

## **COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES**

August 3 & 5, 2016

Denver, Colorado

For the first time that I can recall, Council requested that the agenda order change so that the business of Council could take precedence over reports, demonstrations, citation presentations, etc. This became one of the themes throughout these August Council meetings. In this spirit, my report will not reflect the order of our agenda but rather the "Business of Council" first before reporting other "Council Business."

As a reminder, Council is nearing the end of its trial delegation whereby it addresses policies and issues that affect the discipline of psychology whereas the Board of Directors controls the policies that affect the internal organization of APA. At the end of this trial period, Council will vote whether to make this a permanent delegation of responsibilities.

### **BUSINESS OF COUNCIL**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

As has become the norm in recent years, there are almost as many items on the consent agenda as on the action item agenda. This means that COR does not discuss the consent items at all. Of course any COR member can take an item off the agenda and this does occur at times. This shift to consent items is interesting to me because in times past, Resolutions or Guidelines would rarely be on consent agendas. On the contrary, vigorous discussions would occur as to the language and implications of these documents to our profession. Nevertheless, items approved by COR with no discussion are as follows:

#### **1. Election of Fellows**

We received the lengthy list a day prior to our meeting which is far better than when we were asked a few years ago to consent to the list without having ever seen it! A special shout out to our own Dr. Ellen Williams who was approved as a Fellow of Division 31. Well deserved, Ellen!!

#### **2. Amendment to Association Rule 120-5.1: Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools**

Council approved amending Association Rule 120.5 to extend the member-at-large terms on the Committee of Teachers in Secondary Schools, from two-years to three-year terms.

#### **3. Renewal of Recognition of Forensic Psychology as a Specialty in Professional Psychology**

Council approved the continued recognition of Forensic Psychology as a specialty in professional psychology.

#### **4. Extension of Recognition of Family Psychology as a Specialty in Professional Psychology**

Council approved a one-year extension of recognition of Family Psychology as a specialty in professional psychology.

#### **5. Extension of Recognition of Treatment of Alcohol and Other Psychoactive Substance**

### **Use Disorders as a Proficiency in Professional Psychology**

Council approved a one-year extension of Recognition of Alcohol and Other Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders as a Proficiency in professional psychology.

### **6. Guidelines for Integrating the Role of Work and Career into Professional Psychology Practice**

Council adopted as APA policy the *Guidelines for Integrating the Role of Work and Career into Professional Psychology Practice* and approved August 2023 as the expiration date for the Guidelines.

These Guidelines have been developed to provide psychologists with: (a) the rationale and need for addressing vocational behavior and the meaning of work in professional practice, (b) an introduction to the major issues in understanding vocational behavior and development and the world of work, and (c) specific recommendations for working effectively with work and career issues as they interface with multiple aspects of human behavior and functioning. The Guidelines are written specifically for psychologists working with clients or patients and provide guidance for clinical interventions related to work and career. These Guidelines are not intended to provide directions for interventions with organizations and industries but rather focus on aspects of working with individuals.

### **7. Resolution on Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities**

Council adopted as APA policy the *Resolution on the Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities* and archived the 2003 version of the *Resolution on the Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities*.

### **8. Resolution on the Free and Responsible Practice of Science, Freedom of Movement Scientists and APA International Engagement**

Council adopted as APA policy the Resolution on the Free and Responsible Practice of Science, Freedom of Movement of Scientists, and APA International Engagement which endorses principles stated in the statutes of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS) supporting the development of a global scientific community based on equity and non-discrimination.

The reason for APA endorsement of this policy is to provide a benchmark for APA's engagement with psychology organizations outside of the U.S. Currently APA engages with organizations in a number of ways: through Memorandum of Understanding agreements whereby leaders of psychology organizations agree to hold regular discussions and joint activities; through grant programs whereby APA allocates funds to support international scientific meetings or the development of psychology organizations; and through other joint projects with psychology organizations in other countries or psychology organizations with global reach. Generally, APA's Committee on International Relations in Psychology (CIRP) is charged with recommending international partners, grants, or recognition for approval by APA. In making these recommendations, CIRP attempts to ascertain that the relevant international organizations follow non-discriminatory practices in policies and practice and uphold high standards of science. For most organizations this is expressed in membership policies and criteria for ensuring the "free movement of scientists" in sponsored conferences and congresses. In the past, CIRP has followed the lead of global science organizations that have non-discrimination policies. The present resolution will explicitly recognize APA's endorsement of these non-

discrimination policies.

