

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS**

**Tuesday, August 25, 2020**

President Kimberly Eck called the regular meeting of the Board of Directors, National Organization of Research Development Professionals (NORDP) to order at 1:35 pm Central on August 25, 2020.

The following Directors were present at the meeting: Eva Allen, Joanna Downer, Rachel Dresbeck, Kimberly Eck, Faye Farmer, Jerilyn Hansen, Jill Jividen, Kim Littlefield (absent 2:00 – 3:00 pm CT), Jennifer Lyon Gardner, Anne Maglia, Nathan Meier, Anne Pascucci, Michael Preuss, Paul Tuttle, and Etta Ward. Immediate Past President Karen Fletcher also was present from 1:35 pm – 2:00 pm CT.

**Consent Agenda:**

- Draft July 28, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes – Eck
- Ward moved (seconded by Jividen) to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.
- Note that committee reports were not submitted this month, as the Board resets the schedule for committee report submission. The next set of committee reports is due to Board liaisons by Thursday, September 3, to be linked to the September 22 Board meeting agenda and discussed by the Executive Committee at their September 8 meeting.

**General Announcements:**

**Reminder: September Board Retreat – Eck**

- Board retreat takes place Monday-Tuesday, September 14-15, 2020, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm CT each day. Breaks will be included during the day, but sometimes these will be working breaks.
- KRA Year 1 champions will be asked to provide a year-end report on their KRA objectives ahead of the retreat.
- Retreat will focus on strategic planning, approving the FY21 budget, and governance - focusing on Board and organizational culture. Eck is working with Jim Booth and Laura Nakoneczny from FMPR to build out the agenda.
- Ward requests that the Board ensure that the retreat is a safe space for open discussion.
- Pre-read/prep materials will include brief videos, some budget materials and KRA Year 1 reports.

**Reminder: FY21 Committee Budget Requests – Hansen**

- So far, Revenue and Finance (R&F) has received FY21 budget requests from PD, Mentoring, and Member Services
- Reminder to other committees to submit their budget requests - R&F needs to review these budgets at their next meeting on Sept 2, so that they can be reviewed by the full Board at the Board retreat.
- Ward asked whether committee budgets need to include requests related to the Strategic Plan or KRAs. The Board and R&F will consider KRA/Strategic Plan requests on a rolling basis - these do not have to be finalized by the September Board retreat.

**NORDP Sponsor Website – Eck**

- The NORDP website has been updated to include a page that promotes year-round sponsorship opportunities.
- Dresbeck noted that the org tried this strategy a few years ago, which resulted in InfoReady's sponsorship of NORD grants, but in previous years it was harder for sponsors to wrap their

heads around the concept of year-round sponsorship because they were more used to supporting large in-person events like conferences. In the post-COVID era, sponsors are seeing the value of year-round sponsorship more.

- Ward asked whether there has been discussion about regional NORDP sponsorship. Fletcher noted that this had been discussed during her presidency (2019-2020), but that the discussion had been left unresolved. Dresbeck observed that the challenge with respect to regional NORDP sponsorship is that it would be disadvantageous to have regional sponsorship competing with national-level sponsorship of the org.

#### **Discussion Items:**

##### **2021-2022 Conference Hotel Contract – Hansen**

- NORDP had negotiated a 3-year conference hotel contract (2020-2022) with Hyatt Hotels, with the help of the org's event management vendor, Designing Events (DE). DE had negotiated commissions written into the hotel contract, on the order of 10% of sold hotel rooms.
- However, since NORDP has selected a different conference management vendor through its RFP process, this creates issue with the contract with Hyatt Hotels.
- Hansen has consulted with NORDP's legal counsel, who recommend that the new conference management vendor renegotiate the contract's terms with Hyatt.
- Jividen moved (seconded by Downer) that the Board approve new conference management vendor to move forward with conference hotel renegotiations with Hyatt Hotels for 2021 and 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

##### **Board Development Activity – Interpreting Budgets – Hansen**

- During the Board meeting, the Board reviewed an example NORDP budget together to help calibrate their budget interpretation skills for the September Board retreat.
- Prior to the retreat, Board members will receive copies of committee budgets as well as strategic plan KRA budgets. In addition to these budgets, organizational budget items will also need to be considered. Organizational budget items are not tied to the strategic plan yet are still necessary to support the organization and its members.
- Things to consider when reviewing budgets:
  - Is now/this year the time to spend the money on this particular item?
  - Think about where expenses fall:
    - Is it an organizational expense -- key to keeping NORDP running?
    - Is it elemental to NORDP's mission?
    - Does it apply to a particular KRA? Does it further the goals of the Strategic Plan?
  - A qualified expense needs to be a "yes" in at least one of the above categories.
- Dresbeck asked for copy of SAC's budget from last year. **Action: Hansen** will send.
- The two biggest pools of money (membership revenue and conference) are in flux, but hopefully will have some more clarity on these in time for retreat.
- Farmer commented that the Board should be looking at expanding NORDP's revenue generation opportunities as we approve our committee budgets and the important work they are doing for the KRAs.
- Ward noted that the Board also needs to be considering how it is communicating NORDP's value proposition to the membership in the current global climate. How are we making the statement of the current value of being a member?
- Jividen said that membership numbers are being tracked, and NORDP has been weathering the financial crisis well. RD101 had a huge response - can only accept 25-30 people and 78 registered within the first 30 minutes of RD101 being announced.

