



**APA BOARD OCTOBER 2021 BOARD MEETING**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**Virtual Board Meeting Via Zoom**

**Saturday, October 2, 2021**

**ATTENDEES**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

President Ashley Atkinson, AICP

VP, Administration Derek Wong, AICP

VP, Conferences Bob Lagomarsino, AICP

VP, Diversity and Equity Miroo Desai, AICP

VP, Marketing and Membership Marc Yeber, ASLA

VP, Policy and Legislation Eric Phillips

VP, Professional Development Stephanie Roxas, AICP

Past President Julia Lave Johnston

Commission and Board Representative Stefan Chraghchian

Student Representative Elizabeth Owen

**SECTION DIRECTORS**

Central Jennifer Clark, AICP

Central Coast Rachel Raynor , AICP

Los Angeles Tony Mendoza

Northern Florentina Craciun, AICP

San Diego Tara Lake

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

Chapter Historian – Northern California Larry Mintier, FAICP

Chapter Historian - Southern California Steve Preston, FAICP

Distance Education Director Greg Konar, AICP

FAICP Coordinator Robert Olshansky, FAICP

Transportation Planning Division Representative Katie Witherspoon, AICP

Young & Emerging Planners Coordinator Annapurna Singh

National Board Director - Region VI Kristen Asp, AICP

APA Student Representative – Council Region VI Nazmus Sadat

Planner Emeritus Network President Hanson Hom, AICP

California Planning Roundtable President Bill Anderson, FAICP

**MEMBERS-ELECT**

President-Elect Andrea Ouse, AICP

Vice President, Administration-Elect Lisa Lind, AICP

Los Angeles Section Director-Elect Fern Nueno

Sacramento Valley Section Director-Elect Kacey Lizon (Section Director – Elect)

**STAFF/CONTRACTORS**

Cap City Consulting – Executive Director Sande Stefan

Stefan/George Associates Lauren De Valencia

Intern Shiromi Welipitiya

Envision Consulting, Vice President Suzanne Elliott

Envision Consulting, Senior Consultant Jennifer Lobenhofer

**ACTION MINUTES**

**STRATEGIC PLAN PHASE 1 KICK-OFF SESSION**

Envision Consulting was hired by the Board in September to assist the Board with the development of a new Strategic Plan and two-year workplan. Suzanne Elliott, Vice President and Jennifer Lobenhofer, Senior Consultant with Envision Consulting started the morning meeting with the Strategic Plan Phase 1 Kick-Off Session at 9:40 am. This session was designed to give the Board a situation overview; review the Chapter’s mission, vision and values; conduct an initial SWAT discussion to get the Board’s feedback; share results of Board/consultant/member/past-member surveys conducted in the last month; and get the Board’s initial thoughts on the four-year vision and goals for the Strategic Plan.

The presentation slides and a summary of the morning discussion will be sent to the Board and put up on the Google shared drive. In the coming weeks, Envision will be conducting stakeholder interviews, coordinating focus groups, and working on additional landscape research. Ashley Atkinson, President, asked the Board to send Ashley and Sande Stefan, Executive Director, any additional feedback they would like to share with Envision in the next few weeks. Envision also shared the next steps below:

| Strategic Plan Next Steps: |
| --- |
| * October: Envision completing stakeholder interviews and focus groups, analyzing past member survey data. Full reports to be provided.
* By October 15: Envision provides summary of Board meeting discussions/decisions and detailed next steps.
* By end of October: Committee call to review Board meeting summary and next steps + stakeholder findings, advance discussion on 4-year vision/goals/strategies.
* November – December: Envision works with committee to finalize 4-year vision/goals/strategies framework (+ any budget implications), share with Board.
* January: Review and approve strategic plan, begin development of work plan at Board retreat.
* January – February: Envision works with committee to finalize 2-year work plan.
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**CALL TO ORDER**

President Ashley Atkinson called the afternoon Board meeting to order on Saturday, October 2, 2021, at 1:35 am.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

The Board briefly discussed the following **CONSENT ACTION ITEMS**:

