

**TO: APA California Chapter Board Meeting**

**FROM: Betsy McCullough, AICP, Vice President of Conferences**

**DATE: October 3, 2015**

**SUBJECT: Amendments to the Approved Conference Handbook**

*This report is an information report – no action is required. However, discussion and recommendations regarding the items in the section titled Major Changes/Items for Discussion & Comment are invited.*

DISCUSSION

Amendments to the Conference Handbook are classified in two categories:

* Interpretations and Minor Amendments – can be made to the Conference Handbook without Board approval; or
* Major Changes – shall be approved by the APA California Board

This report discusses several possible major amendments that can be discussed in October and for which Handbook language will be presented to the Board at the January meeting. Also listed are a series of minor amendments/clarifications that will be made in the document along with draft language for the major amendments in January.

Major Changes/Items for Discussion & Comment

1. **Pre-Conference Session Revenue – Section III.C**

Currently the approved Conference Handbook indicates that both revenue and expenses for the Pre-Conference sessions (typically the day of the Board meeting, prior to the opening of the conference) are Chapter budget items and, while they are shown in the Conference budget, there is no net impact to the conference profit/expenses. The intent of this program is that it is an opportunity to provide a unique, in-depth learning opportunity to members, bringing in instructors of stature to conduct high-level training.

Proposed Point of Discussion: For those sessions where the CHC develops the Pre-Conference session topic and materials, and solicits the presenters, consider whether the revenue should remain as conference profit and not be redirected to the Chapter. CHC development of sessions can bring in experts on topics that may be determined of high interest based on submitted proposals or be relevant due to the existence of ground-breaking or advanced programs in the local area.

1. **Complimentary Registrations to the Conference Host Committee Subcommittee Chairs – Section III.K**

Currently the approved Conference Handbook states that complimentary conference registrations shall be provided for the Conference Host Committee Co-Chairs. Other complimentary registrations are identified for several Chapter officers (President and Vice President of Conferences), up to 4 guests of the Chapter President, and other elected Chapter officers under certain circumstances – see #4 below. These registrations are all included in the overall conference profit/expense. No other CHC members are identified as recipients of complimentary conference registrations. A successful conference is based on an extraordinary amount of volunteer time and effort by the Conference Host Committee - not only the Co-Chairs but also the subcommittee chairs. Currently the Co-Chairs are at least partially acknowledged by providing them complimentary conference registrations. The subcommittee chairs are not automatically provided the same acknowledgement.

Proposed Point of Discussion: Should CHC subcommittee chairs also receive complimentary conference registration? How many: all or some? What criteria should be used: those who have an active role for a function during the most active two years of the conference planning process? Should the overall conference profit be used to cover the registration costs for subcommittee chairs (as it is for those mentioned above) or should some of the registrations come from the Host Section’s portion of the revenue?

1. **Situations for Complimentary Registration to Keynotes – Section III.K**

Currently the approved Conference Handbook states: “Except for professionals engaged as keynote speakers, conference speakers, including session speakers, are not paid. APA California does not provide complimentary registration in exchange for being a speaker at the conference.”

Proposed Point of Discussion: It has been noted that public officials and public agency leaders may not accept speaker fees or other compensation for being keynote speakers at conferences. Should a complimentary registration be available to a public agency individual who agrees to be a keynote speaker at the Chapter conference?

1. **Complimentary Registration for Elected Chapter Board Member & Hotel Reimbursement – Section III.K**

Currently the approved Conference Handbook states that “complimentary conference registrations for elected APA California officers must be approved by the VP of Conferences and the Chapter President after reviewing the officers’ budgets to determine whether funding is available to cover the VP’s registration and considering the VP’s conference contribution. The Chapter will reimburse the conference budget the amount of the food costs only for these complimentary registrations.” There is no Chapter policy about reimbursements for conference registration fees other than this – only for Board and other meeting expenses. The above policy was included in the revisions to the Conference Handbook approved by the Board in January and February 2015.

An in-person Board meeting is associated with the Chapter conference. The Chapter covers the cost of one night’s hotel stay for those Board members when they need to arrive onsite the night before the Board meeting to be on time the next day. There is no Chapter policy about reimbursements for elected Board Members’ hotel costs for the rest of their nights at the conference.

Should there be any stated policy about covering elected Board members (the Vice Presidents) for either their conference registration cost or for their hotel night costs they incur to attend the Chapter conference, or any change to what the Chapter covers for Board members’ attendance already?

Proposed Point of Discussion:

Some Chapter Vice Presidents can spend extraordinary amounts of time fulfilling their Board responsibilities and sometimes taking on even more assignments than are in their portfolio.  It is important for Board members to be at the Chapter conference and to be able to proactively reach out and talk to attendees and promote APA as an organization to belong to. How should that be balanced with Chapter fiscal considerations, particularly in times of reduced revenue and steady, or even declining, membership?

Hotel Reimbursement: Support is proposed for adhering to traditional Chapter practice of covering the hotel costs the night before the Board meeting for all Board members who arrive from distance to be on time to the morning Board meeting. To cover costs beyond that for any Board member – elected at the Chapter level or appointed or Section Directors – would overextend the Chapter’s current reasonable budget for meeting expenses. Therefore, it is proposed to retain the long-standing practice that no Board member should be able to seek reimbursement for their conference nights’ hotel stay.

Conference Registration Reimbursement: Regarding Conference Registration fees, the Chapter President and the Vice President of Conferences (along with a limited number of invited guests of the President) have their registrations paid from the conference revenue. In order to acknowledge the effort of other elected Vice Presidents on behalf of the Chapter in a variety of roles, it is proposed that those elected Vice Presidents should have the Chapter cover their basic conference registration expense (i.e., not mobile workshops, not extra event tickets) and the Chapter budget should cover them. The accounting is proposed to be handled as it is currently described in the Conference Handbook: i.e., the Vice President is registered as a ‘complimentary registration’. That is tracked along with any other comp registrations. For the Vice Presidents, the Chapter will, when all conference billing is due, reimburse the conference revenue the number of comp registrations for Vice Presidents attending the conference at an estimated cost of the food for each registration – currently $250 or $300. That reimbursement would be identified as a separate line item as part of the resources annually set aside for Board meeting expenses that year.

In addition, there are several appointed Board members who may play an active role in preparing for and working at the conference.  In those cases, the Vice President overseeing the appointed position may request basic registration for that individual who makes a significant contribution to the conference.

Interpretations and Minor Amendments

Amendments addressing these topics will be included in draft changes brought to the Board meeting in January 2016:

|  |
| --- |
| Availability of Student Registration Rate  |
| Identify the need for Drayage Company when at certain hotel locations |
| Add in Need for Certificate of Insurance & example |
| Use of Codes for Complimentary Registrations |
| Add criteria for granting media passes to conference |
| Inviting Co-Chairs for next year’s conference onto this year’s calls starting 6 months before their conference |
| Creating a PowerPoint presentation of Sponsors for plenary events |
| Refine some items (primarily Administrative) in the new Standard Line Item Budget |
| Who reviews contracts other than contractors’ contracts? |
| Add Region VI student rep to list of invited/comped National reps |
| Fine-turn Conference Timing Roadmap items |
| Add Program Document Development and Review table |
| Change the limitation on complimentary hotel rooms for CHC Co-Chairs from two to the number of Co-Chairs that are managing that year’s conference |