



Society for
Technical
Communication

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

30 September 2021, 5:00-6:30 pm EDT

Attendees

Board

- Kirsty Taylor, President
- Aiessa Moyna, Vice President
- Roberta Werner, Treasurer
- Timothy Esposito, Secretary
- Craig Baehr, Immediate Past President
- Todd DeLuca, Director
- Laura Palmer, Director
- Sree Pattabiraman, Director
- Ann Marie Queeney, Director

Guests

- Liz Pohland, STC CEO
- Erin Gallale, STC Director of Membership and Community Relations

Agenda Items

- Call to order and approval of agenda
- Consent agenda items
- Treasurer's Report (20 mins)
- CEO Report (20 mins)
- Membership Report (25 mins)
- President Report/Discussion (20 mins)
- Nominating Committee Discussion (5 mins)

Consent Agenda

- Approve August 26th meeting Minutes and Summary.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm EDT. The agenda was approved. The consent agenda was approved.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Werner presented the financial report.

August

- **Assets:** \$948,997, against \$583,397 in the same month in 2020.
- **Liabilities:** \$1,199,102 against \$888,974 in the same month in 2020.
- **Total Net Assets:** (\$250,105) compared with (\$305,577) in the same month in 2020.
- **Revenue:** \$886,883 against a budget of \$1,030,199 and \$845,611 in the same month in 2020.
- **Expenses:** \$882,453 against a budget of \$872,560 and \$933,960 in the same month in 2020.
- **Operating Change in Net Assets:** \$4,430 against a budget of \$157,639 and (\$88,349) in the same month in 2020.
- **Total Change in Net Assets:** \$120,268 against a budget of \$164,739 and (\$77,440) in the same month in 2020.

Move that the Board accept the financial report for the month of August 2021. The motion was seconded. The motion passed.

CEO Report

Ms. Pohland presented a report on activities of the Society office.

General Updates

2022 Budget: October for board presentation November

- SBA EIDL loan repayment plan
- Pay off some of the line of credit
- iMIS/website upgrade expenses

Bank Balances

- Line of Credit: \$26,045.88 available credit (current balance \$323,954.12)
- STC Business Account \$325,552
- STCCC Business Account \$29,959.94

Salary Database

Sent CFP email out to 10 industry benchmarking companies with 5 interested parties to analyze the BLS data. Have two proposals currently. Some of the others are only interested in conducting a member survey and report, which we may want to budget for in 2022 (@\$10,000) to supplement the BLS data and to provide a new benefit.

Avon Murphy Proposal?

Ms. Taylor to send an email to Ms. Pohland about it.

iMIS Upgrade

- Working with iMIS support vendor on iMIS upgrade needed for new functionality at @\$20,000. Working with iMIS vendor on data dashboards and other membership experience improvements.

STC Website Proposal

AH Web team has provided an upgrade proposal (moving from WordPress to Drupal in 6 months) at \$150,849, plus \$150/month, plus plus. Proposal is posted in board drive with my initial comments

CPTC Certification Updates

STC Certification Commission (STCCC) Business Account current balance is \$29,959.94, with \$7,937 due for July and August exams.

Recorded two videos yesterday with APMG for marketing purposes.

Current CPTC program data:

- Foundation: 415 CPTCs, 20% Fail, 80% Pass
- Practitioner: 6 CPTCs, 45% Fail, 55% Pass

2021 Membership Revenue as of 8/31/21

FY21 membership year ended with \$572,614 income with 2,962 members (-167 from 2020). This is behind 2020's revenue by (\$26,103) and the 2021 straight-line budget by (\$33,281). (This revenue does not include reinstatement fees and community dues. Per the financial

statements, this deficit will improve somewhat throughout the rest of 2021 as monthly deferrals are realized on the SOA.)

2021 renewal rate is 40%, retention rate is 63%, and churn rate is 3.9%.

2022 Membership Revenue as of 9/26/21

FY22 membership income to date is \$37,804 with 202 members (+41 from last year at the same time). This is ahead of last year's revenue by \$8,219. The graph we are using to track membership has been updated to include community dues and enrollment fees to show the revenue more accurately week to week. We are ahead of the new 2022 budget by \$5,519 at the moment.

Currently at 43% are new members and 58% are renewing (renewals don't expire until 12/31/21).