1. **Approval of the Agenda:** agreed to amend the agenda to move Item 6, Approval of Final Election Results & Change to Election Policies, to the first action item
2. **Approval of May 2021 Board Meeting Minutes**
3. **Approval of Financial Reports and Overages**
4. **Approval of Membership Report**
5. **Approval of Legislative Update**

**MOTION TO APPROVE: The Board moved, seconded, and passed to approve the consent items above. Unanimous vote.**

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

President Ashley Atkinson discussed the following items:

* **National Election Results:** Below are the newly elected National APA representatives from California:

Kristen Asp – AICP Director Region VI

Miroo Desai – AICP Commissioner Region VI

Julia Lave Johnston – Vice Chair, Chapter President’s Council 2022

* **2022 Chapter Services RFP and Proposals**: The RFP Committee has had one meeting to complete an initial review of the 2022 Chapter Services proposals received. Nine proposals were submitted from both existing consultants (Atego, Deene Alongi, GranDesigns, and Simply Bookkeeping) and five other companies including three full-service association management firms. Notably, Laura Murphy. with New Horizon Enterprises, declined to submit a proposal. The RFP Committee will be meeting again in the next few weeks and plans to conduct interviews with finalists at the end of October. Any ultimate determinations regarding contracts however will not be finalized until December to coincide with any recommendations made through the Strategic Plan development process. Communications and social media services will be one of the new contracts that will be chosen. Bill Anderson noted that CPR may want to share in the funding for those new communication services but will get back to the Board with more details.
* **Leadership Academy:** Richard Rojas with CPR asked the Chapter to participate more substantively in their Leadership Academy. More than 100 planners participated in 2021 and they would like more support from APA to manage the strong interest in the program in 2022. It is anticipated that the fees, though low, would cover any cost for staff and other support, but an item may need to be added to the 2022 budget to cover any other expenses.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. **APPROVAL OF FINAL ELECTION RESULTS & CHANGE TO ELECTION POLICIES FOR SOLICITATION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Past-President Julia Lave Johnston gave the election report and asked that the Board adopt changes to the Elections Policies and Procedures to update the process used to form the nominating committee.

**Election Report:**

Each Section Director was asked to nominate someone from their Section to participate on the Nominating Committee.   The final Nominating Committee included:

**Chair:** Julia Lave Johnston, Past President, Sacramento Valley Section

**Members:**

• Kacey Lizon, Director Elect, Sacramento Valley Section

• Rachel Raynor, Director, Central Coast Section

• Tara Lake, Director, San Diego Section

• Jenna Chilligerian, Director Membership and Public Information, Central Section

• Ashley Hefner Hoang, Web Director, Los Angeles Section

• Miroo Desai, Vice President for Diversity and Equity, APA California Board

The APA California Board emphasized the need for a candidate slate that would increase the diversity on the Board. The result was a very geographically balanced slate of qualified candidates with most candidates representing a group that is currently underrepresented on the Chapter Board.

***Please note that Patrick Sauls withdrew his name shortly befo.***

**Final Election Results:**

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 **Recommended Election Policies Amendment:**

The following are recommended policy changes for the nominating and elections processes. After Board discussion, it was determined that a more comprehensive update will be presented to the Board after the Strategic Plan is completed to improve overall election policies and make the process more transparent and aligned with the Chapter’s values. This will include a determination whether to continue using National’s election process which is not well-timed with the Chapter’s terms and does not provide any unique advantages to the Chapter.

***Nominating Committee:***

The Election Policies and Procedures currently tasks the President with forming the nominating committee. In practice, the President-elect or Past-president forms the committee. The Policies and Procedures ([Current Elections Policies as Amended June 201](https://www.apacalifornia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/APA-California-Election-Policies-and-Procedures-2019-Update.pdf)9) should be amended to reflect this by tasking either the President-elect or the Past-president with forming the committee, which is then to be reviewed and appointed by the President in consultation with the Executive Board.

***Suggested Amendment:***

1.2—Nominating Committee.

