

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

**Tuesday, February 23, 2016**

President Rachel Dresbeck called the meeting of the Board of Directors, National Organization of Research Development Professionals (NORDP) to order at 1:38 pm Central on Tuesday, January 26, 2016.

The following Directors were present at the meeting: Jeff Agnoli, Rachel Dresbeck, Karen Eck, Gretchen Kiser, Ioannis Konstantinidis, Marjorie Piechowski, Terri Soelberg, Michael Spires, David Stone, and Peggy Sundermeyer. Alicia Knoedler and Jacob Levin were absent.

**Approval of Draft January 26 Board Meeting Minutes – Rachel Dresbeck**

Ioannis Konstantinidis moved (seconded by Jeff Agnoli) to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

**Committee Reports:**

*Executive Committee – Rachel Dresbeck.*

The Executive Committee met February 9 and had no action items that will not be discussed elsewhere on the agenda for today. During the meeting, Dresbeck and Peggy Sundermeyer agreed to consider helping lead the External Engagement Committee after July 1. In the meantime, a message will be sent to the listserv to recruit additional members so the committee can function.

*Executive Conference Committee – Rachel Dresbeck*

There have been site visits in Salt Lake City and Denver. The committee is recommending two final sites for the conference: the Omni Interlocken in Denver and the downtown Marriott in Salt Lake City. Dianne Norcutt from Designing Events is in touch with both hotels to confirm their final rates and packages, and we hope to have a recommendation for the 2017 meeting site at or before the next Board meeting. The Executive Conference Committee, in addition to working on site selection, also recommends the conference co-chairs and a site manager. There are potential site managers in both Salt Lake City and in Denver, which is a requirement for a city to be considered for the conference location.

*2016 Conference Committee – Gretchen Kiser*

All of the notifications for abstracts selected for presentation went out February 22. No submissions were rejected outright, although in a few cases the Program Committee recommended combining two presentations, or a change of focus and/or title, when it was felt that doing so would improve the quality of the program. Fifty presentations were accepted as posters, and 37 as oral presentations. Kiser is waiting to get confirmation from presenters whose talks were switched to the poster format that they are willing to accept the change. This is the largest number of posters we've ever had, doubling the size of last year's session. The committee is still grouping them by topics.

Kiser is anxious that we do not yet have confirmed speakers from funding agencies. There are a couple of speaking slots that we would like to fill with a representative from a foundation, NIH, NEH, or another agency. She asked that Board members reach out if they have connections. Michael Spires asked if Kiser had received the information he had forwarded previously, and she did not recall receiving it. Spires has a potential foundation speaker, and will forward the information to Kiser again.

There is a short session for the NORDP leadership to say a few words, and the committee is looking to narrow down the scope and give this session a title. David Stone asked what the session was. Kiser replied that, as previously discussed, this is an opportunity for the leadership to discuss NORD and LDRD and bring them to the attention of the membership. It could also be a spot for introducing the new executive director. Rachel Dresbeck added that the session is in the early afternoon of Day 2 and is currently titled "Message from Leadership." This session is half an hour, and will be followed by a half-hour for committee overview and the committee meetings themselves. Dresbeck said that if we have an executive director in place, this would be a good vehicle for introducing him/her. Kiser will post the schedule-at-a-glance so members can read it. The committee meetings have been moved from being first thing in the morning (or last item of the day) to a more focused slot in the middle of the day and in a way intended to foster participation on the committees. The committee chairs will all be asked to give a four-minute lightning talk about what their committee does and its value to the organization. Within that half-hour, all of the committees will have been described, right before the session breaks out into the committee meetings. The hope is that more members will want to participate in the meetings once they understand what the committees do.

Kiser and Dresbeck need to have some additional conversations about sponsors, which they will schedule. We have 165 registrants to date. Next Monday is meant to be the end of early registration, and now that the announcements have gone out about abstracts being selected, she expects an additional bump. Dresbeck asked what our registration target was, and Kiser replied that it was 400. The third keynote, Michelle Bennett from the National Cancer Institute's Center for Research Strategy, who will speak about what funders are doing from inside to help drive innovative research. Peggy Sundermeyer added that for the 2015 meeting, we had 190 paid registrants by the end of February, 146 in March, 69 in April, and 2 in May. With another week left in early registration, we could easily have another 35 registrants. Jeff Agnoli suggested reminding members that the hotel registration block does tend to fill up quickly, and to register early to make sure that rooms are available at the conference rate.