CIRP believes that the resolution will serve to strongly convey to international partners that APA will engage only in activities that are congruent with international standards for non-discrimination and responsibilities of science with respect to society, as expressed by international science bodies. These general principles are cogently stated by the International Council of Science (ICSU), the international “spokes body” for science around the world (its members are international scientific unions and countries, generally represented by their national academies of science). The ICSU statement was also (in 2012) adopted by the international voice for psychology, the International Union of Psychological Science.

It is important to note that this resolution pertains to the practices of organizations, not countries, and that enforcing this resolution is operationalized as APA’s actions with respect to its choices of partner organizations. This distinction is important: APA’s enforcement of this resolution pertains only to whether it engages formally with an organization and does not speak to the politics of the country in which that organization is housed.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

##### **1. Proposal to Establish a New Membership Category for “Friends of Psychology”**

This was a proposal for the creation of a new class of membership that is open to anyone interested in supporting the mission of the APA. This new category is designed to help APA engage the broad range of individuals who possess an affinity for the study and application of psychology. These members can use our content, community and expertise to involve them as appropriate in various initiatives. Examples of these types of mission-enhancing engagements could include efforts to promote the recognition of psychology as a STEM discipline or mobilizing grassroots networks to lobby for funding for psychology education. There is also an even broader population of people interested in applying psychological principles to their work and to their personal lives. Capturing just a fraction of this audience could yield significant dividends for APA’s mission related activities.

These members would be exclusively for individuals who are not eligible to join APA as any other member type including Member, Associate, Student Affiliate, Teacher Affiliate or International Affiliate. They will not be able to present themselves as a full Member of the APA. Broadly speaking their member benefits will be digital in nature (e.g. webinars, newsletters, videos). The content for these products will be a mix of newly created materials as well as revised and repurposed versions of other items

From a financial perspective the overarching goal is that this category is profitable within the first 5 years. The target profit is 25%

**ACTION APPROVED: 90.5% YES vs. 8.3 % NO**

After the motion was approved, COR then voted on whether to include a pro/con statement on the ballot to membership who would have to approve a bylaws change. While pro/con statements are the default, a 2/3 vote of COR can exclude them.

**ACTION TO HAVE PRO/CON STATEMENT: PRO: 44.9 % vs. CON 53.9%**

Since a 2/3 vote was not reached, the PRO CON STATEMENTS will be sent to the membership.

## 2. Revision of Standard 3.04 of the APA Ethics Code

COR was asked to approve a revision to Standard 3.04 (Avoiding Harm) of the Ethics Code. The Ethics Commission recommended approval of the revision as did the CLT. The BOD determined that the revised standard 3.04 is appropriate and does not present undue risk to the Association.

**Main Motion:** 3.04 (b) Psychologists do not participate, facilitate, assist or otherwise engage in torture, defined as any act by which severe pain or suffering whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person or in any other cruel, inhuman or degrading behavior that violates 3.04 (a).

Many COR members felt that a revision was not necessary. Others felt that since an Ethics revision was about to occur, any revisions should wait. However, when it was disclosed that an ethics revision could take up to 6 years, it was generally felt that action was needed now. This revision was meant to add enforcement to the NBI23b item approved last August that clearly did not allow psychologists to engage in torture in any way at black sites.

**ACTION: APPROVED: 73.8% vs. 24.4%**

## 3. Resolution in Favor of Providing Support and Assistance to Military and National Security Psychologists Striving to Abide by the APA Ethics Code and APA Policy (NBI #23A/Feb 2014)

COR was asked to adopt this resolution as policy. This resolution sought to change the discourse within APA regarding detainee welfare by moving away from a prohibition/obligation approach to APA policy and toward a supportive/affirming approach that assists and supports psychologists in abiding by the APA Ethics Code and APA policy. The resolution came from eight policies adopted by APA since 2005 that address the work of military and national security psychologists.

BPA recommended approval. P&P recommended against taking action on the substitute motion at this time. The Ethics Committee did not find the substitute motion to be inconsistent with the current version of the APA Ethics Code of Conduct. COLI recommended caution in passing the substitute motion. BOD recommended referring the item to CLT for content review and a recommendation. CLT recommended advancing the item to COR for discussion and vote.

BAPPI, BSA, CDIP recommended no action until the revisions to the Ethics Code 3.04 have been completed. CRH, CSES and CWP recommended against the resolution.

This was the most controversial motion of the entire Council meeting. It was basically an amendment to NBI 23b that was passed last August that would change NBI 23b from prohibiting military psychologists to treat detainees at unlawful black sites to allowing them to treat these detainees. Many believed it was taking APA backwards from the position it took last August and others believed that last year's motion "overreached" by dictating settings rather than behaviors.