A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the APA California Chapter President by December 31st of each year. This appointment will open a season of Leadership Recruitment and Development. The APA California President-Elect or Past-President shall serve as the Committee Chair and will work to recruit up to eight (8) additional members. ~~The committee shall consist of the APA California President- Elect or Past-President, who shall serve as the Committee Chair, and up to eight (8) additional members~~. The ~~Presiden~~t Chair shall solicit Section input for committee members and shall make every effort to ensure a diverse committee representing a mix of ages, ethnicity, geography, and Section representation in order to gain access to a broader spectrum of interested members.  The Nominating Committee will be discussed at a meeting of the Executive Committee before being appointed by the President.

**MOTION TO APPROVE:** The Board moved, seconded, and passed to adopt changes to the Elections Policies and Procedures to update the process used to form the nominating committee by requiring either the President-Elect or Past-President, rather than the President, to serve as Nominating Committee Chair and work to recruit the full nominating committee. **Unanimous vote.**

1. **APPROVAL OF AWARDS POLICIES TO ALIGN SECTION AND PRESIDENT’S, AND SECTION ACTIVITY AWARD WITH CHAPTER AWARDS PROGRAM**

President Ashley Atkinson and Vice President for Administration Derek Wong asked the Board to approve amendments to the Awards Policies to a) require an Excellence or Merit award at the Section level to proceed to the Chapter awards program, and b) to require that Sections offer the Chapter's award categories, with the ability to add additional local categories at their discretion; and c) reflect related changes. Additionally, the action also requests that the Board vote to amend the Awards Policies to make procedural updates describing the nomination process for Special Chapter Awards Categories and the Section Activity Award (also known as the President’s Awards) and encouraging Section adoption of the Chapter awards policies.

**Background:**

Revision to the Awards Policies toward the goal of greater Chapter/Section alignment has been ongoing since 2019. In that year, the policies were revised to require submission at the Section level in order to proceed to the Chapter program. Having implemented that policy for the 2020 and 2021 awards, the President, Vice President of Administration, and Section Directors initiated discussion of further alignment for 2022.

During the Section Directors’ meetings on July 9th and August 20th, discussions regarding the awards program were held. Issues raised include the need to elevate the profile of the Section awards; the opportunity to better support and encourage more diverse applicants through a more unified process; and award categories that receive few applicants and may need to be combined or eliminated.

After reviewing the award categories offered by the Sections and the Chapter, along with the number of applicants in each category at the Chapter level, the group discussed the potential requirement for an Excellence (First Place) win at the Section level for an applicant to proceed to the Chapter program. This would limit the universe of applicants to 8 in each category. After further discussion, there was a consensus between the directors that both Excellence (first place) winner and Merit (second place) winners within the Sections should be considered at the Chapter level, to broaden the applicant pool.

In order to facilitate this new tiered approach to the awards program, the Sections would be required to adopt the Chapter’s awards categories and update them as updated by the Chapter. An exception would be for the Pioneer and Landmark awards, which would be optional to offer at the Section level, based on the recommendation of the Chapter Historians. Sections would have the opportunity to add their own local awards categories at their discretion. Winners in Section-only award categories would not advance to the Chapter awards program.

The proposal was also discussed at the Executive Board meeting on August 20. The Executive Board was generally in agreement with the proposal, although concerns were raised that quality applicants from larger Sections might be excluded from the Chapter program due to more robust competition in those Sections. However, given that most Chapter award categories receive fewer applicants than there are Sections, this proposal should ultimately result in more quality applicants at the Chapter level, rather than fewer.

As is the current policy, applicants for projects with regional (i.e., overlapping Sections) or statewide significance may submit directly to the Chapter.

The deadline to submit awards to the Chapter is permanently set for May 15th each year.

An item for discussion later is a potential reorganization or reduction of the Chapter awards categories, to create a more efficient program with improved outcomes. Twenty percent of the Chapter’s award categories did not receive any applicants in 2021, while another 35% of the award’s categories had one or two applicants. Also discussed by the Board was the need to reach out to the State and UC’s to let them know they can apply through a Section or directly to the state, and the use of MemberClicks to make submittals of awards applications easier.

The Sections also requested that they be allowed to send more than one merit award to the state awards jury to allow smaller sections to compete with larger sections that receive more submittals.

