



Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter

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

www.penn-delaer.org

Penn-Del AER General Assembly Meeting Minutes April 27, 2022

Location: In-person and Zoom
Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Holly Russell, Board President
Parliamentarian: Vince McVeigh

Welcome participants in-person and virtually. Comments are welcome. Use the chat box if you are virtual.

Attendance

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

Officers' Reports

President - Holly Russell

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

Secretary - Brenda Egan

The minutes from the April 22, 2021, General Assembly Meeting were presented to the membership. Vince McVeigh moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Membership voted (using the Zoom Participant 'Yes' and 'No' features). The minutes were accepted and approved.

Treasurer - Vince McVeigh

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

Balance as of 3/31/22: \$45,545.80

Balance as of 3/31/21: \$47,727.45

Revenue has been impacted by the cancellation of the in-person conference the previous two years and expenditure from commitment to scholarships and recognizing award recipients. Revenue is offset by income from exhibitor payments.

The impact of these factors can be seen by comparing this year's current balance to the balance at a similar time last year.

Year In Review

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

The conference title for 2022 is "*Adjusting your Sails: Charting a new Course*". In 2021, committee members worked to bring a virtual conference, this year we offer a hybrid conference; in-person and virtual. In the past two years, members of the Board and committees have produced two virtual Leadership series consisting of six webinars.

Penn-Del maintained our commitment to award deserving individuals with the Richard L. Welsh Service Award, Elinor Long Educator of the Year Award, and Student Scholarship.

Maintained a strong connection with AER International. The Board Officers have attended many meetings in the past year with AER leaders from all over the United States through the Council of AER Chapter Presidents.

A Memorial committee was established to remember and celebrate our colleagues that have passed away within the past year. The role of this committee is to collect, compile, and confirm a list of Penn-Del AER members and other individuals of professional significance who have passed away each year.

The website is updated frequently. We enjoy connecting with members through Facebook, Twitter and through email blasts. Visit us at Penn-Delaer.org to keep in touch with things that are happening with the Board and committees.

AER Outstanding Chapter

Award Recipient: Penn-Del AER is the recipient of the 2020 AER Outstanding Chapter Award. This is not the first time Penn-Del has been recognized as an outstanding chapter. Our Chapter was recognized in 2010! We are very proud of being recognized Internationally as an Outstanding Chapter!

Holly encouraged non-members to consider joining AER and become active within the Penn-Del AER Chapter.

Strategic Plan Overview

In 2018, the leaders of Penn-Del AER led the Board of Directors in a self-assessment designed to evaluate the Chapter's strengths and weaknesses and to identify goals and strategies through which the Board could expand support to its members.

The results of the needs assessment motivated the Penn-Del AER Board of Directors to develop and implement a strategic plan that addresses the Chapter's weaknesses and bolster its strengths.

The Board developed a plan that consists of six focus areas:

- Membership
- Leadership Development and Mentoring
- Advocacy for the Field
- Non-Profit Status
- Professional Development and Conference
- Board Improvement

Old Business:

The Strategic Plan goals have been integrated into committee work.

Strategic plan goals continue to be monitored by a yearly self-assessment.

Chapter manual has been reviewed and updated to make it more user-friendly.

New Business:

Penn-Del AER added a Memorial committee to honor those members who have passed away.

Wear your Penn-Del AER logo gear on Friday. You may purchase a Penn-Del AER logo shirt at the Membership table.

The 2022 AER International Conference will be held from July 20-24 in St. Louis, MO. Attend if you are able!

Membership Committee Incentives

Maria Lepore-Stevens, membership chair, presented the 2022 Incentives for Penn-Del AER Members. Drawings will be held during today's meeting, the Awards Event, and throughout the next day and a half to entice others to join AER.

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, Ashley Popojas, and Mark Steciw

Committee Report: The award recipients will be introduced at tomorrow's Awards Ceremony

2021 Award Recipients

Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh Service Award: Marcy Graboyes

Elinor Long Educator of the Year (ELEY) Award: Margy Durkin

Student Scholarship Awards: Joanna Graham

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.

Communications Committee - Kerry Lueders and Mary Daubenspeck, Co-Chairs

Committee Goal: To disseminate chapter information in an accessible manner

Members: Nancy Ashley, Patty D'Ascenzo, Lynn Fox, Greg Gerhart, Marcy Graboyes, Deb Holzapfel, Frank Irzyk, Becky Knaub, Holly Russell, Christine Snellman, Mark Steciw, Emily Vasile, Erin Weaver, Doug Williams

Steve D'Andrea serves as web master

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

- Website
- Mail Chimp eblasts
- Social media posts
- Dropbox management
- Shift from Survey monkey to google forms
- Document templates
- Electronic files

Legislation Committee – Doug Williams

Committee Goal: The goal of the Legislative Committee is to monitor and respond to current legislative activity at a state and national level.

