

MINUTES
HLAA-CA SEMIANNUAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Oakland, California
February 16, 2015

Attendees:

Attending Trustees and Officers: Jeff Chess, Janel Edmiston, Zina Jawadi, Ram Kakkar, Lynne Kinsey, Jim Montgomery, Gail Morrison, Debra Rogers, Ann Thomas
Attending via Skype: Nanci Linke-Ellis, Meg Wallhagen, Don Senger (afternoon only)
Chapter Leaders: Alan Katsura, Bob Zastro (Diablo Valley); Sally Edwards, Raegene Castle (Peninsula); Maggie Iller, Stephen Kinsey (Silicon Valley)
Guests: Cindy Jagger (afternoon only)
Captioning by Carilyn Cipolla via Connection Magic and Skype
Chair: Zina Jawadi

Opening

The meeting was called to order at 9:14 am, but was delayed, because the remote captioning was not functioning properly.

New members, Debra Rogers and Ann Thomas, as well as all members, introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes from previous Meeting

A motion was made and passed to approve the 10/22/2014 BOT meeting minutes. Those that were not at this meeting abstained.

Election of Officers

The proposed slate of officers for 2015-2016 was presented:

Treasurer—Jeff Chess

Secretary—Lynne Kinsey

Vice president—Gail Morrison

President—Zina Jawadi

The officers were elected as presented. Zina welcomed each officer with a letter outlining the officer's responsibilities.

Treasurer's Report—Jeff Chess

The Year-to-Date 12/31/2014 Financial Report was presented with the following added comments. The final 2014 numbers show that HLAA-CA is in better shape than expected. Meg and Bill Wallhagen's first \$2,000 donation is included in the report. Meg Wallhagen is the Chairperson of the National HLAA Board and an ex-officio member of the HLAA-CA board.

In 2014 Jeff Chess closed the HLAA-CA Savings Account and moved the balance into the checking Account. HLAA-CA will be receiving less interest but will incur no fees. The current balance is approximately \$20,500.

HLAA-CA's Liability insurance and Director and Officers insurance will expire this year. The total annual premium is \$1,560 with no deductible. Furthermore, HLAA-CA would have to take both insurance policies. HLAA-CA can get insurance through the HLAA carriers for \$935 per year, but there is a \$5,000 deductible for each occurrence. Also, Jeff Chess would have to deal with both HLAA and the insurance company. Jeff Chess recommended staying with what the current insurance.

Newsletter Report

Grace's report was included in the packet; Grace was not able to be present via Skype.

Financial status of the newsletter: the newsletter made more money than last year and brought in more ads.

Last year both Grace and Zina contributed the money they fundraised in the Walk4Hearing to the newsletter expenses.

It was suggested that other Trustees consider donating the money they raise from the Walk4Hearing to HLAA-CA and the newsletter.

A discussion was had about whether it was proper to solicit general funds and then immediately allocate them to a restricted use.

An HLAA-CA donation function has been added to the HLAA-CA website. A discussion was had about adding a donation form in the newsletter and whether there should be spaces to designate how a donation should be used. It was concluded that this discussion will continue via email.

It was moved and passed to put a form in the newsletter asking for HLAA-CA donations, and that the form can specify where that money should be used.

It was advised to make donation solicitation letters vague regarding their use so that HLAA-CA is not locked into something very specific, should circumstances change. Further, after a discussion, the motion was reworded and amended to say that the donation form in the newsletter would have space to designate that the money be allocated for HLAA-CA general funds, for the Newsletter, or for other.

Donation Form on Website

Janel indicated that the donation link on HLAA-CA website is very small and should be bigger.

Alan Katsura indicated that he had made a small donation via the website, and there was no way to return to the HLAA-CA website after the donation.

Ann recommended creating a fabulous and dynamic donation page, because people donate to causes that are compelling to them.

HLAA-CA Newsletter Editor

The potential new newsletter editor, Lisa Beth Snyder, a member of HLAA-LA, is currently in training with the current editor, Grace Tiessen. Lisa Beth Snyder has Journalism and Newsletter experience.

A request was made for a list of deadlines for articles to be easily accessible.

There was a comment that “the CA newsletter has become the So CAL newsletter.” There needs to be more input from Northern California. It was concluded that Janel and Nanci, as chapter coordinators, will ask chapters for more input.

It was suggested that definite deadlines for submitting newsletter articles, together with a request for interesting chapter stories, be printed in the newsletter, sent to this board, and sent to chapter leaders by Nanci and Janel.