For more information review the following documents:

[APA California Section Awards Categories](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1T76-0V8rRUDXXoLJLGjcJaCJTowMVIf1/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=105222059819689764664&rtpof=true&sd=true)

[Redlined Draft Revised Awards Policies](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m0vjPk5Uwkbklv0WSJUMPmo2rGM3BLwY/edit)

**MOTION TO APPROVE:** The Board moved, seconded, and passed to approve amendments to the Awards Policies to a) require an Excellence or Merit award at the Section level to proceed to the Chapter awards program, b) require that Sections offer the Chapter's award categories, with the ability to add additional local categories at their discretion; c) reflect related changes, and d) add an additional amendment that Sections may send more than one merit award to the Chapter. Additionally, the action also requests that the Board vote to amend the Awards Policies to make procedural updates describing the nomination process for Special Chapter Awards Categories and the Section Activity Award (also known as the President’s Awards) and encouraging Section adoption of the Chapter awards policies. **Unanimous vote.**

1. **APPROVAL OF 2022 DRAFT BUDGET STRUCTURE AND ASSUMPTIONS**

Executive Director Sande Stefan went through the main new items in the budget. Most items in the 2022 draft budget have not changed from 2021 or are only slightly changed to reflect anticipated increases or decreases by the end of the year. The draft includes a reduction in anticipated dues income from National to $365,000 (LI 4115). In addition, several one-time items have been requested that could be paid out of reserves (the reserves American Fund account has a current balance of $486,000):

* $75,000 to be transferred to a new Conference Savings Account as seed money for the multiyear conference expenses that come in before registration and sponsorship monies are available.  This request has already been approved by the Chapter Conference Committee.
* $15,000 to Envision to complete the 2-year work plan following the completion of the Strategic Plan in December.
* $18,840 seed money for Chapter 75th Anniversary projects. Steve Preston, the Chair of the 75th Anniversary Committee, explained that this amount includes the first year of requested expenditures out of a 2 ½ year program. Many of the project costs have the potential to be funded through sponsorships or volunteers to allow reimbursement to the Chapter, but the initial costs will need to be fronted by the Chapter. The 2022 list of projects requested to be funded in 2022 include an anniversary webpage, archives exhibit, a book celebrating APA California’s planning history, branding and logo, an interactive graphic timeline, historical poster displays throughout the conference, oral histories, and expanded public Information and social media.
* $5,000 for a CPF Diversity Scholarship donation requested by CPF.

Several other potential budget changes are not yet included in the draft budget because they are not yet known, including any changes in contracts and services because of the 2022 RFP process that is ongoing, the potential for expanded or new programs depending on the final conference profits, and changes that will be recommended through the Strategic Plan and workplan process. Refined budget amounts will be determined at the December 17th Board meeting when actual income and expenses for the year are better known.  Final approval of the 2022 budget will also be voted on at the December 17th Board meeting.

**MOTION TO APPROVE:** The Board moved, seconded, and passed to approve the 2022 Draft Budget Structure and assumptions as outlined above. All Board members present voted aye with one abstention (Julia Lave Johnston).

1. **APPROVAL OF 2022 CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS AND THEME**

Vice President for Conferences Bob Lagomarsino and 2022 Conference Co-Chair Stephanie Roxas requested that the Board approve the 2022 Conference Co-Chairs Stephanie Roxas, AICP, and Amber Gregg; the 2022 Conference Theme “Celebrating CommUNITY”; and the conference logo.

**Background:**

The Orange Section will be hosting the 2022 APA California Conference from October 1 to 4, 2022, at the Anaheim Marriott.

Section I.C.1 of the APA California Conference Planning Handbook (Conference Handbook) provides the following guidance concerning the selection and ratification of CHC Co-Chairs:

The Section hosting the conference should nominate two or three CHC Co-Chairs. The goal is to have a balance of public and private sectors members on the CHC, and ideally to have each sector represented among the co-chairs.

Section V.A.1 of the Conference Handbook provides further guidance concerning the development and selection of a conference theme and logo:

The conference theme and logo should distinguish your conference from others. The conference theme should reflect your region and highlight your local activities and assets. After forming the CHC, creating a theme and logo are initial tasks.

The Conference Handbook further stipulates that the selected theme is subject to APA California Board approval which may occur either at a meeting or by email vote.

