



Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter

**Association for the Education and
Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually
Impaired (AER)**

www.penn-delaer.org

Penn-Del AER General Assembly Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2021, APPROVED

Location: Zoom

Meeting called to order at 10:45 a.m. by Holly Russell Board President

Parliamentarian: Vince McVeigh

Attendance

Penn-Del AER Board Members and General Membership (on Zoom)

Officers' Reports

President: Holly Russell

The meeting opened with a general welcome and introduction of Board Members and Directors-at-Large.

Secretary: Melodye May

The minutes from the May 21, 2020, General Assembly Meeting were presented to the membership. Vince McVeigh motioned to accept the minutes as submitted, seconded by Brenda Egan. Membership voted (using the Zoom Participant Yes and No features) and accepted the minutes.

Treasurer: Vince McVeigh

Vince McVeigh presented the current balance of the Penn-Del AER account. He reported the following:

Total Shares: \$34,092.76

Certificates: \$13,634.69

Balance: \$47,727.45

He also reported that the cancellation of 2020 in-person conference impacted Chapter revenue. The commitment from our Chapter to providing recognizing Chapter award and scholarship recipients resulted in some expenditure which was partially offset by vendor payments. The impact of these factors can be seen by

comparing this year's current balance to the balance of \$53,474.16 at a similar time last year.

Year In Review

Holly Russell presented an overview of the highlights of the previous year.

Award Recipient: Penn-Del AER is the recipient of the 2020 AER Outstanding Chapter Award.

Round Table Event: Chapter members were given the opportunity to participate in a round table event in October 2020.

2021 Leadership Series: This 3-part webinar series focused on recharging, refreshing, and renewing ourselves professionally and personally and on ways we can share those strategies with our students and clients. These free sessions were each 90 minutes in length, and certificates of attendance were provided by request. The sessions were held on January 28, 2021, (Get a Move On! A Jump Start for Your New Year with Maria Lepore-Stevens), March 25, 2021, (Penn-Del Rocks! Bringing the Stone Age Forward to Social Media with Maureen Army), and June 23, 2021, (Taking Care of Ourselves: Helping Us So We Can Help Others with Billy Brookshire).

Strategic plan including updates from membership, leadership development and mentoring, advocacy for the field, non-profit status, professional development and conference, and board improvement.

Old Business:

Cogswell-Macy Act: AER is supporting the Cogswell-Macy Act which will further support students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind by strengthening services and educational opportunities, enhancing reporting and evaluation measures, increasing training for teachers and professionals, and reaffirming the Department of Education's mission and responsibility to ensure an accessible and quality education for all students. Be on the lookout for opportunities to support the Cogswell-Macy Act.

New Business:

Bioptic Driving and Related Topics: Look for more information and trainings on Penn-Del AER website and through emails

Penn-Del AER Memorial List: An Ad Hoc Committee has been established to work on the presentation of the Memorial List at next year's conference.

AER eLearning Series Overview: Megan Doty, AER eLearning and Professional Development Program Manager showed participants how to navigate AER's eLearning Series platform

Membership Committee – Ashley Popojas, Committee Member, presented the 2021 Incentives for Penn-Del AER Members. Drawings during today’s meeting:

Drawing 1: Four (4) \$25 Gift Cards (2 Target, 1 Amazon, and 1 Michael’s)

Drawing 2: 2022 AER International Conference, St. Louis, MO in July 2022

Committee Reports

Awards Committee – Brenda Egan, Chair

Committee Goal: To recognize and highlight the achievements of deserving professionals within this Chapter through our three awards: Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh Service Award, Elinor Long Educator of the Year (ELEY) Award, Student Scholarship

Members: Lynn Fox, Debby Holzapfel, Brittany Larkin, Mark Steciw

Committee Report: The award recipients will be announced at tonight’s Awards Ceremony:

2021 Award Recipients

Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh Service Award: Sherry Sandt

Elinor Long Educator of the Year (ELEY) Award: Evangeline Worsley

Student Scholarship Awards: Kenneth Patrick-Quinn and Marie Vater

Brenda asked that we join her in congratulating these well-deserving award recipients.