STC Membership Highlights

- New programming: We Are TC KnowledgeXChange and New Member Meet-Ups.
- Benchmarking research on dues structures and engagement-preference subscription models.
- Welcome videos and member testimonial videos/interviews.
- LinkedIn Sales Navigator data and outreach in progress.
- CVP outreach to individuals and industry research for prospects.
- CAC mentorship program and resume review research. Who among the communities is already doing this well?
- Ongoing membership-related IT/Web Projects:
 - iMIS hosting proposal, iMIS upgrade
 - Updating and streamlining membership form and information
 - Free New to TC signup (prospect building for newsletter)
 - Community Reports improvements
 - Autorenewals and autopayment subscriptions (post upgrade)
 - Demographic and Member Profile updates (post upgrade)
 - Website updates for membership areas (esp. home page menu reorganization and content consolidation)

Education Revenue as of 9/26/21

Education revenue is \$134,786, which is \$53,900 ahead of last year and \$18,586 ahead of the straight-line budget, with \$17,856 in future course and webinar sales currently in iMIS, and courses scheduled out through March 2022. Education revenue is also ahead of last year's total EOY revenue by \$22,382.

We need \$20,214 in revenue to make the EOY budget projection, but the expectation is to far surpass the budget.

Summit Revenue as of 9/27/21

Total 2021 conference registration revenue as of 8/31/21 is \$263,765, behind budget by (\$36,235). This total includes Summit OnDemand revenue.

Conference Updates

2022 Summit (15-18 May, Chicago, IL)

- Discussion with Hyatt in September re: contract addendum to reduce space, room nights, and food-and-beverage minimums
- CFP deadline extended
- Opening registration 1 November

AH Industry Relations/MarCom Activities Report

Ms. Pohland shared an Industry Relations progress report showing no further change in IR sales for exhibitor revenue from the conference, sponsor revenue, advertising revenue, webinar revenue, and job bank and salary database revenue.

Membership Report

Ms. Gallalee joined the call at 5:41 PM ET.

Membership Comparison

A graph showing a comparison of membership numbers for the past 4 years was shared. There is a downturn in membership numbers each year from 2017. Membership was fairly level for the past year.

Breakdown by Category

Ms. Gallalee shared multiple tables and ratios showing the different membership levels and the number of members in each level from 2017 onward, including retention rate, renewal rate, churn rate, and average tenure. She also reported on the activities of the Membership Marketing Committee and the ongoing IT/Web projects.

Retention Rate

Percentage of members who choose to rejoin before their term expires (12/31/xxxx)

(End Count – New Members) / Start Count =

2021: 2958 – 961 = 1997/3129 = .63	63%
2020: 3129 – 1075 = 2054/3690 = .55	55%
2019: 3690 – 1087 = 2603/4252 = .61	61%
2018: 4252 – 1332 = 2920/4318 = .67	67%
2017: 4318 – 1296 = 3022/5016 = .60	60%

Renewal Rate

Percentage of members who choose to rejoin after their membership has lapsed (12/31/xxxx) #
of Renewals / Eligible Members

Full Year

2021: 1973/3129 = .63	63% by 12/31/2021
2020: 2054/3690 = .55	55% by 12/31/2020
2019: 2603/4252 = .61	61% by 12/31/2019
2018: 2920/4318 = .67	67% by 12/31/2018
2017: 3022/5016 = .60	60% by 12/31/2017

Expiration of Benefits

2021: 1509/3129 = .48	48% by 1/31/2021 (456 difference 1965 total) – 14%
2020: 1605/3690 = .43	43% by 2/2/2020 (449 difference 2054 total) – 12%
2019: 2221/4252 = .52	52% by 2/24/2019 (382 difference 2603 total) – 8%
2018: 2337/4318 = .46	46% by 1/31/2018 (583 difference 2920 total) – 13%
2017: 2475/5016 = .49	49% by 2/3/2017 (546 difference 3021 total) – 10%

Lapse Rate (Churn)

Percentage of members that discontinue membership over a period of time

Dropped Members / Start Count

2021: 89/2054 = 4%
2020: 549/2603 = 21%
2019: 317/2920 = 11%
2018: 102/3022 = 3%
2017: 367/3389 = 10%

Average Tenure

Average length of time a member stays

1 / Lapse Rate

2021: 1 - .63 = .37	37% lapse	avg tenure 2.7 years
2020: 1 - .55 = .45	45% lapse	avg tenure 2.2 years
2019: 1 - .61 = .39	39% lapse	avg tenure 2.5 years
2018: 1 - .67 = .33	33% lapse	avg tenure 3 years
2017: 1 - .60 = .40	40% lapse	avg tenure 2.5 years

Benchmarking – Where does STC rank?