In order to facilitate discussion of this emotionally divided issue, CLT presented an alternate way of addressing the issue. Rather than just open debate on COR floor as usual, COR first broke up into small groups to discuss the issues involved for 30 minutes. It was hoped that the ensuing

“debate” would be more productive. As it turned out, many COR members thought it helpful to discuss the issues prior to debate. However, these discussions did not seem to facilitate the debate and it was business as usual with differing viewpoints digging in their heels. While amendments and wordsmithing began to irritate many COR members, it was ultimately decided to postpone the item due to the range of complexities the item presented. A group with diverse views on the issue will be formed to address these complexities and bring back revisions to COR next February. These complex issues included:

- A. Should military psychologists serve in any capacity at black sites?
- B. Should military psychologists provide treatment to detainees at black sites?
- C. Should military psychologists provide treatment to military personnel at black sites?
- D. Should non-military psychologists provide treatment to detainees at black sites?
- E. What ethical guidance needs to be provided for military psychologists regarding the potential conflict of interest they might have regarding their commitment to their profession?
- F. Should APA’s resolution provide some protection for military psychologists who might have to deal with this conflict?

**ACTION APPROVED TO POSTPONE: 88.8% vs. 6.9%**

#### **4. Transparency of Decisions**

Council was asked to approve the substitute motion of NBI #23C/Feb 2016 Transparency of Decisions, which asked that all open session votes taken by the Board of Directors, Council Leadership Team, and Council of Representatives be recorded by names of voting individuals and posted on the APA website for full members to view. The intent of the item was to bring complete transparency of decisions made by elected leaders, improving accountability in the organization, enhancing APA member’s trust in the workings of its leadership, and through the above, a renewal of membership by those who have recently left APA.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It was recommended by general counsel that this item be postponed in order to make revisions because posting the way COR members voted in open session would require a bylaws change. There was also a recommendation to refer this item to the Task Force on Organizational Procedures because they will also be looking at transparency issues. The movers of this item were understandably upset because they had been working with APA staff all along to get this item on the COR agenda and were not notified of General Counsel’s concerns until this meeting.

**ACTION TO REFER: 88.2% APPROVED vs. 11.8% OPPOSED**

#### **5. 7. Diversity Training in 2017**

A work group comprised of Council members and EMPA delegates have been working on recommendations regarding Council issues related to diversity since the February 2016 meeting. A subgroup of this work group focused on diversity training and provided Council with its recommendations for diversity training in 2017 in advance of the August meeting. The motion asked COR to approve “Unconscious Bias and Microaggression” as the diversity training topic for COR in 2017.

**ACTION APPROVED: 88.8% vs. 6.9%**

**6. Removal of Barriers to Admission to Doctoral Programs in Psychology Created by the Use of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Scores (NBI #24A/Aug 2015)**

Council was asked to consider adopting a resolution as provided in the substitute motion of the New Business Item #24A: Removal of Barriers to Admission to Doctoral Programs in Psychology Created by the Use of GRE 'Cut Off' Scores, which seeks to discourage the use of GRE 'cut off' scores for admission to doctoral programs.

**ACTION: REFERRED UNTIL 2/2017: 86.5% APPROVED vs. 12.9% OPPOSED**

**7. Resolution on Psychologists in Integrated Primary Care and Specialty Health Settings**

Council was asked to adopt as APA policy the *Resolution on Psychologists in Integrated Primary Care and Specialty Health Settings*, as provided in the substitute motion.

Consistent with the Association's mission to advance the development, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives (APA, 2009), this proposed resolution aimed to support and strengthen APA policies and initiatives on psychology practice, education, training and work force development, patient and health system outcomes research, Federal, State and health system guidelines, leadership training, and, organizational collaborations which support evidenced-based, interprofessional approaches to patient and family health care across the life span. It is believed that this resolution is particularly timely and serves to advance the psychology's role in advancing health and increases recognition of psychology as a science, in accordance with the Association's Strategic Goals, Objectives and Initiatives.

**ACTION APPROVED: 99.3% vs. No opposition**

**8. Revision to Resolution on Data about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

Council was asked to amend the *Resolution on Data About Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* that was adopted in February 2016. Council was asked to adopt the amendments because feedback received regarding the resolution indicated that the treatment of gender identity does not adequately reflect the current consensus in the field.

**ACTION APPROVED: 98.0% vs. No opposition**

**9. Resolution on the Free and Responsible Practice of Science, Freedom of Movement Scientists and APA International Engagement**

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recommendations, CIRP attempts to ascertain that the relevant international organizations follow non-discriminatory practices in policies and practice and uphold high standards of science. For most organizations this is expressed in membership policies and criteria for ensuring the “free movement of scientists” in sponsored conferences and congresses. In the past, CIRP has followed the lead of global science organizations that have non-discrimination policies. The present resolution will explicitly recognize APA’s endorsement of these non-discrimination policies.