Bylaws and Structure Committee, Vince McVeigh, Chair:

Committee Goal: To govern the Penn-Del AER Chapter in all of its meetings by parliamentary law as contained in Robert’s Rules of Order

Members: John Hofmeister, Debby Holzapfel, Frank Irzyk, Mary Nelle McLennan

Committee Report: There are no pending bylaws changes at this time and the Penn-Del AER Chapter Manual has been updated

Communications Committee: Debby Holzapfel, Kerry Lueders and Christine Snellman, Co-Chairs

Committee Goal: To disseminate chapter information in an accessible manner

Members: Nancy Ashley, Mary Daubenspeck, Lynn Fox, Marcy Graboyes, Frank Irzyk, Becky Knaub, Greg Lazur, Holly Russell, Emily Vasile, Erin Weaver, Tracy Whitehead

Committee Report: The Communications Committee ensures current information is available, accessible, and distributed through:

- Website
- Electronic files
- Emails to Chapter members, mailing lists, distribution lists
- Social Media
- Virtual Videoconferencing via Zoom - Special thanks to PaTTAN

Membership Committee: Maria Lepore-Stevens, Chair

Committee Goal: To actively recruit new members and retain current members

Members: Nancy Ashley, Patty D’Ascenzo, Angela Humbertson, Ashley Popojas, Holly Russell, Doug Williams, Lachelle Smith, Tracy Whitehead

Committee Report: We currently have 148 members and there are 45 lapsed members. Thank you to Ashley Popojas for her work on the Membership Committee. We welcome Maria Lepore-Stevens as our new chair. A thank you to Patty D’Ascenzo for contributing as our Penn-Del AER Student Ambassador.

Nominations Committee – Angela Humbertson and Holly Russell, Co-Chairs

Committee Goal: To fill director positions in districts where vacancies exist and to select Directors-at-Large that approximates the diversity of interests which exist within the general membership.

Members: Brenda Egan, Kerry Lueders, Melodye May

Committee Report: Angela Humbertson presented the proposed nomination Slate: (Terms ending June 23, 2023)

Western PA District: Brenda Egan and Mary Nelle McLennan

Eastern PA District: Alexis Morrison, Student Ambassador, No vote needed

Central PA District: Tracy Whitehead

Delaware District: Maria Lepore-Stevens and Yomi Koya

Officer Vacancies: There are no vacancies at this time

Director-at-Large Vacancies: Four vacancies and two open positions

Angela Humbertson asked for nominations from the floor. Membership voted to accept the slate of Officers and Board of Directors as presented.

Professional Development Committee: Angela Humbertson, and Erin Weaver, Co-Chairs

Conference Planning Sub-Committee Goal: To host a quality annual conference to support on-going professional development and networking

Members: Gayle Aquino, Dael Cohen, Brenda Egan, Debby Holzapfel, Frayk Irzyk, Becky Knaub, Greg Lazur, Maria Lepore-Stevens, Helene Marano,

Melodye May, Tessa McCarthy, Mary Nelle McLennan, Jo Ann McNamee, Vince McVeigh, Holly Russell, Mark Steciw, Emily Vasile, Tracy Whitehead, Doug Williams

Sub-committee Report: The Penn-Del AER 2021 Virtual Conference is currently underway Angela expressed gratitude to those who attended the opening session last night and Session II this morning and invited participants to join us for today's General Session and tomorrow's all-day Exhibitor Event tomorrow

Leadership Sub-Committee: Mary Nelle McLennan, Chair

Leadership Sub-Committee Goal: To foster leadership opportunities for the members of the Penn-Del AER Chapter.

Members: Nancy Ashley, Dael Cohen, Brenda Egan, Marcy Graboyes, Becky Knaub, Greg Lazur, Kerry Lueders, Vince McVeigh, Holly Russell, Erin Weaver, Tracy Whitehead, Doug Williams

Sub-Committee Report:

In the spring of 2020, the Leadership Committee developed and produced a three-part webinar series titled "Building Resilience: Leading and Learning Our Way through 2020 and Beyond" to replace the Leadership event that was canceled due to COVID-19.

In 2021, the committee developed and produced a three-part webinar series titled: "Taking Charge: Restore, Refresh, Renew." Two sessions were presented in early 2021; the third is planned for June.

Announcement of Drawing Winners

The Drawing winners were announced throughout the business meeting.

Drawing Winners:

\$25 Target Gift Card – Kerry Lueders

\$25 Amazon Gift Card – Doug Williams

\$25 Target Gift Card – Sherry Sandt

\$25 Michael's Gift Card – Marla Moon

UEB Practice Sentences – Tracy Whitehead

2022 AER International Conference in St. Louis, MO – Win Registration AND \$500 towards Travel Expenses: Gina Bryant

Lachelle Smith and Doug Williams won annual conference registration, \$100 travel expenses and \$25 O'Reilly's gift card in 2020 and will be provided the opportunity to receive that prize for 2022.

Conclusion

Holly Russell invited members to join committees and become involved with the work of the Chapter.

The 2022 Penn-Del AER Conference will be held April 27-29, 2022.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:30 am.

DRAFT minutes submitted by Holly Russell

The Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) supports professionals who provide education & rehabilitation services to people with visual impairments.

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