Zina suggested including this information in the newsletter, so people know to look for it there. Moreover, it was recommended that reminders be sent stating that everyone has 6 weeks to send something, then another reminder at perhaps 4 weeks, and 2 weeks.

Website Report—Zina Jawadi

A donation button was added to the HLAA-CA website with the ability to use PayPal or credit cards. The gallery section was enhanced with photos. Unfortunately, the HLAA-CA website was hacked but was fixed, and a daily security scan added. The HLAA-CA website receives about 30 visitors per day, of which about 60% are the result of Google Searches.

Janel noted that the HLAA-CA website’s donation button is very small and the page is not particularly appealing or inviting to donors. She suggested it be embellished.

Ann cited the American Red Cross as having a particularly attractive page and suggested that others look at it for a positive example.

Southern California Coordinator’s Report—Nanci Linke-Ellis

There is a new Central Coast Chapter in the Santa Maria area; and new chapters in the City of Orange and in Santa Monica. The City of Orange has over 185 people on their mailing list and 22 members that come monthly.

South Coast Chapter has closed and is donating their leftover money and outreach supplies to other Southern California chapters.

Northern California Coordinator’s Report—Janel Edmiston

Some Northern California chapters had major changes. East bay chapter is reorganizing leadership. Sacramento chapter closed in January. The other Northern California chapters maintained their status quo.

Looping Report—Ram Kakkar

The Loop Installer in the Long Beach and Santa Barbara areas, Oto-Joy, has been installing at least one loop per month. They are well publicized in their communities and are being recognized by mayors, local politicians, and community leaders. Ram is working personally to get city council chambers looped. He would like to see chapters in other parts of California approach their council members, libraries, and houses of worship about installing loops. It is important to recognize successful loop installations and the local politicians that were instrumental in looping efforts.

Ann Thomas gave an update about the BART Looping Demo at the Colma BART Station in the Agent's Booth. It worked best with a T-Coil-only hearing Aid (HA) or Cochlear Implant setting, not on a Microphone/T-Coil (M-T setting). Some people thought that flashing light displays with station names was better than the loop. Others thought that, depending on where a person is, he/she could not always easily see and read those lighted signs. This BART station will keep the demo loop for at least 60 days. Comments are requested.

Ann commented that Northern California does not have enough professional loop installers to help in such a campaign. Using loop installers from Santa Barbara in the South or Grass Valley in the North adds travel time to the cost of installations. "How much will it cost?" is a first question asked by those approached.

Strategic Plan Proposal Report—Zina Jawadi

BOT members received Zina's Strategic Plan Proposal prior to this meeting for review. The plan focuses on high-level initiatives to reach HLAA-CA's goals. The tactical details will be determined at the committee/team level, not at the board level. Zina prefers the term "teams," rather than "committees," because she feels that committees make decisions whereas teams get things done. Her plan is based on the HLAA-CA Strategic Survey, which she conducted last December and January. All of the details are in the written Plan.

Zina discussed who is served by HLAA-CA, HLAA-CA's major priorities, and the plan to accomplish these priorities.

After Zina's well thought-out presentation, the attendees broke for lunch.

After lunch there was a lengthy discussion about the plan.

Zina concluded with some practical suggestions and a discussion about the frequency and timing of the BOT in-person and digital meetings. She suggested ways to reduce the numbers of emails exchanged, about limiting the use of reply-to-all when it is not necessary, and about revising new-email subjects making them more pertinent. She asked for later feedback on these topics

Strategic Plan Proposal Discussion

A discussion was had about whether there are enough people to carry out this strategic plan.

It was suggested that more publicity is needed, so people know HLAA-CA. More publicity could lead to more fundraising.

The average age of a member for some chapters is 60-80 years. Many do not use computers, email, or Facebook. For that reason, the printed newsletters must be used. Some members do not drive and some do not walk without helpful devices.

Concern was expressed for having both a Walk4Hearing and a state conference in the same year. Are there enough people to support both? They are both labor intensive.

Another concern was that HLAA-CA has never had a fundraising emphasis; members know how to talk about hearing loss issues, but they may not know how to raise funds. Ann Thomas has been successful at fundraising and getting in-kind donations; she stated that corporations will not give money to a board, for a concept/idea, or for a walk or conference. HLAA-CA needs to present a specific program. If the Fundraising Team wants to apply for grants, the team needs a prepared list of specific compelling programs for which to request money. Ann has many thoughts to share on developing personal relationships with those to approach and how to approach them. Ann will be on the Fundraising Team.

Also PR or marketing is crucial. Specific information about each program to fund is needed.