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### **REPORTS, REMARKS, AND UPDATES**

#### **1. Financial Update:**

CFO/COO Archie Turner gave COR an update on APA’s financial health. Due to time constraints and allocation of time, this very important report was truncated so that COR was not able to discuss their issues, questions or concerns. This was very troubling to some for various reasons, including:

- It’s vital nature to the well-being of APA;
- COR’s current financial responsibilities to the organization
- COR’s inability to fully understand and collaborate on APA’s finances

COR’s ability to fully discuss APA’s finances was especially important because the final delegation of financial responsibility to the BOD is scheduled to be voted upon next February. To leave the discussion for February’s meeting just prior to voting seems to be a disservice to COR to fully appreciate the consequences of this delegation of financial authority.

Despite the time constraints, Mr. Turner informed COR of a number of important financial facts:

- A. The APA Net Asset Goal is to have 4 months of operating expenses which is approximately \$36m. This goal was met for the year ending 12/31/15 with total net assets of \$42m.
- B. The Value of Equity in Buildings acknowledges the considerable equity in our buildings, currently estimated at \$192m. This equity represents the equivalent of a fixed asset

- investment in our long term investment portfolio.
- C. Our Standard and Poor's Rating reflects our current financial health and outlook as measured by an independent financial rating agency. The Association Rule requires a minimum rating of BBB. APA's bond rating remains at BBB+ with a stable outlook.
  - D. The Debt Covenant on Bonds is a measure externally exposed by Bank of America as an indicator of our ability to repay our debt. APA must maintain consolidated liquid assets of at least \$33m. In 2015 APA's liquid assets were \$94m.
  - E. APA's areas of concern include:
    - a. Designations
    - b. Membership Dues decline
    - c. Publication Revenues
  - F. The Integrated Budget
    - a. Brings together all cash sources and expenses into single streams
      - i. Case sources
        - A. Dues
        - B. Publishing and other sources of income
        - C. Building revenue
        - D. Investment portfolio
      - ii. Expense categories
        - A. Operating budget
        - B. Non-operating expense (including interest and principal on long-term debt and taxes)
        - C. Designation
    - b. Brings designations into the regular expense picture
    - c. Highlights areas of weakness in the budget more effectively
    - d. Facilitates reallocation of resources to areas of highest priority
    - e. The integrated budget approach includes a number of checks and balances, involves extensive collaboration among the CEO Governance and staff. It adds a goal-oriented assessment process.
    - f. Ongoing assessment is a key feature of the integrated budget approach along with the constant evaluation of risks and benefits of each financial strategy and action plan.
    - g. Success requires clear priorities and spending restraint at times, i.e., financial disciplines.
  - G. APA Real Estate
    - a. The current estimated equity in the 750 First Street building is \$107.5m. The average interest rate is 5.27%
    - b. The current estimated equity in the 10 G Street building is \$83.3m. The average interest rate is 4.6%.
    - c. APA maintains an 8-10 year forecast of cash equivalents.
    - d. Major variables are:
      - i. Tenant improvement
      - ii. Commissions
      - iii. Capital expenditures
      - iv. Rent concessions
    - e. Cash needs fluctuate widely dependent upon the schedule of tenant renewals.
    - f. Since 1995, real estate has contributed \$69m to APA operation



## 2. Report on Trial Delegation Evaluation

The Finance Committee was mandated to oversee the evaluation of the Trial Delegation The Finance Committee was mandated to oversee the Trial Delegation Evaluation for financial authority and report back to Council last August and at this Council meeting. These evaluations were vital for COR to assess how this financial delegation was going and what might be areas of concern. Due to the fact that last summer's Council Meeting was basically appropriated by the Hoffman Report and its sequelae, the first evaluation was never reported in the Treasurer's report. Rather, it was "delegated" to New Business Items, a category that I suspect few COR members read given the voluminous materials necessary to absorb for the meeting. Therefore, there was no venue for COR members to discuss these findings. The thrust of the first evaluation basically dealt with mistrust issues.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, this year's discussion of the trial delegation survey was also unexpectedly cut from the agenda. And again, many COR members were quite disgruntled about this. The difference from last year's meeting was that the Finance Committee held webinars this year prior to COR to present the evaluation results. While very helpful, the webinars were to be precursors to a healthy discussion of the delegation of financial authority to which many were looking forward. It was unfortunate but quite telling that this very important item was considered dispensable when a historic vote will take place next February that will change the structure of APA in a major way.