- Dresbeck emphasized that the org needs a marketing strategy to communicate the value of membership, and that a paid professional communicator is needed to help create and execute the strategy. The strategy should include marketing not only to individual members, but also to CROs and VPRs.
- Ward said that as NORDP starts to package the value of membership, it needs to consider the quality of its tech support, reflecting on recent glitches in scheduling meetings, accessing webinars, etc.

#### **FirstPoint Management Resources (FPMR) Contract Renegotiation – Lyon Gardner/Hansen**

- As R&F was evaluating conference support contract renegotiation in 2019-2020, Fletcher had asked R&F to evaluate expanding the FPMR contract from its current, hourly billing contract to a fixed-rate contract. As FPMR continues to expand what it's doing for NORDP to relieve burden on the membership and Board, this model makes more sense.
- R&F is proposing to move all accounting in-house with FPMR, rather than having it distributed between FPMR and external vendors. This will expedite financial processing.
- R&F is also considering adding communications management to the scope of FPMR duties.
- Laura Nakoneczny and Jim Booth from FPMR have provided NORDP with a draft agreement for adding financial management and communications management to scope of duties. This is what the Board is voting on today.
- Preuss: Will this be cost-neutral?
  - Hansen: Adding financial management is cost-neutral. Comms management will be an added cost, since the responsibilities are currently covered by the (all-volunteer) Communications Working Group.
  - Eck: Trying to source these services from separate vendors would be more expensive than centralizing them with a single vendor. The FPMR comms proposal is very cost-efficient.
- Hansen explained that this would be a two-year agreement with FPMR. NORDP can reevaluate after 2 years to see whether we're happy with this.
- Farmer noted that there is risk in depending on one organization for multiple services.
- Dresbeck noted that FPMR has not yet provided a detailed proposal covering comms and marketing. Comms and marketing are two separate services. Marketing includes attracting new members and protecting the brand. Comms includes website redesign, as well as extracting knowledge/information from committees and documenting it. That said, Dresbeck acknowledged that NORDP likely does not have the budget to cover a comprehensive comms and marketing plan, so FPMR is probably the best option we have right now.
- Lyon Gardner asked whether expanded comms/marketing services could be discussed at the September retreat. Hansen said that should be feasible.
- Eck said that Jim Booth wrote the contract language very generally so that NORDP can define later what is in scope and how it should be operationalized. NORDP needs to work with FPMR to refine the scope, rather than request a wholly new proposal from FPMR.
- Preuss moved (seconded by Pascucci) for the Board to approve Revenue & Finance to move forward with renegotiating the FPMR contract to include consolidated financial services and comms/marketing services. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Update on NORD – Eck**

- A sticking point in ongoing discussions about NORD's status has been whether NORD should have corporate authority - if a committee has corporate authority, then it must be composed of majority Board members. The current NORD members do not see corporate authority status as

a necessity and are comfortable with NORD being converted to a committee without corporate authority, so that the committee can accept many more non-Board members.

- NORD sees some value in maintaining distinction between operational and thought-leadership work. The InfoReady seed grant process is really much more operational. NORD has one thought piece/paper in the works right now, primarily authored by Michael Spires, although there might be opportunity for this to be a more collaborative paper.
- Ward reiterated that thought leaders in NORDP come from all academic and professional backgrounds. Dresbeck agreed, and spoke about the history of NORD's founding. NORD was a growth out of Science of Team Science and other orgs. NORD grants are intended to support projects that: 1) synthesize existing scholarly work to package evidence into easily applied and digestible tools for the research community to improve research-impacts design and practice; and/or 2) enable small-scale innovative scholarship that explores new horizons and advances knowledge about research impact practices. Both types of projects require recipients to create products such as guidance documents, concept papers, scholarly articles, decision support tools, multimedia supports, instructive videos, or other creative or scholarly outputs.
- Tuttle discussed how he, Preuss and others have been thinking about future directions of RD. Preuss advised that some kind of structure needs to be put in place for these conversations. Discussion ensued about whether KRA 5 is fully encompassed by NORD.
- Farmer noted that NORDP tends to collapse on itself when it's drilling down to ideas. She would be interested in seeing a plan for how to incorporate a larger swath of membership in defining NORD. Farmer noted that her call for volunteers for RD credentialing discussion captured 35 people from across the organization (some in committees). She her process as a model to call for volunteers for informational interviews to gauge interest in aspects of NORD.
- Downer suggested that scientific editors' networks could also be asked what they think would be interesting. Dresbeck suggested that data governance would be a good subject for a working group this year.
- **Action: Eck** will write back to NORD, looping in Tuttle, Dresbeck and Littlefield to continue discussion.

#### **NORDP Fellows Charter Class – Jividen**

- NORDP Fellows designation, a lifetime honor, is meant to be the highest honor that the organization bestows. For this reason, several Board members noted, the org should be cautious not to give Fellow designation to too many people. Need to ensure an expectation isn't created that people who roll off the Board automatically become designated Fellows.
- Meier noted that the Fellows designation was modeled after the National Academy of Inventors, a relatively new organization that has upped its ante on what's required to be inducted as a member.
- Downer asked who will make decisions on electing fellows. Following appointment of a charter class, members will nominate colleagues for the designation. An awards task force review committee will consider nominations and make recommendations to the Board.
- **Action: Lyon Gardner** to initiate email vote in Basecamp for Board to adopt slate of charter class candidates (motion: Eck; second: Meier).

The following agenda item was tabled for the September Board meeting, due to time constraints:

- **Governance Committee Reboot (continued from July) – Lyon Gardner**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm Central.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Lyon Gardner, Secretary

**Note:** The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. Central; 12:30 p.m. Mountain; 11:30 p.m. Pacific; 2:30 p.m. Eastern.