

August Executive Committee Meeting

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As this was John Peters' and my first Executive Committee meeting following our annual meeting, given the many accomplishments, I decided to dedicate my newsletter to this event.

This particular meeting always occurred the day after the annual site visit for our next annual meeting. In this case, it was held at the Sheraton Downtown Denver. Our members should recall that this was the site of our 2017 Scientific Meeting and again in 2021 after we missed the meeting in 2020 due to the pandemic. In prior years, the meetings lasted one and a half days; however, due to changes in the meeting structure, we finished at 12:45 on the first day! This was secondary to the proposal of our new Executive Director, with my complete agreement, to simplify the meeting process. From this meeting onward, we will conduct meetings to discuss items presented by our four Vice Presidents, provided by their respective committees, and then incorporate them into the meeting agenda. The responsibilities of each committee chair will be to elevate issues based on an "SBAR". This acronym stands for "Situation, Background, Assessment, and Recommendation." So, should a committee come up with an issue, they will have to answer each one of those items before they forward it to their responsible Vice President.

I am not going into real depth on the notable items, so should you want some more details, feel free to ask one of us.

Prior to our Annual Meeting in Atlanta, the Church across the street from our Alexandria headquarters (HQ) asked our Executive Director if AsMA was interested in selling the building. As you may have heard, with the requirement for all government employees to return to their places of business, there is an excess of empty properties in Virginia. That, along with the aging of the actual building and the fact that the monthly upkeep was costing AsMA more money than the organization was putting into the property, your Governance team voted to explore the possibility of the Church purchasing the property. Well, after a lengthy but standard process, the Church accepted our offer of \$1.5 million. The AsMA staff will visit HQ in late September to clean out and mail essential documents to be archived. The rest will be sent to our new HQ in North Palm Beach, FL. Our new mailing address will be 631 N. US Highway 1, Suite 307, North Palm Beach, FL, and we will be co-located with the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS).

Since AsMA will no longer have a presence in Virginia, the Governance team also voted to incorporate in Florida.

A longstanding issue with choosing meeting sites for our annual meetings has been providing a per diem rate to all scientific meeting attendees. As our members should know, there is a significant number of members who are military and government. This became a substantial issue from 2029 and beyond, where AsMA's requirement for per diem was being challenged. Jeff Sventek, AsMA's outgoing Executive Director, incoming Executive Director John Peters, and the team from AIM pushed forward with an idea to negotiate

a 5-year agreement with a single brand versus focusing on individual markets. The result was Marriott and Hyatt bidding for 5 years of our scientific meeting. Well, they were successful and, after reviewing the offers, your Governance team decided on the Marriott Corporation. Our three annual meetings are already planned. They will be in 2026, Denver, CO; 2027, Dallas, TX; and 2028, New Orleans, LA. So, beginning in 2029, which is AsMA's 100th Anniversary, we will be having meetings at hotels exclusively belonging to the Marriott corporation. The 2029 meeting is to be held at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis Hotel from June 12 to 24.

It was discussed and agreed at the meeting that our committee chairs be vetted much more carefully by their respective Vice Presidents. The committee chairs need to provide much more timely responses to issues that arise during their tenure and agree in writing to accept their responsibilities. The Vice Presidents were tasked with developing a process to assess the performance of their committee chairs. The committee chairs should respond to issues within approximately 20 days of their initiation. This is where the creation of an "SBAR" will occur. The SBARs will then be collected by the respective Vice President and become the issues discussed at each meeting. We still want the committees to provide us with meeting reports that will continue to be part of the "supplement" to our meeting minutes.

Your AsMA management team has been diligently working on evaluating the organization's outsourced information systems and platforms. The team intends to create our next generation of systems in-house rather than purchasing outsourced systems that are inflexible and expensive.

As you are aware, we have discontinued printing our monthly journal, limiting ourselves to printing copies at the expense of AsMA and the requester. This had become an added expense with minimal return, prompting the management team to seek a group willing to print our Journal and handle the requester directly, rather than through AsMA. The AsMA team has partnered with Sheridan Connect to provide an on-demand print system for individuals who prefer print journals. To remind our members, you can now print specific articles or the entire journal on your own! A remarkable milestone was acknowledged at the meeting by our Treasurer. This was the first time in the history of the AsMA Journal that the expenses of the journal were less than the cost to the Association!



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