Basically, the evaluation had significant limitations in that the majority of COR members did not respond, thus limiting the significance of the results. Nevertheless, the results showed:

- The majority felt that financial decisions made in 2015 were timely and of good quality.
- The majority were confident in the ability of the BOD to make the best financial decisions.
- COR members were split on how well informed they felt about financial decisions made by the BOD
- 46.6% were comfortable with the process of having BOD primarily responsible for financial decision making while 53.3% were not comfortable.
- The majority of COR did not believe that COR is sufficiently informed about APA' finances nor did they believe that COR has adequate tie to be the body primarily making financial decisions for APA.
- The vast majority believe that the BOD is sufficiently informed about APA's finances and believe that the BOD has adequate time to be the body primarily making financial decisions for APA.

Probably the most important question in the evaluation survey was:

***Do you believe that the delegation of financial decision-making authority to the BOD should continue past 2017?***

47.3% of COR members were positive while 52% of COR members were negative to the idea of delegating the financial authority to the BOD on a permanent basis.

These results suggest that COR is currently split on the issue of delegating financial authority to the BOD, at least of those who responded. If the vote in February is as divided as the evaluation

question suggested, does it still make sense to go forward with such a significant change when nearly half of COR disagrees?

### **3. Update on APA Commission on Ethics Processes**

The charge to this Commission which was one of the results of the Hoffman Report is as follows:

To evaluate and recommend changes to the APA ethics processes, including:

- The possible establishment of a Chief Ethics Officer,
- Consideration of the relationship between ethics education and adjudication,
- Review of the efficacy and utility of the investigative and adjudicative processes,
- Attention to the potential conflicts between human right and other considerations, and
- An assessment of current practices and procedure with benchmarking against ethics processes of other professional organizations.

The Commission has met face-to-face once since inception and formed four Subcommittees:

- Ethics Adjudication and Education;
- APA Policies and Procedures related to ethics;
- APA Institutional and Organizational Culture, and,
- Benchmarking

### **4. CEO Remarks: Cynthia Belar, PhD, Interim CEO**

**A. APA Style Central** was launched July 11<sup>th</sup>. It is a project that combined the IT Office and the Office of Publications. APA Style Central is allowing APA to move forward to a new era of product development into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **B. Mental Health Reform:**

APA is advocating on important mental health bills:

- Helping families in Mental Health Crisis act of 2016 (House)
- Mental health Reform Act of 2016 (Senate)

#### **C. Internship Stimulus Package**

- 241 applications
- 138 grants awarded
- 205 new internship slots created
- 41 internship programs received APA accreditation
- 39 programs under reviews

#### **D. Member Education**

- 9 Clinician's Corner webcasts
- Independent Study Program
- Psychological Science Webcasts
- Convention programming-CE credits
  - 70 workshops
  - 300 convention sessions

**E. Advanced Training Institutes:**

There were 5 day advanced training institutes on a variety of topics to study state of art research methods, titles included:

- Structural Equation Modeling in Longitudinal Research
- Big Data: Exploratory Data Mining in Behavioral Research
- Research Methods with Diverse Racial and Ethnic Groups
- Nonlinear Methods for Psychological Science
- Single-Case Intervention Research: New Developments in Methodology and Data Analysis

**F. USA science Expo**

- APA and Boston Museum of Science
- The Science of Kids: Ask, Play, Learn
- Interactive tasks used in cognitive development
- 300,000 attendees

**G. Clinical Practice Guidelines-Target goals for clinical practice guidelines**

- PTSD- February 2017
- Depression-August 2017
- Obesity- August 2017

**H. APA Summit on National Assessment of Psychology, June 2016****I. Top 20 Principles from psychology for PreK-12 Teaching and Learning**

- How students think and learn?
- What motivates students?
- Why are social context, interpersonal relationships and emotional well-being important to student learning?
- How can the classroom best be managed?
- How to assess student progress?

**J. ACT Raising Safe Kids Program**

- Over 15,000 parents
- Over 10 countries.
- Recognized by
  - World Health Organization
  - CC Division of Violence Prevention
  - US Department of Justice
  - Office of Head Start
  - California of Evidence-Based Clearinghouse on Child Welfare

**K. Hosted/sponsored Events**

- History of Women of Color in Psychology,
- Psychology Summer institute- Minority Fellowship Program, Healing the Fatherless Heart-Health Disparities Program
- National Student Leadership Conference

## L. Internal projects

- APA 2025 self-studies,
- Professional Development: blind spots-ethics in decision-making and group think.
- Established new office on Early Career Psychologists
- Dr. Nancy Gordon Moore is now Executive Director of Strategic Programs
- New general counsel Deanne Ottaviano, JD
  
- **M. On the Horizon:** Center for Psychology and Health. CMS Grant application to train 6000 psychologists
- Center for Learning and Career Development- promoting excellence in psychologists.
- Dr. Gwen Keita, Executive Director in the Public Interest Directorate is retiring.