While the Conference Handbook recommends the selection of Co-Chairs 24 months prior to the conference and development of a conference theme and logo 18 months prior, the disruptions associated COVID-19 have pushed the schedule back by several months.

**Conference Co-Chairs:**

The Orange Section has nominated two CHC Co-Chairs: Stephanie Roxas, AICP, and Amber Gregg.

Stephanie Roxas has been involved with the past two virtual conferences as the Programs Co-Chair for the 2020 conference and serving on the Chapter Conference Committee for the 2021 conference. Amber Gregg has been an active APA member for nearly 20 years. The last time the conference was in Anaheim, Amber served as the Student Day Co-Chair along with her husband and fellow planner Sean Nicholas.

**Conference Theme and Logo:**

The proposed conference theme is "Celebrating CommUNITY."

As the first in-person conference in three years, the conference will celebrate coming together as planners and a profession as a whole. The theme recognizes the hard-won victories and achievements in planning that required collaboration, cooperation, and creative problem solving to navigate the last two years. The theme underscores the "unity" aspect as these planning achievements would not have been possible without it.

The conference logo, show below, is intended to convey a sense of positivity, optimism, energy, and fun.  These cornerstones will continue to guide the messaging and associated branding of the 2022 APA California Conference.



**MOTION TO APPROVE:** The Board moved, seconded, and passed to approve the 2022 Conference Co-Chairs, theme of “Celebrating community”, and logo. All voting aye with one abstention (Stephanie Roxas).

1. **APPROVAL OF LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT POLICY AND CORRESPONDING AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS AND CONFERENCE HANDBOOK**

Vice President for Diversity and Equity Miroo Desai asked the Board to adopt a stand-alone land acknowledgment policy by which Native American tribes are recognized as traditional stewards of the land. This policy will require State- and Section-initiated and/or sponsored events (webinars, conference sessions and other events) to begin with a land acknowledgement that acknowledges the stewardship of the tribes where the activities are being held. This action includes a request that the Board adopt companion changes to the APA California Chapter Bylaws and the APA Conference Handbook that will be triggered by adoption of the acknowledgment policy.

**Background:**

California has the second highest number of Native American population (those who identify themselves as American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) per Census categories). However, with their population standing at 328,112 it constitutes less than 1 per cent of state population. California is home to about 200 tribes and had the 18 original treaties with California tribes been honored by the state and federal government, the tribes would possess over 7.5 million acres of land. Today, California tribes collectively possess about 7 percent of their unratified treaty territory.

As a professional organization that fundamentally centers land and the use of land in its practice, APA California should encourage planners to think about what it means to be living and practicing their professions on occupied land. A land acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes and respects indigenous people as stewards of land and the enduring relationship that exists between them and their traditional lands.  A land acknowledgment is an expression of gratitude to those whose homelands we reside on and recognition of the original people who exclusively managed these lands prior to the arrival of settlers and colonizers. A land acknowledgment also provides a learning opportunity for those who may have never heard the names of the tribes that have and continue to live on the land that we all are standing on.  The California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center states that “acknowledging the land is a transformative act that works to undo the intentional erasure of indigenous peoples as the first step in decolonizing land relations.” It is critical to understand that these land acknowledgments are not about placing blame but are the first step towards building a more inclusive future so that indigenous peoples’ voices, lives, and history are not erased.

The practice of land acknowledgment is a small gesture and needs to go beyond that to preclude tokenism. For an organization such as APA California one way to do this is for us to educate ourselves and our membership on how indigenous communities are impacted and/or ignored in our planning practices in a thoughtful and responsible way. One way to do that is to intentionally seek out 2-3 conference sessions at each State conference and allow one by-right session that focuses on indigenous communities. The VP Diversity and Equity would work with conference organizers to develop at least one session on issues directly related to native American people in much the same way as they are responsible for organizing the Diversity Summit at the conference. By doing this APA California will affirm our responsibility to amplify indigenous voices and promote better understanding and public consciousness of Native sovereignty, history, and land use struggles.