Kiser noted that during the site visit it became apparent that the president's suite, where we have traditionally held the president's reception, will likely be unsuitable for it this year if we continue to have similar numbers to last year's. The suite reception area will only comfortably accommodate about 15 people at a time. There are, however, several other spaces (indoor and outdoor) that can be used. Kiser is working with Dianne Norcutt from Designing Events on locating these events. We may also be able to use one of the hotel's on-site restaurants for the Board's meeting. Dresbeck replied that we can use the suite for the Board meeting proper, and then can go out to dinner afterward.

Dresbeck asked that Kiser inform the Board of what our responsibilities are and the times for all of them. Spires mentioned that he had prepared a document for that purpose for last year's meeting, and offered to send it to Kiser so that she can modify it for the current conference. Dresbeck asked that Board members who have not already made their travel plans please remember to share them with the Secretary, and asked for a report on the information he has received to date. Spires replied that he is missing most of the Board members' information at this point, with only himself, Dresbeck, Karen Eck, and Terri Soelberg having shared information. Board members make their own reservations at the hotel, but NORDP will cover the cost of upgrades for certain positions and also those nights before the conference that are taken up by Board business once the registrations are completed.

#### *Member Services – Marjorie Piechowski/Terri Soelberg*

Terri Soelberg had several membership drive ideas from the last committee meeting to share with the Board. Also, the regional representative from the Great Lakes region has resigned; Soelberg is looking for a replacement. The survey has gone out to former NORDP members who did not renew, and there

have been 30 responses to date. The main reasons respondents have given for not renewing with NORDP were either changing jobs or retiring, or needing to prioritize professional memberships due to limited financial resources. Some suggestions for improvement that have come up have included the listserv, improving webinar offerings (which Ioannis and EPPD are working on), making the conference more applicable to areas other than the hard sciences, and the conference becoming stale, which speaks to the discussion last month about not wanting to allow speakers to repeat sessions from year to year outside of the fundamentals talks.

Marjorie Piechowski found it interesting that the two comments received about conference content specifically referenced predominantly undergraduate institutions and international considerations. Perhaps it would be advisable for next year's conference committee to include some relevant content, or possibly also a webinar on either, would be beneficial. Peggy Sundermeyer will be hosting a networking dinner on PUIs at this year's meeting.

Piechowski also reported on efforts to begin updating some of the member content on the NORDP website, in particular the list of consultants. This list is quite out of date and also isn't very comprehensive. The committee feels it is an appropriate service to offer the membership, so Peg AtKisson drafted a quick survey, which Piechowski has made some changes to, and posted it to Basecamp. This is a starting point for gathering information that can be used to update and maintain the list.

Gretchen Kiser remarked that the website content in general needs to be kept current and fresh, and it isn't clear who is responsible for doing so. Rachel Dresbeck replied that it would be a job for the executive director. Ioannis Konstantinidis asked Piechowski if the committee had a sense for how the consultants' list would be maintained. She replied that it does not, but is working on it. The consultants list was originally derived from NORDP members' reports of hiring an individual or a firm, and finding them useful or helpful, without sorting or vetting or commentary from the leadership. Piechowski suggested that perhaps an annual survey could go out to the membership requesting information, but there are other avenues available and the committee has not yet settled on a preferred option. Dresbeck added that many institutions have preferred vendor lists, and a task for the executive director could be to send out an RFP for people and firms with appropriate qualifications. A subcommittee could then review the information and put together a list from that. Piechowski replied that she liked the idea of preferred vendors, but indicated we would need to determine how these would be vetted. Also, something that was not in the original draft of the survey (but which should be included) was evaluation services for proposals and projects. Dresbeck agreed, and indicated that this is a project we can devote time to in the future. If we are not confident in the quality of our list, we can always ask Matt Dunn to remove it from the website until we're ready to revise it. Sundermeyer asked whether the committee has the volunteers, time, and interest to keep this project moving. Piechowski suggested tabling the project until we have an executive director if we're going to be developing an RFP and making it more robust. Dresbeck concurred that this was a reasonable approach. But if the committee feels it is important to move sooner rather than later and has a volunteer who wants to work on it, they should go ahead. The problem is (as it has always been) that we don't just want to provide an unverified list: we need a vetting process, which we don't have, and neither do we have bandwidth right now to cope with such a process even if it were in place. Sundermeyer suggested there might be issues with vetting consultants, opening up liability and reputational concerns. She would prefer more of a LinkedIn model: there would be an endorsement if someone had used their services, and they would be invited to provide comments. This approach is also more reasonable given the resources NORDP has available. Piechowski agreed: rather than passing judgment on someone's expertise, we would simply be passing on information based on experience with them and their services. Michael Spires asked how such a

process would work when we have NORDP members who do consulting on the side. It's one thing when someone recommends a third party, but what about a NORDP member effectively recommending him/herself? Sundermeyer responded that the list would simply state that NORDP member X offers certain consulting services, and people who have employed that member could then comment on the quality of the services received. Dresbeck noted that we could literally use LinkedIn for this: put the list on NORDP's account there. Soelberg asked who manages the LinkedIn group. Sundermeyer replied that no one manages it per se; when someone requests affiliation with the group, she adds them (approximately once per month), but does not check whether or not they are NORDP members. Dresbeck added that this could be a way of recruiting new members, once we have an executive director in place who can devote more attention to it.