### 5. President Susan McDaniel's remarks:

Among other things, President McDaniel reiterated the actions that COR is taking to "Transform APA."

- Commission on Ethics Processes
- Conflict of Interest Work Group
- CEO Search
- Task Force on Human Rights
- Appointment to the International Curriculum on Human Rights in Psychology
- Work Group to Develop Civility Principles and Procedures
- Work Group to Review Organizational Policies and Procedures
- Work Group to Develop Guidelines Regarding Task Force Selection
- Amended the Guidelines for Council Resolutions to ensure consistency with APA's core values and recognize when they advance human rights, ethics and social justice.

6. **REP. TIM MURPHY:** Representative Tim Murphy briefly spoke to COR on Friday morning prior to COR meeting. He presented his bill, (HR 2646) the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act that he introduced to the House of Representatives. The ACT proposes funding for a number of mental illness issues.

### **REFLECTIONS**

#### **One Association, Divided by Our Versions of Reality**

Given that this was my last Council meeting of my last year of my second term, this will be the last Council Report you will receive from me, at least for a while. Dr. Peter Oppenheimer will ably succeed me as your Division 31 Council Representative and I know that he will serve our Division extremely well and continue to advocate for state, territorial and provincial issues. He is experienced, passionate and will tirelessly pursue the right path for APA.

Since this my last report, I have decided to shamelessly be indulgent (and I apologize in advance) and share some of my Council reflections. Please remember that these reflections are my personal thoughts and do not necessarily echo those of others or even reality for that matter!

**Warning:** This is not part of my formal Council Report so if you have no interest or time to read further, please stop now!

### **An Association Divided**

There appears to be two major issues over my last 6 years on Council that have seemed to fracture this governing body into at least two opposing camps: The Good Governance Project (GGP) and what has become known as The Hoffman Report. Either of these issues alone could have easily caused the current civil war occurring among the factions. In the past when there were intense conflicts, the “APA Way” was to form a task force composed of representatives of the differing perspectives along with an excellent facilitator, like Dr. Sandy Shulman, to work out compromises to bring back to Council. This was usually a very effective strategy and de-intensified some potentially explosive issues. For whatever reason, this has not happened of late. What I also find stunning is the lack of empathy and respect we have displayed in trying to understand others’ viewpoints. Many have seemed to forget that there are multiple realities, all strongly believed and none necessarily “the right belief” and until we can accept this concept, I fear we will remain in the stalemate we seem to find ourselves.

#### **A. Good Governance Project (GGP)**

Several years ago the majority of Council members felt that changes to Council’s structure and function were necessary. Because governance change was part of a then newly adopted APA Strategic Plan, the GGP project was established by the Board of Directors. While the idea was good, I believe that the BOD recommended too many changes all at once, many of which were not thoroughly thought through as to implementation or cost. In fact, if all of the recommendations would have been approved and implemented, the extra cost to APA would have been about \$1 million annually. It became very difficult for Council to carefully understand all of the nuances, implications and consequences of what we were approving because the materials sent to us became voluminous. And unlike the BOD, we did not have the advantage of digesting the recommendations throughout the year and in between Council meetings. Rather, we would receive the materials a few weeks before voting. I think it would have been easier and wiser if Council approved one or two changes at a time and allowed them to be fully implemented to see how they could be improved or whether they were useful or even necessary. An additional problem was the insidiousness of groupthink whereby those who challenged, opposed or even questioned the GGP recommendations were marginalized, told they had problems with trust or pathologized.

Some of the GGP recommendations included:

#### **1. Enhancing Technology Use to Improve Communications Among Members, Governance and Staff.**

This was a no brainer and most everyone agreed with this recommendation. I thought it meant that COR would be able to use some new kinds of technology in order to continue COR business between meetings, including voting on some issues. A few meetings ago COR was introduced to some new software to help aid in a “mega issue discussion” which was now the mission of COR. Unfortunately the software was ineffective and that was the last we heard of that. Many of us were quite surprised when we were then told that DC law did not allow us to vote electronically unless it was unanimous. So that was that. I wondered why the BOD did not know this important fact prior to their recommendation so that COR would have been more informed about what we were voting for. And then recently I heard that if APA filed certain papers and paid a fee, we could, in fact, vote electronically but I have not yet verified this rumor nor has the BOD or APA brought this to COR’s attention.

