated that purchasing a table would cost around \$100. A concern was raised that such job fairs are usually held in the spring, which would be after the deadline to use the money by. It was decided more research would need to be performed. A CEC member mentioned that he would look into when the job fairs are, the cost involved, etc.

❖ **Holiday Reception**

- Matt asked if the CEC wished to have a holiday reception similar to the previous two years. Matt mentioned that in the past this event was used as a networking, member appreciation, and new member recruitment event.

SUMMARY OF MEETING-Continued

❖ **Holiday Reception (Continued)**

- Matt mentioned that in the past he was told that due to high demand before the holidays for office parties, etc., downtown establishments begin taking reservations for holiday events in September/October, and it will be difficult if not impossible to book an establishment that has a separate room for our use if done at the last minute.
- Discussion was held. Eddie spoke in favor of the holiday reception. He attended last year's reception and had a great experience. The reception gave him the opportunity to meet and network with chapter members. It was the consensus of the group to consider holding a holiday reception this year as nobody who discussed the holiday reception spoke against holding the reception.
- Location of such a reception will need to be determined. Exchequer, which is where the event was held for the past two years was mentioned as an option. CJ suggested Ten Pin for bowling and food. Eddie volunteered to research possible venues to hold the holiday reception, and will report back at the next CEC meeting.
- Elaine mentioned that she is in favor of holding a holiday reception, and thinks it is a great idea. She mentioned that when she was involved with AGA many years back, the chapter held holiday parties. Elaine mentioned that she was willing to donate \$200 to help cover the cost of holding the holiday reception.
- A CEC member proposed that we contact Becker Professional Education to see if they were willing to help sponsor the event, which would further reduce the chapter's cost of holding such an event. It was mentioned that as such a holiday reception was not being held on federal property, the solicitation rules would not apply, thus giving Becker an opportunity to speak, pass out literature, and promote their product. It was also mentioned that our holiday reception would be a great event for Becker to sponsor, as we would hopefully have many college students in attendance, which is believed to be Becker's target audience for selling their CPA exam prep courses to.
- A CEC member proposed setting a budget for the holiday reception. It was mentioned that as variable costs are the key contributor to the overall cost of holding the event, the budget be set as an amount per person, not total cost, with a possible cap on the number of attendees or limit on the amount the chapter is willing to subsidize. It was decided not to set a budget at this meeting as the cost structure is not known since the type of event and establishment to hold the holiday reception has not yet been decided.
- A CEC member proposed charging a fee to attend the holiday reception. As the cost structure has not been determined yet, decided to table discussion on whether to charge a fee to the following month's meeting.

❖ **CEC Meeting Conduct**

- Matt mentioned that in the past to foster open discussion and sharing of ideas, it was allowed for CEC members to remain anonymous as Matt brought up items for discussion / calls for votes on behalf of anonymous CEC members. Matt mentioned that as time passed, it was becoming clear that this was not the best / most efficient way of running the chapter. The same items were being brought up for discussion / votes repeatedly without the CEC members knowing the identity of the person who wishes for the items to be re-discussed / re-voted, and items were being requested for discussion and then no one is willing to discuss the item when it is brought up for discussion. Matt mentioned that he had received complaints from CEC members regarding how the meetings were being run; in particular, allowing CEC members to remain anonymous. Matt mentioned that he did not propose going to Roberts Rules of Order; however, he proposed that if a CEC member wants an item to be voted on, a motion should be made and seconded, and no anonymity be granted. That way all CEC members know who is bringing up an item for discussion and who desires a vote be held. Matt mentioned that he believes we are a friendly group and everyone should feel comfortable sharing their opinions, even if they differ from other CEC members. Matt mentioned that he will let Elaine as chapter president determine how she wishes to run future meetings, and what he is saying is from his experience as chapter president.

❖ **Citizen-Centric Report**

- Julio contacted Matt saying he is working on the chapter's Citizen-Centric Report (CCR), and that he plans to have it completed by next week. Thus, the chapter will meet the September 30th CCR submission deadline to obtain bonus chapter recognition points.

❖ **North-Central Region Challenge**

- The North Central Region "Challenge" is a contest being run by Regional Vice President Eric Busse this chapter year.

SUMMARY OF MEETING-Continued

❖ **North-Central Region Challenge** (Continued)

- The participants are all the chapters in the North-Central region (our chapter, the Madison chapter, the three Indianapolis chapters, the Springfield chapter and the Minneapolis chapter).
- A prize, which has not yet been disclosed, will be given to the winning chapter.
- Matt sent to all the CEC members an email listing the activities the chapter can earn points on. In addition, there are monthly activities that the chapter can do to earn additional points.
- The September activity was received after last month's CEC meeting. The September activity involved contacting a past national president, asking three questions, and reporting the answers to Eric Busse.
- Matt completed the September challenge by contacting past national president Bobby Derrick. Matt forwarded Bobby Derrick's response to all the CEC members.
- This challenge is separate from the points earned in the Chapter Recognition Program.

❖ **Update On Joint Event**

- Our chapter is still looking into holding a joint event. We are awaiting the Madison chapter's response regarding their polling of chapter members on proposed activity, acceptable cost, time of event, etc.

❖ **Chapter President Transition**

- Matt mentioned that effective at tomorrow's Continuing Education Seminar, Elaine will become the chapter's president. After that time, everyone will need to call Matt past-president.
- Elaine made some brief comments about the chapter. She praised the chapter's past work and said she is committed to having a successful chapter year.