

Creation of Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Virtual Meeting Platform Options for Biennial and Board Meetings

Background:

We have seen that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person annual conferences and meetings of similar organizations has led to cancellations or limited online sessions. In the months following the first postponement of the 2020 Biennial Meeting from April 2020 to August 2020, the Conference Chair, Conference Vice-Chair, and Executive Staff discussed the possibility that the pandemic would either limit or prevent an in-person Biennial Meeting. One approach we considered was to offer a hybrid in-person and virtual meeting, but we felt strongly there was not sufficient time to plan a virtual meeting that would meet the needs for conducting the Biennial Meeting sessions and activities. The subsequent postponement of the 2020 Biennial Meeting from August 2020 to April 2021 offers the much needed time for the Board to take action to investigate virtual meeting platform options as a “Plan B” for the 2020 Biennial Meeting and for future biennial meetings.

We are grateful to AFDO for providing the means for us to hold the September 1-2, 2020 Board meeting using not only their WebEx account but also the technical support of AFDO staff, Krystal Reed and Amy Bonsell. The Board has considered virtual meetings to reduce the costs associated with in-person Board meetings. The timing seems appropriate for the Board to also take action to investigate virtual meeting platform options for holding biennial meetings.

Requested Action for Executive Board:

Request motion to create a Board ad hoc committee to investigate virtual meeting platform options for Biennial Meetings and Board Meetings with the following charges:

- 1) Develop a plan on how to hold a virtual Biennial Meeting of the Conference;
- 2) Identify the Biennial Meeting sessions and activities as either essential or optional to the successful outcomes of the Biennial Meeting process;
- 3) Conduct research for platforms accessible to all Conference constituencies that will allow for the Biennial Meeting sessions and activities identified as essential in charge 2 and for Board meetings to be conducted using a virtual platform;
- 4) Obtain cost estimates for the most viable virtual meeting platform packages; and
- 5) Report recommendations back to the Board on or before December 31, 2020.