Of course we have made use of webinars so that a few weeks prior to COR meetings, we have received “Town Hall” meetings about GGP recommendations or more recently finance presentations. However, what happens is that a member will be allowed to ask a question and the presenter or staff responds. There is no ability for the COR members to interact together for full and useful discussions. I can only hope that in this current age of enhanced technology, APA can do better than this.

I have found the COR list serv frustrating, if not useless. Only a small number of COR members post on the list serv with the majority silent. If there is a question or suggestion posted, neither the BOD nor CLT frequently respond so that the postings seem to go into Cyberspace Neverland. I have not found it a useful method of meaningful communication.

## **2. Developing Leadership Training**

There were several ideas recommended to develop leadership training but as of now, I have not seen any new leadership training as a result of GGP. If there are such programs I’m not sure they came from GPP nor has COR been informed.

## **3. Refocusing Councils’ Work on Major Strategic Policy Issues for the Discipline of Psychology While Refocusing BOD’s Work on Policy Issues for the Internal Organization of APA.**

Because many on COR didn’t understand exactly what responsibilities now would go to COR and which would go to the BOD, a trial matrix of authority was developed. Because COR could not agree about the specific delegations and time was running out at that particular meeting, COR voted for the matrix to be a trial only and that we would go back and hash out the different responsibilities at a later date. Unfortunately we never did revisit the matrix formally and the “trial” matrix became the permanent matrix.

I have found this delegation confusing if not problematic. And I’m not convinced that COR members truly realized what they were exactly voting for. For example, should the delegation of authority become permanent and a bylaws change approved by the membership, COR will no longer have a say in choosing a new CEO. Another major problem is the process of COR discussing what was originally called “mega issues” that affect the profession. I have experienced about 4 of these mega issue discussions on various topics and the results have appeared non-existent. The idea proposed to COR was that we would take major issues and develop action plans. That happened. What has happened is that we might spend several hours in small groups and then state the groups’ ideas at the assembly of the whole. Sometimes the small groups would be allotted 30 minutes to thoroughly discuss sub issues with the expectation of coming up with action plans within the time given. The next day we might get a list of these ideas. Then nothing happens. If COR will be responsible for issues affecting the profession, I sincerely hope that a better process is developed.

Another problem with this delegation is that COR does not receive minutes from the BOD. Therefore, COR has no idea what issues the BOD is working on, some of which may actually be within the purview of COR or at least appropriate for collaboration. Further, I seriously doubt that the BOD will allow a major, sensitive and/or high profile professional issue to be in the sole jurisdiction of COR even though that is what was presented to COR with respect to this delegation of authority.

**Finances:** Delegating financial authority to the BOD from COR has been opposed by a visible minority of COR. What concerns me most about this delegation of authority is that there will no longer be any real checks and balances. For example, the BOD made a contract with Hoffman giving him basically a blank check that subsequently cost APA millions of dollars. This happened without COR approval or even knowledge for that matter until after the fact. While the basic daily APA expenses might readily be managed by the BOD, it seems only prudent and good business practice that should any amount over X dollars, let's say \$1M for sake of argument, must be approved by COR. Therefore, I think a compromise might allay the fears that some COR members may harbor.

#### **4. Council Leadership Team**

When this part of the GGP was presented to COR, we were told that since the BOD would have separate responsibilities, the CLT would basically take the BOD's place and become COR's Executive Committee. However, it appears that the concept of the CLT was to really be more administrative in running COR meetings rather than advocating for COR. I'm certain that the CLT works very hard but it is difficult to know what they are doing when they do not communicate to COR on a regular basis nor do they always respond to list serv inquiries.

But what concerns me most about the CLT is that it is composed of several BOD members so that the CLT is not and cannot be solely advocating for COR should there be a conflict between the BOD and COR on any particular issue. Further, COR does not even know when there might be a conflict because what happens between the BOD and CLT does not seem to be communicated to COR.

#### **5. Restructuring of Council**

The GGP presented a motion to restructure COR and reduce its size. There was a great deal of opposition to the proposals presented and COR sent it back for additional proposals. This motion was the only one that the majority of COR seemed to oppose and clearly there was not enough support for it to pass. Interestingly, this motion has never come back to COR for approval but even more interestingly, COR has never been told why it hasn't reappeared. Perhaps because the GGP knew that there was not enough support and for some reason it didn't want the motion voted down. Or perhaps they are waiting for a more supportive group on COR to approve it.

