

42nd Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions 2021 Program Committee Conference Call

Date: Thursday, June 11, 2020
Time: 3pm ET/2pm CT/1pm MT/12pm PT

In Attendance

Dori Steinberg, PhD (Chair)
Ellen Beckjord, PhD (Co-Chair)
L. Alison Phillips, PhD (Past Chair)
Monica Baskin, PhD (President)

Staff

Lindsay Bullock (Executive Director)
Angela Burant (Meetings Manager)
Rachel Mizar (Senior Meetings Manager)

1. Minutes Approval

Dr. Phillips moved to approve the minutes. Dr. Steinberg second the minutes. The minutes were approved with the correction of the name Jamy Ard.

2. Hybrid vs. Virtual Discussion

A hybrid in person budget would not be lower because of costs we incur regardless of how many people attend the meeting. We would possibly have to pay for charges in having a lower number of people in our hotel room block. We would also incur extra expenses for video recording. Our only fiscally responsible options are in person, which would isolate some from attending, or a completely virtual meeting. There is no insurance to cover the loss of potentially needing to cancel a meeting due to COVID-19 or other communicable diseases. We are not sure what the social distancing measures would be come April 2021. Currently, some hotels have meeting room capacity for 6 feet social distancing, which allows for only 10% capacity. The capacity for the general session room is 1,200. With social distancing measures, only 120 could be in the room. The social distancing guidelines would mean some of the breakout rooms would only be able to accommodate 7 people. We sign hotel contracts 3-4 years out so if people like the hybrid option then there could be less people at our meetings, but we would still have to pay for our contracted conference and hotel room space for the next few years.

A virtual option would cause some new costs for a virtual platform but we would mitigate some costs since we haven't signed all our contracts yet for 2021. A virtual meeting would be the best chance to break even or make a profit. Dr. Steinberg feels the virtual meeting would be best to get everyone involved. A hybrid meeting would be hard to make both sides high quality. The committee discussed possibly hosting regional events for people to network, but not sure how that would work with social distancing and how much it would cost to rent out multiple meeting spaces throughout the country. Regional meetings would still need a budget and we aren't sure how registration fees would work and how the event would run. The costs for a hybrid meeting would not be the best financial choice for SBM because we still have fixed expenses that wouldn't go away by having fewer attendees. Overall, there would be lots of limitations with a hybrid meeting and expenses would be a lot higher.

If we go virtual, SBM could still have swag bags but send them by mail. There could be a virtual match making program to network with colleagues. If we decided soon to have a virtual meeting, we would save some money and could put the money towards having swag bags and/or pay more money for speakers to present.

A great marketing strategy to get people excited about the virtual meeting would be to highlight how inclusive the meeting would be and highlight ways the meeting would be a lot greener. Try our best to make the virtual meeting sound positive and not just about health and safety or financial reasons. Could make it fun by wearing a certain t-shirt on some days. The committee wants to try to make a virtual meeting as interactive as possible.

Dr. Phillips suggested a town hall meeting with the Program Committee to get some feedback on ways to make the virtual meeting more interactive. This town hall could be a webinar or an online survey. Either option we choose there will always be some people complaining about the choice we made.



Another interactive option is people could connect wearables to the meeting. Give prizes for most active or do some type of competition to get people moving around. APA has officially gone virtual for their fall meeting this year. We can look at what they do to know some ideas that we should and should not do.

3. Recommendation to the board.

The Program Committee will add a motion to the June/July board meeting calls to hold the 2021 Annual Meeting as a virtual meeting. The Program Committee can present an abbreviated version of the survey results and PowerPoint to show why they are making the motion to hold a virtual meeting. First half of the call for providing information and second half for discussion. SBM staff will put together an abbreviated presentation and either SBM staff or Dr. Baskin and Dr. Steinberg will present the information.

4. Abstract Timeline Discussion & Communication to Members

The Program Committee agreed to push the abstract opening date back to August. Usually we open abstracts in mid-July but we will be pushing the date back 2 weeks. Staff can then work with Cadmium to make any edits and changes from what the board decides on the July call. Most abstracts come in during the last 2 weeks of closing. We would still have the same submission types but then the Program Committee could decide how many of each to accept. The abstract timeline for submission and reviews would stay the same.

Next Program Committee Conference Call

June 25, 2 pm CT

Small Committee Call