

## Council of Delegates Open Hearing Comments and Questions Summary

Friday, January 11, 2008 and Thursday, January 17, 2008

**Topic:** 20/20 Vision Documents and accompanying recommendations regarding governance

**Number of Participants:** 67: 31 (first hearing) and 36 (second hearing)

**Hosts:** Ann Sheets, ACA President; Peter Surgenor, ACA President-elect, and Scott Brody, ACA Vice President

**Overview:** During both calls, Surgenor and Brody gave an overview of the 20/20 Vision and discussed why a change in the governance of the National organization is just a small piece of the picture.

- Many on the first call said that the overview was very helpful and made the documents much more understandable. Delegates asked that an overview narrative expressing the thoughts expressed by Surgenor and Brody be created. [They agreed to develop this piece and have it posted on the Delegates Web Page before the end of January.](#)
- On the second call, Sheets mentioned that this overview piece was being developed and said that the Board has decided that once the overview piece has been posted and Delegates have had time to digest the information, she will host another Open Hearing – this time as an online moderated chat room format – early in February. [\(Check the Delegates page for date and time.\)](#)

On both calls, questions were categorized into similar topics. For ease of understanding, these notes are grouped by topic, and include both teleconferences together:

### Conditioning the Environment/Bringing non-Delegate members along

- How will we make the information digestible and clear to the membership?
- How will we make a case that change is needed?
  - The response was that the [20/20 Task Force will continue developing information and pieces for distribution](#) (including discussion templates) as we near finalizing what we want to do. They continue their work throughout January and February prior to the National Conference.

### Comments about the split of “public” members on the National Board

- There was no agreement on what split would be best. Some expressed the desire for the greater percentage to be “ACA people”, others expressed that the greater percentage should be for “public” people, still others advocated for a 50/50 split.
- Some pointed out that in order to attract public Board members, Board work needs to have “content” for them.
- Some wondered whether ACA had done research on what other organizations who have public members do.
  - [Surgenor and Sheets explained that the 20/20 task force has done that research and will post it on the Delegates page along with the new overview piece. The research included similar organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.](#)
- A number of people commented that in order to attract public members, they need to see that there are other public members on the Board and that they are not just a “token.”
- Sheets pointed out the “brutal truth” that ACA needs people of influence and that have access to funding bases and that research shows that that would mean we would need a majority of public members on the Board.

- A Delegate wondered if a “public” advisory council that helps the Board would be a better approach.
  - Surgenor shared that that option was considered, but the research informed the Task Force that this approach has not been as successful as having public members on the actual Board.
- A few commented that we need to make sure that we choose public members who are *willing* to participate and won’t just “have their name on the letterhead.”

### Method of Election

- Clarification was asked for regarding the proposed method of election of Board members.
  - It was explained that the recommendation is for a partially member-elected Board Development Committee that would select the slate of candidates for election for the Board by the Board.
- Further clarification was asked for about the current election system and its challenges.
  - Brody, Sheets, and Posie Taylor explained that currently the Board Development Committee receives nominations from Sections, and the Committee really only vets what it gets. Then, elections are conducted and often people who are not popularly known are not electable. This leads to the elections sometimes appearing to be “popularity contests.” They also explained that we currently have a multiple candidate slate, so good people are left out when they are not elected.

### Other Governance Structure Questions

- Some wondered where the Sections fit in.
  - Sheets and Taylor explained that the Sections will elect some of the members of the Board Development Committee. The idea of that the new Association Leadership Committee will involve the Sections (see handout on Delegates page) was discussed.
  - Sheets encouraged Sections to look at their own By-Laws and to consider if they want to reach out to include at least some public members. Many Sections commented that they already have public members and they find their involvement helpful.
- A Delegate asked if the responsibilities of the Board will change.
  - Sheets clarified that no – the Board has always had the responsibility for setting vision and ensuring financial resources – but that we have not always been really good at it.
- A Board member noted that the new recommendation increases flexibility of term limits on the Board.

### Council of Delegates

- Many inquired about the future of the Council of Delegates
  - Sheets and others explained that it is the desire of the Board that the Council itself discuss what it wanted to look like in the future. She said that the 20/20 Task Force has only focused on the National Board at this point. She added that at the February 2008 meeting, the Delegates will indeed be discussing what they want to be in the future.

### Other Comments for the Board and the 20/20 Task Force

- “Control” seems to be an issue that needs to be clarified.
- We don’t want to lose the passionate volunteerism from members. – What will we do to continue to ensure that people feel “connected”?
- We need to find public Board members who are passionate about camp.
- Some are still unclear as to how the governance changes will help us reach the goal of having 20 million children with a camp experience.
- Some wonder why this change will make a difference when we have made governance changes before.

- Need to make sure Delegates understand what "Policy Governance" means.
- Need to make sure to clarify what was meant by "sending out an RFP for cause marketing and funds development."

### Reminder

At any time, Delegates can post questions on the Governance Message Board that will be answered back promptly. <http://www.acamessageboards.org/forum/ubbthreads.php?ubb=postlist&Board=40>