#### **6. Guiding Principles**

The Implementation Work Group, established by the BOD to find ways to implement the GGP motions approved by COR, had Guiding Principles for their work that included expectations that there be, among other things:

- Transparency—COR does not receive BOD minutes of their meetings or conference calls. COR does not receive minutes of CLT meetings, conference calls or meetings they have with the BOD. COR recently asked for the BOD minutes and received only one which appeared quite diluted if not sanitized.
- Be fair and engender trust—There are COR members who do not trust what is happening and feel "handled."
- Reflect diversity in voices—Opposition to mainline views is often not respected or desired.
- Include appropriate checks and balances—Many believe there are no checks and balances should the BOD retain financial authority over finances.

- Allow for adaptation, evaluation and revision—I have not seen adaptation or revision occur. There have been two evaluations of the financial delegation that were mandated by COR but COR was not allowed time for full discussion of either.

## **B. Hoffman Report**

First I want to say that not one of my patients has mentioned APA at all, let alone with respect to the torture issue. Not one friend, family member or cat. That is not to say that there are some outsiders very concerned about APA's positions but the general population at large (at least in my small part of the world) does not seem to think about APA, should they know it even exists. So when I hear that the public has lost trust in APA or psychologists in general due to this "torture scandal," I would truly like to see the data for this claim.

Having said that COR is now in the midst of a civil war with no solution in sight. It is draining to read all of the list serv posts on numerous list servs, all defending their individual positions, but with no genuine dialogue or willingness to negotiate. For me there are two separate, equally important issues. One is what will APA will do to heal this destructive rift about "who is right" and the other is how APA is dealing with those targeted in the Hoffman Report?

### **Who is Right?**

This actually might be the wrong question. The question more appropriate may be what do we do with these divergent and conflicting perspectives? As I mentioned previously, the old way was to form a task force and come up with a compromise. In fact I suggested to a CLT member last August after NBI23b was approved that CLT set up a task force with the now disenfranchised groups and the APA critics to hash out a compromise to NBI23b. After I was told it was a good idea, it never occurred. Or perhaps the BOD needs to set up a mediator to help sort this out. I actually wonder whether COR should no longer be the body deciding the issues that arose from NBI23b and now NBI 23a because the longer this debate continues, the more firmly entrenched the differing sides are becoming. Perhaps it is time to let the membership decide what position they believe APA should take. Whatever is done, it must be done quickly because the Hoffman Report has basically hijacked COR's time and a substantial amount of APA's finances.

### **Civility**

It is striking to me that this "civil war" has become so "uncivil". In fact, COR had to create a work group on civility in order to deal with some of the COR members' behaviors. Enough said.

### **Retribution**

I can deal with differences of opinion and I respect anyone's right to express their thoughts. I also strongly believe in democracy and regardless of how much I might oppose something, I will defer to the majority. However, what I cannot tolerate is how those targeted in the Hoffman Report have been treated. Perhaps it's my legal background, but I believe that people are innocent until proven guilty and I firmly believe in due process. Yes, people were named in the Hoffman Report and some may have done wrongdoings. But Hoffman can only present his evidence. In America, **everyone** has a right to confront his/her accuser and everyone is tried in a court of law, licensing board or ethics committee. They are not tried in a report, a newspaper, book, in the public's eye, or within APA. That is part of what makes



America just and great. It is truly unfortunate if not destructive that APA was not able to provide these individuals with the due process to which they were entitled and deserved, before their reputations and careers were damaged.

#### IN SUMMARY

Change can be very good and often necessary. But as psychologists we also understand that change can also be difficult and challenging with emotions stirred up that may even be beyond our consciousness. The process of introducing change is probably as important as the change itself. For example, we all know that “buy-in” is far more effective than autocratic mandates or manipulations. Therefore, to really listen to concerns and allow compromise, rather than marginalize “outliers”, could help prevent an “us versus them” mentality that merely solidifies polarities between groups.

Change to APA governance is not a bad thing. But COR was presented with too many changes all at once with implementation and possible unintended consequences not completely thought through. And voices that tried to point out some of these problems were often silenced, leaving some very frustrated if not distrusting.

APA is a great Association and it does many, many great things for the public, for the psychology profession and for psychologists. I have always felt it unfortunate that most APA members have no idea how much each directorate really does in their respective silos. Perhaps APA needs to do a better job in communicating all of its achievements to the membership. I do not believe that the Hoffman Report defines the sum total of APA or that any wrongdoing that may have occurred was widespread and not contained within a small component unbeknownst to most. We **must** find a way to move on so that APA can live long and prosper as Spock would say.

And now it's time for Scotty to beam me up.