Soelberg communicated a list of ideas for increasing membership that had gotten favorable responses in the committee's discussions, and asked for feedback from the Board about what can be worked on now and what might need to wait for an executive director. Dresbeck replied that the list looked very good. An institutional membership structure does not make economic sense for NORDP at the moment, so that option should be deferred. Something that runs through a number of the other suggestions, but which wasn't expressly identified, is using the annual renewal as an opportunity for recruitment. Memberclicks likely has a webinar on this, and they have several good ones about using the Memberclicks tool for boosting recruitment. Spires added that he had just gotten an email from NORDP's election services provider, Survey and Ballot Systems, about a new ebook they've put together on why people don't vote in elections. Since it was free, Spires downloaded it, thinking it might be something the Nominating Committee could use in its work, but if it would be helpful for Member Services as well, he would be happy to post it to Basecamp. Jeff Agnoli asked what the committee had in mind when it mentioned incentives for people who recruit members to NORDP—discounts to their membership, gift cards, or some other mechanism? Soelberg replied that the committee hadn't been thinking of financial remuneration, merely some form of recognition. However, if there are funds to provide incentives to the top few recruiters that would be nice—but how would we track recruitment to provide such incentives? If we know that there are people who are ambassadors and who through their work bring people to NORDP, it would be nice to recognize them as such. Agnoli replied that Sundermeyer had suggested making an effort, during the annual meeting, to recognize, for example, institutions with the most members in attendance, or who had increased their membership significantly over time, the region(s) with the most members in attendance, etc. Gretchen Kiser liked the idea of a certificate, or even just a mention or slide during the conference sessions, for institutions with the most members present, if we can get at the data. She asked that if members had ideas for this kind of recognition to send them to her. Sundermeyer replied that the awards committee could include them as part of their work, and leave it to Designing Events to come up with something for recognition.

Ioannis Konstantinidis asked if we have someone working on doing media outreach or social media during the conference. Dresbeck replied that the conference communications committee has a good team in place. Kiser will let the committee know about these recognition categories so they can be incorporated into the social media campaign.

#### *External Engagement – Jacob Levin*

No report. Rachel Dresbeck noted that we have received one request for travel funds, and wanted to make sure that the committee within External Engagement that awards these funds is giving them to people who are representing NORDP, not merely to people who want to go to a conference. Peggy Sundermeyer agreed that the purpose of the travel funds is for NORDP members to travel to represent NORDP at a meeting. Jeff Agnoli asked whether this meant that the member was presenting a poster or presentation, or was simply at the meeting to represent the organization in some capacity. Dresbeck

replied that it was ultimately up to the committee, but that it would be a mistake just to give funds to people to travel, unless that travel was in service to NORDP—which could take different forms. If the member isn't giving a poster or presentation, it would be difficult to determine whether they had in fact been representing NORDP. Ioannis Konstantinidis asked whether or not members applying for travel funds needed to present some kind of plan for representing NORDP as part of the process, or provide a report afterward on what they did. Sundermeyer replied that both were part of the process, and that the guidelines required a “substantive participation” at the meeting, whether making a presentation, meeting with the organization’s leadership to develop future partnerships, or have some comparable presence at the meeting. As Treasurer, Sundermeyer sees all of the applications since they contain a budget, although she does not vote on the recipients. All of the applications she has seen have advanced at least one of the purposes identified for the scholarships. Her criticisms of the process are, first, that we do not sufficiently advertise the opportunity (so we wind up giving funds to the same people who know they're available), and second, that while a report on the member’s activity at the meeting is a condition of being reimbursed for the expenses incurred, nothing happens with those reports. Gretchen Kiser suggested that having the reports posted to the blog should become a standard part of the process. Sundermeyer agreed, adding that doing so would also be a great way of advertising the availability of funds. Kiser also suggested that the chair of the External Engagement Committee should be conveying these reports to the Board. Jeff Agnoli has referred the individual who contacted him about the scholarship to the online application, and once it has been completed, the cognizant committee will review it in accordance with the established procedures.