Jobs should be divided to utilize the BOT members. By nature, some members will do many tasks, but to get new people involved, they need to be given small tasks at first. Each team should decide how many other people from chapters they need to accomplish their goals. It was suggested to try to find other people outside of the chapters that have hearing loss and want to be involved. To do this, the BOT needs to advertize in newspapers and visit senior centers and senior residences.

The board will use a "Dashboard" to keep track of the status of tasks and projects. Some things will take more action time and time waiting for responses and work completion. Listing them on the dashboard insures all members know that something is being done.

People need to feel free to work in areas in which they are comfortable and knowledgeable. When a skill area is identified as being needed, the Nominating Team should look for someone with those skills.

A plan can always be re-visited as teams evaluate accomplishments, the numbers of people involved, and what parameters need adjusting. A goal that is not working or reasonable can be changed. Some goals may be too big for the HLAA-CA small teams. People need to remember to ask for help when needed. Zina will be on all teams at the start. Some teams may be found to be too big or too small and can be adjusted.

It was suggested that in the goals of the Outreach Team what is called conventions, should be called events or booths. Rather than putting on a convention, it is really exhibiting in a booth at someone else's convention or event, such as the California Academy of Audiology Convention or the Disability Fair. Note that the California Academy of Audiology's Annual Statewide Conference will be September 10-12, 2015 at the Doubletree in San Jose, California.

Teams can decide how many people they want to recruit. Some board assignments seem obvious. The chapter coordinators should be on the nominating team, because they already are trying to find people to be nominated.

Team Member Assignments

Nominating Team—Janel, Nanci, Zina

Outreach Team—Ann, Debra, Gail, Janel, Nanci, Ram, Zina

(Alan indicated that he can do video captioning).

Fundraising Team—Ann, Debra, Gail, Zina

Expo Team—Janel, Jim, Lynne, Nanci, Zina

Information Officer Team—Lynne, Zina

Ann made a motion to adopt the Strategic Plan Proposal, which was unanimously approved.

Action Item Results from Previous Meeting

1. Zina Jawadi to assume presidential duties and Jim Montgomery to remain on the board. — complete
2. Grace Tiessen to add a donation box to the HLAA-CA newsletter — pending
3. Zina Jawadi to added a donation function to the website — complete
4. Jeff Chess to track organizations approached for donations
Currently Quickbook Pro 2010 (regular user) is used. Jeff has not created any kind of database to track potential donators. Doing so builds relationships with donors, so they know HLAA-CA is making wise decisions in spending donors' money.
5. Grace Tiessen to find backup newsletter editor — complete
Grace is working with new newsletter editor, Lisa Beth Snyder. Zina will ask for Lisa's contact information and share it with the BOT. Nanci and Janel will share this information with the chapter leaders.
6. Next Walk4Hearing to be scheduled in conjunction with the next BOT Meeting
It was decided that, instead, the next BOT meeting will be scheduled in conjunction with the San Diego Walk4Hearing
7. Zina and Nanci Linke-Ellis to work on funding and facility needs for Ed Ogiba visit — complete
Funding: \$1,000 per event in budget
Facilities: possible Northern California options are San Jose Masonic Center and Holiday Inn Express & Suites Oakland Airport.

Chapter Development Workshops in Northern California and Southern California

It was emphasized that Ed Ogiba feels that states can get new members and publicity from having a free conference. HLAA Florida had huge attendances, gained new members, and made money. Jim Montgomery commented that HLAA-CA never regarded the conferences as fundraising events. The exhibits and programs were intended to be informational for the chapters and members. HLAA-CA would have to re-design the advertising and the purpose of the exhibits and workshops, if the strategy is changed.

Bylaws and Standing Rules

Ann Thomas explained that the state of California doesn't allow nonprofits to vote in a non-face-to-face meeting, unless there is written consent and 100% of the board approves all of the actions. HLAA-CA had non-face-to-face meetings, and Ann questioned whether every board member voted to approve all of the amendments to the bylaws. This is state law regardless of the HLAA-CA bylaws.

Numerous concerns ensued. Should the board vote again today to accept the bylaws? Did everyone see copies of the previous bylaws and the revisions? It was suggested that all board members should review the proposed changes and the sources of Ann's comments.

It is imperative that things are done legally within California law.

There was a suggestion that this be tabled until the next meeting, so it can be looked at by everyone.

Many opinions were shared. Meg Wallhagen noted the importance of staying in compliance with the laws of the state. It was concluded that everyone should review the changes previously approved with a 100% vote and that the meeting should move on to the next agenda item.