To facilitate members to develop land acknowledgement statements, a “Guide to Land Acknowledgment” will be posted on the State APA website and distributed as needed. It is anticipated that this Guide will be updated as needed. This is not a “check the box” requirement – there is no mandated acknowledgement language for every event. Each event sponsor/moderator must decide which of the optional acknowledgements in the Guide they feel comfortable making.

Miroo will send guidance to Board members and the Sections as follow-up.

**Suggested New Stand-Along Land Acknowledgement Policy:**

“The APA California Chapter Board recognizes Native American tribes as traditional stewards of the land. State- and Section-initiated and/or sponsored events (webinars, conference sessions and other events) shall begin with a land acknowledgement that acknowledges the stewardship of the tribes where the activities are being held.”

**MOTION TO APPROVE:** The Board moved, seconded, and passed to adopt a stand-alone land acknowledgment policy by which Native American tribes are recognized as traditional stewards of the land. This policy will require State- and Section-initiated and/or sponsored events (webinars, conference sessions and other events) to begin with a land acknowledgement that acknowledges the stewardship of the tribes where the activities are being held using the Guide to Land Acknowledgement to determine a preferred statement. This motion will also adopt changes to the APA California Chapter Bylaws and the APA Conference Handbook that are consistent with this policy. Unanimous vote.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. **2021 CONFERENCE UPDATE**

Bob Lagomarsino told the Board that the conference met its registration goal of 1000 registrants (fewer than last year but not by many) and is expected to meet the $100,000 conference profit goal. Bob thanked the Chapter Conference Committee for a very well done and successful virtual conference, particularly the two past Vice Presidents for Conferences Betsy McCollough and Hanson Hom. Bob said that the Chapter Conference Committee is also considering offering the early conference registration rate to members who did not register to allow them to view all the conference/CM credit sessions.  The goal is to provide further revenues for a member service without hurting future registration.

1. **DIGITAL FILE SUBMISSION LINK FOR APA CALIFORNIA CHAPTER ARCHIVES**

Chapter Historian Steve Preston updated the Board on a new submission link option for the Northridge APA California Chapter Archives. To date, sending records to the archives has involved sending in paper documents. The Chapter requested that Northridge consider an option to file archival documents electronically. Northridge has notified Steve that the electronic option will be available soon by using “Box” file transfer software. This software will be best suited for limited numbers of items because each document will need to be loaded one at a time but will work well for the Sections which have limited documents to send to the archives each year. This should increase Section submittals. For large files of documents and historical documents, however, those will still need to be submitted in paper form. Steve will send out a new archive memo to the Board in the next few weeks.

1. **WORKING GROUP UPDATES AND OTHER ITEMS**
* **Mentorship Committee:** Student Rep Elizabeth Owen said a list of recommendations to the Board to support mentorship and/or provide a guide for Sections and the Chapter for mentorship programs will be coming shortly. There are no budget amounts yet determined. Ashley asked for those budget requests to be provided by November so they can be added to the final 2022 budget. Julia said that the recommendations will be phased in, hopefully using existing resources first by adding mentorship to the scope of services for the new communications contractor.
* **Legislative Webinar:** Eric Phillips, VP for Policy and Legislation, and Lauren De Valencia, Lobbyist, are putting together an implementation webinar with HCD for the new housing bills just signed into law this year. It will be held in early December with a reasonable fee so it will be a revenue opportunity and will offer legal credit.
* **Last Call for 2020 Annual Report Submittals:** Derek Wong, VP Administration, asked the Board members including Section Directors one last time to provide submittals for the 2020 Annual Report. The submittals should include thoughts and experiences of APA, including graphics if possible. Ashley said that she will be working with Lisa Lind, the new VP for Administration, to spread out the VP’s duties so they are more manageable, and making the Annual Report easier, more nuts and bolts, to make it easier for everyone to finalize early each year.
* **Student Rep Candidates:** Elizabeth said she would be graduating soon after two years as the Student Rep. She asked CPF to send her candidates from the Student Scholarship recipient list. The approval of the new Student Rep will most likely be completed by email vote by the end of October.
* **DEI Webinar Series Continuing:** Miroo reminded the Board of her three-part series of DEI webinars that are continuing this month.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

President Ashley Atkinson adjourned the Board meeting by unanimous vote at 4:15 pm.