How has your membership changed in the past one-year period?

- 2021 – increased 26%, decreased 47%, same 26%, not sure 1%
- 2020 – increased 42%, decreased 27%, same 30%, not sure 2%
- 2019 – increased 45%, decreased 26%, same 28%, not sure 1%

Brand New Members

- 2021 – increased 29%, decreased 37%, same 28%, not sure 6%
 - 32% in 2021, 34% in 2020, 29% 2019, 31% 2018, 30% in 2017

Are We Competitive for Dues?

Average Basic Dues

- Sliding Scale 40%
- Basic Dues 60%

How Often do you Raise Dues?

- Annually 20%
- Every Other Year 5%
- As Needed 53%
- Other 14%
- Never 9%

Median Dues (\$249)

- <\$50 8%
- \$50-99 10% Student
- \$100-149 12% Retired
- \$150-199 9% New Prof
- \$200-299 16% P&A
- \$300-399 12% Gold
- \$400-499 8%

- \$500-749 9%
 - \$750-999 4%
 - \$1000+ 12%
- Sustaining

Renewals

When to Start?

- Right after welcome 9%
- 6+ months 4%
- 6 months prior to expiration 4%
- 5 month prior to expiration 1%
- 4 month prior to expiration 9%
- 3 month prior to expiration 39%
- 2 month prior to expiration 18%
- 1 month prior to expiration 10%
- Month of expiration 4%
- Not Sure 3%

When to Stop?

At month of expiration 2%

- 1 month after expiration 10%
- 2 month after expiration 11%
- 3 month after expiration 24%
- 4 month after expiration 6%
- 5 month after expiration 3%
- 6 month after expiration 12%
- 6+ months after expiration 9%
- We don't stop contact 22%
- Not Sure 3%

Renewal Options

- Accommodations for Hardship 51%
- Installment Renewal Payments 35%
- Automatic Credit Card Renewal 31%
- Multi-Year Renewals 22%
- Lifetime Membership 19%
- Renewal Bill-Me 18%
- EFT Renewals 16%
- Early Renewal Discounts 14%
- Gifts for Renewal 6%
- None 15%

Top Cancellation Reasons

- Lack of Engagement with Association 50%
- Lack of Value 39%
- Employer won't Pay or Stopped Paying 33%
- Left the Profession 31%
- Forgot to Renew 29%
- Could not Justify Renewal Costs (ROI) 28%
- Company Closed or Merged 24%
- Too Expensive 23%
- Retirement 18%
- Student Memberships do not Convert to Full 8%
- Unemployment 6%
- Disagree with Advocacy of Association 3%
- Other 9%
- Not Sure 1%

Association Membership Challenges

Growth

- Difficulty in Communicating value or benefits 38%
- Insufficient staff 32%
- Difficulty identifying/contacting prospects 26%
- Attracting/maintaining younger members 24%
- Lack of strategy/plan 21%
- Membership too diverse, difficulty meeting all needs 20%
- Insufficient budget 19%
- Inadequate association management database 17%
- Lack of marketing expertise 11%
- Difficulty converting student memberships to regular 10%

External Challenges

- Declining member/employer budgets 43%
- Pandemic/global health issues 35%
- Economy/recession 34%
- Competitive associations 33%
- Lack of brand awareness 26%

Data Challenges

- Lack of marketing results tracking and analysis 37%
- Inadequate membership dashboards and reporting tools 34%
- Lack of skilled data professionals to manage and work data 33%
- Cannot model and segment members and customers 32%

- Lack of demographic data on members 32%

How to Engage?