HLAA National Convention Funding and Allocation of Meg Wallhagen's Donation
Meg and Bill Wallhagen have donated \$4,000 to HLAA-CA. The first \$2,000 is already in the budget.

Nanci suggested that donations should be spent or allocated in the year received.

In exploring the idea of providing convention scholarships to BOT members, it was noted that the following BOT members are going to the HLAA National Convention in St. Louis: Ann, Debra, Janel, Jim, Lynne, and Zina. (6 members)

A discussion was held on the importance of both BOT members and chapter leaders attending the HLAA convention, especially if they have not attended previously.

It was noted that there needs to be specific expectations of scholarship recipients. If a member does not go, the money should be returned. Alternatively, the money could be given to the member after the conference.

Ann suggested that part of the donation money be used for outreach items, such as another canopy, tablecloths, and banners.

It was suggested that HLAA-CA should help members of the BOT to go to the HLAA convention by giving each BOT member going to convention money towards registration and convention fees based on how many trustees attend.

Three motions regarding convention scholarships were made and later withdrawn without being voted upon:

1. Debra—Give a \$500 convention scholarship to two board members and one \$500 convention scholarship to a non-board member.
2. Janel—Use \$1,000 to split between all BOT members going to the convention; \$500 to someone that has not been to an HLAA National Convention; and \$500 to the General Fund.
3. \$1,000 Convention scholarship divided as in #2 above; \$1,000 to the general fund.

All three motions were withdrawn, and a new motion was proposed by Janel to spend \$1,500 on HLAA 2015 Convention scholarship to be divided by those BOT members attending the St. Louis convention, and that \$500 be allocated to the general fund.

This motion passed with six people voting yes and three people voting no., Jeff Chess added that he would donate an additional \$500-\$1,000 to the scholarship money depending on how many board members go to the convention, to be decided by Jeff.

Next HLAA-CA BOT Meeting

A motion made by Janel was passed unanimously to hold the next meeting in San Diego on the day before the Walk4Hearing.

The San Diego WALK is on Sunday, October 25th. The BOT meeting would be on Saturday, October 24th.

The Long Beach Walk4Hearing is on Saturday June 6th.

Chapter Development Workshop with Ed Ogiba

Ed Ogiba will be traveling around the country to hold these events. National is covering his flights. HLAA-CA needs to host him and cover his remaining costs. Two events are planned in California, one in Northern California and one in Southern California. \$1,000 per event has been budgeted.

Ed sent a flyer explaining what the event entails.

The California chapter training events will probably be late in September or in October.

Peninsula Chapter may host the Northern California workshop. They will look for a meeting place. The budget amount for the meeting place is \$300; morning and afternoon

refreshments \$100 each, and captioning \$500, keeping it under \$1,000 per event or even less.

Ed would like a social event the night before. It was compared to the opening events at HLAA conventions in answer to how it would work for people with hearing loss. Ed also does not want to do the Northern California and Southern California workshops on the same weekend. It was suggested that in the Fall, the event could possibly be outdoors in a park setting.

Perhaps a hearing loss-related company may sponsor the pre-event. It is uncertain if it would be necessary for people traveling to stay overnight.

Conclusion

Ram requested that a letter of appreciation from the BOT be sent to the City of Cerritos recognizing their successful looping efforts. Such a letter was requested previously but had not been sent. Ram and Gail will provide details to Lynne so she can formulate a letter. Gail will also work on a press release to get the information in the newspapers.

At 3:02 pm the proposed budget as presented earlier was accepted.

Problems with the captioning and with Skype were noted. Nanci mentioned that she has successfully used Yahoo Messenger Conference many times. Further investigations will be done.

The Meeting was adjourned at 3:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynne Kinsey, Acting Secretary

Summary of New Action Items

1. Jim Montgomery: Contact CAA regarding CAA Convention participation
2. Zina Jawadi: Share new editor's contact info with the BOT.
3. Grace Tiessen: Share list of due dates for newsletters with BOT and include in the newsletter.
4. Nanci Linke Ellis and Janel Edmiston: Send article due dates to chapters.
5. Zina Jawadi: Enlarge website Donation button, eventually make the page more attractive and compelling.
6. Grace Tiessen: Add to the newsletter an HLAA-CA donation form with space to indicate preferred uses.
7. Nanci and Janel: Ask chapters to submit newsletter articles.
8. Newsletter: Send/post 6, 4, 2 week reminders for newsletter articles.
9. BART Users: For next 60 days, submit comments on use of temporary loop at Colma Station.
10. All: Approach city councils and other venues and official bodies regarding need for loops.