

Minutes
Executive Board of the California Educational Research Association
Phone Conference—February 2, 2005

Phil Morse, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

A quorum of the Board members was present:

Phil Morse Paul Tuss Jim Parker Tom Barrett Juan Sanchez
Kate Esposito Ebrahim Maddahian Bob Carlson Chun-wu Li

Absent: Younghee Jang

Phone Conference Method

Phil Morse asked if the phone conference approach was going to be a problem for anyone since it is a toll call. None of the members considered it a problem with the possible exception of our student board members who could be reimbursed for the charges.

Conference Fees

The first agenda item discussed was the suggestion to raise CERA conference fees from \$100 to \$125 for students, from \$125 to \$150 for regular membership attending 1 day, and from \$150 to \$175 for regular membership attending 2 days. Prior to the vote, Jim Parker reviewed the 2004 fiscal overview pointing out that we had a net loss on the 2004 conference of about \$2,400. On a per attendee basis (we had 215 registrants for 2004) the expenditures for the conference totaled \$154. This means we end up losing over \$50 for students and around \$25 for regular members attending. Jim pointed out that by increasing the fees by \$25 we can better cover costs in 2005. It was noted that a major reason for our 2004 conference loss was a cost of \$4,050 for overbooking lunches—mostly as a result of attendees leaving early on Friday.

During the discussion, Bob Carlson and Ebrahim Maddahian expressed that it may be undesirable to raise the fees for students. With only a few graduate students registered for the 2004 conference, increasing fees by \$25 might further discourage a group that the Board hopes to attract to future conference in increasing numbers. It was pointed out that until student registration increases significantly, the \$25 increase won't make much of a difference anyway. It was also suggested during the discussion that we do more outreach to attract students and university faculty.

Mr. Morse then suggested that we vote on fee increases separately for students and regular members. Kate Esposito made the motion to increase fees for the regular membership by \$25 for both 1 day and 2 day attendees. Tom Barrett seconded the motion. The vote was a unanimous 9-0 in favor of the proposed increase. **The new fees will be \$150 for 1 day attendees and \$175 for 2 day attendees.**

Kate then made the motion to keep student fees unchanged at \$100 and Tom Barrett seconded the motion. The vote was a unanimous 9-0 in favor of leaving the student fees unchanged. **Student fees will remain at \$100.**

CERA Website

Phil Morse provided information that he had received from Start Logic.com (www.startlogic.com) and others regarding the costs for Web page design and development as well as on-going maintenance. The proposal from the Center for Distributed Learning at the Butte County Office of Education was approximately \$25,000 for the web page development. Another source from Mary Tribbey estimated around \$7000 to \$10,000 for web development. StartLogic, a commercial web host, charges \$7.50 per month for hosting the site (for a two-year agreement) and has templates that could allow for us to develop our own site. Kate Esposito verified whether the CSU Dominguez Hills School of Education could host the CERA site. She indicated that she had a verbal “yes” from the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU), who has a website that we could use with a possible link for CERA (www.csudh.edu/cumu). She offered to gather further information in order to decide whether this may be a viable option.

Juan Sanchez said he could help with design but it would probably be limited to rearranging what we already have on our page. Student assistance from CSUDH may be available to help with development. It was noted that with a commercial company, more features would probably be available to us. Things like on-line registration and PayPal on-line payment might require a commercial vendor. Ebrahim mentioned that we might try to get donations from companies for the development. During the discussion, it was noted that even \$10,000 appears to be too expensive at this time. A small subcommittee was formed comprised of Juan Sanchez, Paul Tuss, Kate Esposito, and Phil Morse to further investigate the topic. In the interim it was noted that we can continue to use the current CERA website for a while longer. Recommendations will be brought to the next meeting.

2005 Conference Venue

President Phil Morse has visited 4 or 5 hotels and proposed the key elements of our conference requirements. The Long Beach Westin appears to be the front-runner at this point. Also visited were the Renaissance, Hilton, and the Hyatt hotels. It is proposed that \$10 of the room registration will go back to CERA. We can share it with the membership if we decide to do that.

The Renaissance Hotel proposal included a \$139 per night room rate, which is more expensive, but Phil felt it is the most elegant. For every 40-50 rentals we'll get a free room. This was done for the 2004 conference.

We have asked for complimentary rooms for a night for Board meetings and a free room for every 40-50 rentals to help accommodate guest speakers. In addition, it is being asked that the rooms be upgraded for CERA Board members. Other amenities were described as well. Phil reviewed the document sent to the Board members pointing out what we're asking for. The Westin requires a minimum of 300 room-nights. CERA will be billed for any overage that the hotel can't book. Also at the Westin, there is a food and beverage minimum of \$25,000 which is somewhat more than Pasadena in 2004 (around \$22,000). The Renaissance indicated they would require a minimum of \$40,000 for food and beverage service. Phil indicated they have come down from that but it's still expensive.

It was also noted that we're considering holding an institute this year at CERA, which could bring in more attendees. However, since we don't know with certainty how much more revenue it would produce, we should probably be conservative in estimating conference attendance.

The calendaring of the conference was discussed next. With CAHSEE and State Board meeting the first and second weeks of November respectively, Phil suggested scheduling the conference for the 3rd week in November.

During the discussion it was noted that upgrading the rooms for Board members while raising fees for the membership might not be received well. Phil indicated that the upgrade may not actually cost anything so it may not be an issue.

Phil concluded the discussion by saying that he will pursue the Westin most aggressively with the Hyatt as another possibility. The Renaissance appears to be too expensive. Phil also said that he has someone with a lot of experience with this type of contract and will review it with him prior to signing.

Several phone conference attendees had to leave at 5:30 p.m.....The following items were discussed after some members left the meeting.

Conference Theme and Other Ideas

Some possible conference themes were suggested:

- “Why Can't Jorge Read?” (Jim P) (Focus on content for reading.)
- “What ever happened to Science instruction?” (Jim P)
- “Future of Public Education in California”
- “Can Assessment & Research Staff be Stretched Any Further?”

- “Research Based Instruction” (Paul)
- Debate format with 2 speakers, one pro, one con on a theme
- Methods, Effect Sizes (session topics)
- Grant Writing (Session topic)
- Scanning Systems: Give 5 companies an opportunity to see presentations from vendors. Pearson, Veritas, Teleform, Pearson, Scantron, Remark
- Possible keynote speakers: Jack O’Connell (State Superintendent of Schools), Jack Plotkin (State Legislative Analyst’s Office), Charles Reed (California State University Chancellor), or Sylvia Rousseau (Los Angeles Unified School District Local District Superintendent)

Further discussion on the theme, speakers and other issues will continue at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

It was tentatively decided to have our next meeting face-to-face on Friday, March 4th in Long Beach where we can do a walk-thru at the hotel. Kate Esposito will not be able to attend but indicated that she could call in to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted:
Edited:

Tom Barrett, Secretary/Treasurer, 2/8/05
Phil Morse, President, 2/15/05