Tools

- Welcome Emails
- Create a Membership Profile
- Invitation to Follow/Like Association's Social Media
- New Member Email Series
- Invitation to Join Online Community
- Membership Card or Certificate
- Welcome Kits
- Welcome Phone Calls
- Invitation to Volunteer
- Webinars for New Members
- In-person Webinar or Reception
- Chapter Meetings
- New Member Survey
- New Member Gift

Social Media

- Facebook 90%
- Twitter 82%
- LinkedIn 79%
- Instagram
- Youtube
- Association Blog
- Private Association Social Network (Slack etc)
- Listserv
- Pinterest
- TikTok

41% posts 1-3 times per week

27% posts 4-6 times per week

25% posts 7+ times per week

Marketing/Recruitment

Highest Return

- Word of mouth recommendations 57%
- Email 50%
- Events/meetings 40%

- Personal sales calls 19%
- Member referrals 18%
- Social media 17%
- Chapters 14%
- Direct mail 13%
- Conferences/trade shows 12%
- Paid online digital marketing 11%

Effectiveness

- Conference or convention discount 54%
- Dues discount in first year 45%
- Monthly or quarterly installment dues 39%
- Additional months free 36% (for example 15 months for the price of 12)
- Multiple-year dues discount 34%
- Product discount, coupon, or voucher 31%
- Free trial 32%
- Incentives for members 19%
- Free gifts or premiums 19%
- Money-back guarantee 19%

Membership Marketing Committee

- 5 new members last month!
- Content for website, reorganization
- Academic videos
 - Welcome
 - Day in Life
 - Testimonials
- Benchmarking Project
- LinkedIn Sales Navigator
- Mentorship research – CAC assistance
- Student/New Professional program research

IT Projects

- Upgrade iMIS in progress
- More robust member profile/directory - started
- Payment receipts/confirmations – started
- Improved member process/cart/autopay - started
- Improved community reports/membership reports
- Improved product organization between site/iMIS
- Certification Module build
- Training in dashboards and reporting - started

KnowledgeXchange Project

Meet-Ups – 6 participants

- 2 per month – 2nd week, Monday at noon ET and Friday at 3PM ET
- New members, emphasis on STC benefits and how to get connected, info gathering for staff - what are new members looking for?

Panel Discussions – 30+ participants

- 1 per month – last Monday, 1PM ET
- Open to all, content geared toward new TC professionals, specific topics about key issues those new to industry are facing (resumes, portfolios, tools, soft skills, etc). Opportunity for seasoned professionals to be a panelist and engage with new members/new TC professionals

Ms. Gallalee left the call at 6:06 PM ET.

President Report/Discussion

What can we do about other revenue streams? Ms. Taylor would like us to brainstorm more ways for the Society to earn money. She is sharing the Non Dues Revenue task force report with us. Some immediate suggestions included a resume review and interview preparation service, a podcast.

Scholarship Committee Update

- **REQUEST:** Instead of awarding one \$500 scholarship this year, the committee wants to award two \$500 scholarships during the coming year – one to an undergraduate and one to a graduate/certificate student
- **RATIONALE:** The committee has observed a clear difference in the ability of undergraduate- and graduate-level students to complete the application. With only one scholarship available, the committee believes the selection process favors the graduate applicants, making it unlikely that an undergraduate would be selected. To ensure a level playing field for applicants within both peer groups, the committee is proposing to not only award two scholarships, but create two distinct rubrics for undergrad and grad/certificate students. The criteria and selection process otherwise would be the same for the two awards.
- **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** The scholarship fund currently is \$5,327 (per the August 2021 financials). The committee will help ensure that awarding two scholarships this year is both feasible and sustainable by working to generate additional contributions. If the board were to approve an additional scholarship, it would be for this year only, rather than on an ongoing basis.

Move that the Board approve the Scholarship Committee's request to award two \$500 scholarships during the 2021-2022 program year. The motion was seconded. The motion passed.

Other discussion points:

- We could consider making it part of the committee charter to help with soliciting/contacting potential sponsors.
- Easier and separate scholarship contributions should be prioritized with iMIS upgrades to better support scholarship marketing and collections.
- Could we press for a certain level of fund-raising to maintain 2 scholarships?

Nominating Committee Discussion

Conflict of Interest

- Nominating Committee instructions are unclear as to if a board member can be a reference for a potential candidate. The "NomCom Guidelines" only references forbidding "endorsements," implying that Board members may be a referral, but cannot endorse.
 - Board Handbook: under Other Constraints of Serving on the STC BoD: "BoD members cannot serve as references to the STC Nominating Committee."
- Suggestions: Add text to "NomCom Guidelines" and the NomCom online application form stating that "Board of Director members and STC Staff cannot serve as references or endorse candidates." This is in line with references for awards and honors.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.

Next Meeting

October 28, 2021 at 5:00pm EDT