#### *Enhancing Collaboration – Karen Eck*

The gift cards worked very well. The survey was open for all of January, and four \$50 gift cards were given out at random to people who completed the survey. The committee is currently analyzing the data. There were 200 people who responded, but only 100 people provided actual scenarios of research development collaboration efforts in detail, so those 100 responses are likely to be the only ones considered for the analysis. The quantitative results have been compiled after the data were cleaned and de-identified. Quyen Wickham is developing a rubric for analyzing the qualitative responses. The survey was set up to allow participants to provide up to three examples for each point, but most respondents put everything in the first box, meaning that some work will be necessary to sort all of these responses. The survey results will also inform the workshop that will be presented at this year’s annual meeting.

Gretchen Kiser asked how the results would be shared outside of the workshop. Eck replied that a report will be compiled and provided to membership, and data will eventually be incorporated into the continuum. Depending on the results, the committee may also opt to write up an article for publication in an appropriate scholarly journal. The report should be ready by early summer, if not before. Perhaps a summary might be available around the time of the conference, but Eck will know better next month.

Jeff Agnoli asked whether the winners of the incentive cards had been announced on the listserv. Eck replied that she had, after getting permission from each winner. Agnoli also suggested using the listserv to thank members for their participation and teasing some of the results as they become available—while stressing that the first full report will be made at the conference, and followed by a complete report. It could be a way of driving conference attendance. Kiser noted that we had given a preliminary report on the salary survey at last year’s business meeting. While that might not be the best venue for discussing this report, even if a full report isn’t ready by the time of the meeting, it would be a good idea to alert the membership to what has been completed, and let them know to expect further details as the analysis goes forward.

Peggy Sundermeyer asked Kiser if she had any metrics on the use of the tool developed for the salary survey to allow members to sort and filter the data for their own purposes, and whether that might make a good presentation for this year's business meeting. Kiser responded that she doesn't have metrics, but we could potentially ask to have information about hits on the salary calculator. She will reach out to Matt Dunn and ask him to provide some information.

*Effective Practices and Professional Development – Ioannis Konstantinidis*

No action items. The mentoring group decided that they are going to do no-cost options. A report has been posted to Basecamp. The main thing is that the mentoring group will go live with their sign-up next month. There will also be an oral presentation at the conference about the road to the certificate. Our first online workshop already has 10 participants signed up. The creative thinking workshop series will take a different approach, utilizing the Circle option in Memberclicks and other asynchronous methods, so EPPD will have the opportunity to compare how each approach works. There was a recent webinar on evaluating an RD office, another one is coming up from Kari Whittenberger-Keith on March 11 about preparing conference presentations and posters.

Gretchen Kiser asked whether it might be worthwhile to have a table in the vendors area, or some other kind of notice at the annual meeting to announce the mentor program. Since the mentor program has been consistently popular with the members and is now being re-launched, it should get more attention. Konstantinidis agreed, and added that the committee had discussed having one-pagers at the registration desk for each of their programs. Having a poster or table that could be available would also be a good idea, and he will mention it to Anna Brailovsky. Kiser suggested asking each of the committees to provide a flyer or some form of handout that could be included in the conference packet, in addition to the description of the committee in the program book. Rachel Dresbeck agreed, and asked all Board members to cooperate. They can start with the basic description of their committee from the NORDP website, and then add information on current projects, for example. Peggy Sundermeyer reminded Konstantinidis that he had requested similar information for last year's conference, but Konstantinidis replied that it wasn't enough to amount to a full page. He will share what he collected and will send this information out later today. Sundermeyer suggested thinking more in terms of programs than about committees, at least in the written materials: we want people to get excited about helping with a certain project, rather than just joining a committee.

*Revenue/Finance Committee – Peggy Sundermeyer*

Jeff Agnoli recommended deferring discussion of investment of NORDP's reserve funds to next month, in view of time constraints. Peggy Sundermeyer noted that our contract with Talley is up for renewal soon. In light of the discussion at the Board retreat about wanting to allow the executive director an opportunity to make his/her own determination of the need for (and types of) administrative support, she recommends the Board consider extending the Talley contract for another four to six months. This would allow time to bring the ED on board and then have a couple of months to assess the services Talley provides (or could provide) before making a decision about administrative support going forward. Agnoli moved (seconded by Michael Spires) to extend the Talley contract by up to 6 months while we assess our needs. Sundermeyer offered a friendly amendment that the contract not exceed more than 10% of its current cost, which was accepted. The motion carried unanimously. Sundermeyer will report back on both the term and the cost at the next Board meeting.