Members: Marcy Graboyes, Oluyomi Koya, Greg Lazur, Lachelle Smith

Committee Report: No updates at this time

Membership Committee - Maria Lepore-Stevens, Chair

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

Members: Nancy Ashley, Angela Humbertson, Oluyomi Koya, Victoria Perdziola, Ashley Popojas, Holly Russell, Lachelle Smith, Doug Williams, Tracy Whitehead

Committee Report: We currently have 163 members. Thanks to committee members. Committee conducted a gear sale this year and we encourage you to wear your gear on Friday to show your Penn-Del AER love! Stop by membership table to pick up your AER mug.

Memorial Committee – Mary Nelle McLennan

Committee Goal: To establish a chapter tradition of recognizing Penn-Del AER members and other individuals of professional significance who have passed away.

Members: Maureen Army, Nancy Ashley, Brenda Egan, Greg Lazur, Vince McVeigh

Committee Report: The Penn-Del AER Memorial List will be respectfully presented during the opening session of each chapter conference. Penn-Del AER is the first chapter to adopt this tradition within AER.

Our earliest list from AER is in 2004. The committee has collected all available memorial lists and extracted Pennsylvania and Delaware names to be read. Of the 31 names, there are no names from Delaware.

A submission form has been created and made available on the website. The committee encourages members to submit names of colleagues that pass away during the year so the list can be kept current. The current names of the deceased are posted on the website and will be updated.

The names will be read tomorrow at the opening session. We will read the names of all those who have passed since 2004 through current date. Moving forward, the names of those who pass will be read at subsequent conferences.

Nominations Committee –Holly Russell

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, Angela Humbertson

Holly thanked Board members whose term is complete:

- Melodye May
- Jo Ann Mc Namee
- Angela Humbertson

Committee Report: Holly Russell presented the proposed Nomination Slate: (Terms ending June 30, 2025)

Proposed Slate:

Officer Vacancies: President-Elect: Maria LePore-Stevens, Secretary: Ashley Popojas

Western PA District: There are no vacancies at this time

Eastern PA District: Mark Richert, Mark Steciw, Eva Worsley

Central PA District: There are no vacancies at this time

Delaware District: Sue Barton

Quorum – Vince reports we have met the required 10% to have a quorum.

Holly Russell explained that the Nominations Slate was sent to the membership through an email blast and was posted on the Penn-Del AER website two weeks prior to today’s meeting. Nominations were accepted through email up to April 26. Holly called for nominations from the floor and the chat box (for our virtual attendees). No nominations were made. Holly called for a motion.

Vince moved to accept the nomination slate as presented; Mary Nelle McLennan seconded. No discussion. The motion carried.

Professional Development Committee - Angela Humbertson, chair and Erin Weaver, Asst Chair

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 Holzappel, Frank 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 2022 Hybrid Conference is currently underway. The committee has worked very hard to bring this hybrid conference.

Two-day in person and hybrid event

3 note speakers

15 concurrent sessions

Holly thanked the conference planning committee!

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, Kerry Lueders, Helene Marano, Vince McVeigh, Holly Russell, Erin Weaver, Tracy Whitehead, Doug Williams

Sub-Committee Report:

Part of strategic planning. Covid hit and decided to develop a series of webinars on what were the personal cost/personal struggles of our fellow colleagues. Building Tools to Help us Survive 2020

2021 Put on a 3-part webinar series Personal aspects of maintain momentum while going thru the pandemic

2022 Decided it was impractical to put on a leadership series while working on a hybrid conference. Thoughts are to create a 2022 Fall Series. Send suggestions.

2023 Penn-Del AER Conference Registration – Angela Humbertson

Announcement of Drawing Winners

The Drawing winners were announced throughout the business meeting.

Drawing Winners:

\$25 Target Gift Card – Helene Marano

\$25 Amazon Gift Card – Gayle Aquino

\$25 Target Gift Card – Becky Knaub

\$25 Michael’s Gift Card – Brenda Egan

Two (2) Penn-Del AER T-shirts – No winners

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

Join Us!

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

The 2023 Penn-Del AER Conference: Location and Date is to be determined

Call to Adjourn

Vince moved to adjourn the meeting; Angela seconded

Meeting Adjourned at 7:15PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Egan
acting secretary

The Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of the Association for 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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