Sundermeyer asked whether we had advertised the new membership dues rates. Dresbeck responded that we had agreed to wait until after the end of early registration for this year's conference. She has a reminder on her calendar to send out the notification after early registration closes, which will need to move back if we extend the early registration period.

#### *Governance Committee – David Stone*

Stone suggested that the Board should begin to consider how it wants to relate to the executive director, since it looks like we're on the way to getting one. Some guidance should be provided for Board members about our roles as Board members, and the ED's role, so all of that is clear. Also, since the ED will be an employee of the Board, we need to begin developing employment policies so these can be in place once the position is filled and the ED will understand what his or her expectations are. Peggy Sundermeyer commented that in her experience on other boards, it is the Executive Committee that has supervisory responsibilities for the executive director. Rachel Dresbeck concurred. Stone agreed to help in developing the guidance and the policies. We can draw materials from Board Source if they have some. Stone asked for additional volunteers for the Governance Committee (which is currently made up of just Stone and Michael Spires), given the amount of work it will need to accomplish in a relatively short time. Spires added that we still have a number of policies to develop and/or refine, since at the moment the only policies in the NORDP Policies and Procedures document that is referred to at numerous points in the Bylaws are those relating to elections and the Executive Conference Committee. Dresbeck asked if it would be possible to have a draft available for discussion at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, and offered to help if it were needed. Board members will have to commit to spending a good deal of time discussing these matters in Orlando, though hopefully at least some can be resolved ahead of the annual meeting. Board members should plan to be meeting from approximately 3:00 on the Sunday before the conference begins.

#### *Nominating Committee – Michael Spires*

The call for nominations has gone out on the listserv. Board members should nominate people (and consider applying to run again if eligible). The closing date for nominations is March 18, and the closing date for applications is two weeks later, allowing the committee time to contact those who were nominated, determine their willingness to run, and then the nominees need to fill out the application before the closing date for applications hits. The committee hopes it won't need to extend the period for applications, but has left enough time in the process to allow for an extension if needed and still have sufficient time to open voting two weeks prior to the annual meeting.

Rachel Dresbeck asked how many applications we had received. Jeff Agnoli said that he had seen one application in Memberclicks, and Spires added that he had nominated one additional person.

#### **Additional Business**

##### *Executive Director Search Update – Rachel Dresbeck*

We have five candidates that are being interviewed, out of approximately 60 applicants.

##### *Policy on Groups Within NORDP – Rachel Dresbeck*

This discussion will be referred to the Governance Committee. NORDP Northeast has just elected officers. The new chair is Kathy Cataneo from the University of New Hampshire, and Susan Gomes from Harvard. Amy Carroll from Brown is chair-elect. Caitlin McDermott-Murphy is the communications chair, and Peg AtKisson is the membership coordinator. This is a group that is a great model, and when we develop our overall policy we should look at how they have been operating.

##### *Board Responsibilities During 2016 Conference – Rachel Dresbeck*

As noted above, Board members should plan on meeting at or around 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 22. Board members should also remember to send their travel details to Dresbeck and to the Secretary as soon as they have completed their arrangements.

*Board Officers for Next Year – Rachel Dresbeck*

We need to elect a vice president/president-elect, a treasurer-elect, and a secretary/secretary-elect. Michael Spires noted that the Bylaws allow for assistants to both the Treasurer and the Secretary. New Board members are encouraged to consider whether they want to take on a Board officer role.

**Other Business**

Jeff Agnoli noted that two individuals have nominated the same person for the Holly Falk-Krzesinski Award. No nominations have been received for the Rising Star award as yet, so if Board members intend to nominate someone, they should contact Agnoli, or if they have questions. He suggested that possibly Kathy Cataneo from NORDP Northeast would be a good candidate for this award. Gretchen Kiser and Rachel Dresbeck both have nominees in mind, but have not yet had time to complete the nomination process. The nomination deadline will be extended to February 29. Kiser asked whether there was a list on the website of past award recipients. Agnoli replied that there is for the HFK award, though it needs to be updated with Anne Windham's information since she received the award last year. He will work with Matt Dunn to update the page.

There being no further business, Gretchen Kiser moved to adjourn (Terri Soelberg seconded) at 3:04 p.m. Central. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Spires, Secretary

**Note:** The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, 2016, from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Central Time (2:30-4pm Eastern, 11:30am- 1pm Pacific and 12:30-2pm Mountain).

*Approved by the Board of Directors at its March 22, 2016 meeting.*