

National Council Minutes
National Broadcasting Society - Alpha Epsilon Rho
May 16, 2022 – Meeting Held Online

Roll Call

Chapter	Attendance	Proxy
Appalachian State	Covid	
Austin Peay State	P	
Bloomsburg	A	
Central Michigan	Covid	
Emerson College	P	
Harding University	P	
Marietta College	P	
Marshall University	P	
Millersville University of PA	P	
Norfolk State	A	
Plattsburgh State	Covid	
Rider University	Covid	

Chapter	Attendance	Proxy
Slippery Rock	Covid	
Stephen F. Austin State University	P	
Stevenson University	Covid	
SUNY Oswego	Covid	
Tarrant County College	A-InP	
Towson University	P	
Union University	P	
University of Florida	Covid	
University of Indianapolis	P	
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	A	
University of North Alabama	P	
University of West Georgia	P	

Chapter	Attendance	Proxy
West Texas A & M University	A	
West Virginia State University	Covid	
Western Carolina University	A	
Western Illinois University	A	
Governor Ginger Blackstone	P	
Governor Jamie Byrne-McCollum	P	
Governor Ray Eaton	P	
Governor Gina Johnson	P	
Governor Jeff Smith	P	
Governor Joe Chuk	P	
Governor Jim Wilson	P	

[A=Absent P=Present Px Present by Proxy Covid=Chapter Inactive Because of Covid Conditions InP=New Chapter in progress]

Business Meeting Session

The meeting was called to order by Board of Governors Chair, Dr. Joe Chuk, at 7:35 PM EDT.

Executive Director, Jim Wilson, was recognized to call the roll. Following the roll call, as recorded above, Wilson announced the University of Miami and the University of Montevallo requested to be moved to inactive status. Nine other chapters would be considered inactive due to Covid complications on their campus and their status would be evaluated in 2022-2023. (School are indicated in roll call above.) Executive Director Wilson announced the National Council did have a quorum.

Chair Chuk announced his report had been posted online and then summarized its contents. (Report follows these minutes.)

E.D. Wilson then summarized his report, indicating the pandemic took its toll on the organization’s activities and finances. The situation was urgent. An unofficial comparison of organizational income over the past five years had been posted online and is included below.

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Membership	\$ 23,916	\$ 21,256	\$ 12,997	\$ 13,901	\$ 2,806
Other	\$ 90,028	\$ 50,115	\$ 36,883	\$ 41,886	\$ 6,380

The IRS form 990 for the 2020-2021 fiscal year is posted online. Our current resources will take us into the 2022-2023 fiscal year but will likely not withstand another year like 2021-2022.

Chair Chuk announced Governor Steve Koehn has resigned because of health issues. In addition, Governor and Webmaster Jeff Smith will resign soon because of employment concerns. The Board of Governors hope to appoint replacements in the near future. Interested parties who wish to help should contact the national office or apply online.

Chair Chuck then opened the meeting for discussion. Topics included students on the Board of Governors (they are invited to apply), reinstating the Student Advisory Council (an invitation has been extended), opening the organization to high school students (legal and insurance complications have prevented this in the recent past), we need more feedback on national activities and are looking for suggestions to better serve the membership, and what is the status of our social media (it’s limited, we are still looking for interested students to help out). There will be online discussion sessions planned for this summer to get additional input from the membership.

E.D. Wilson thanked all of those involved in helping us through another most unusual year. Chair Chuk again thanked everyone for participating in the meeting, thanked everyone for their work this past year and wanted to especially recognize the effort over the past two years of Dr. Steven Koehn for developing our new certification program. Chair Chuk also wished to congratulate Gina Johnson on her hiring as a producer at WPVI in Philadelphia. A thank you goes to Dr. Stan Tickton for offering to serve as our parliamentarian. (Audio issues obfuscated some of the thank you messages.)

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM EDT.

National Electronic Media Association, NBS-AERho
Joseph R. Chuk, Chair – Board of Governors
2021-2022 Annual Report

As was the case with virtually every organization like the National Electronic Media Association, NBS-AERho, the continuing impact of Covid-19 during 2021 and into 2022 was responsible for significant changes in our planning and functioning, both on the national and chapter levels. With the increased availability of Covid vaccinations and the downward trend of virus infections into summer 2021, we were hopeful that we could return to in-person national convention in the spring of 2022. A virtual gathering in January and an online national convention in March of 2021 were well-received by those who participated in the events, but numbers were very low. With the remaining uncertainty of the progress of the virus into 2022, initial plans for the 2022 national convention allowed for both a physical gathering in Atlanta and the option of virtual attendance. Throughout the fall of 2021 board members, along with professional members and associates, worked on detailed plans for this March 12-15, 2022 hybrid event.

As the potential for in-person attendance became less clear, ongoing negotiations with the convention hotel had to focus on reducing the financial liability of NEMA, with either smaller than expected hotel reservations, or an outright cancellation of the in-person event. With the number of active chapters decreasing – primarily because of the impact of Covid on chapter activities – and the reduced potential for interest by functioning chapters in traveling to Atlanta, the board determined in late January 2022 that it would be best to produce an all-virtual convention. Unfortunately, this late decision left a relatively short time period for promoting the event, even with a change in schedule to March 28-30 to avoid conflicting with college spring breaks. The Zoom Events platform worked well, and those who participated enjoyed the event.

The financial bottom line, however, was somewhat dismal, with only 41 attendees paying a registration fee that was only a fraction of what is normally collected for an in-person convention. Although there was additional income from competition entries, the reality is that a significant portion of NEMA annual operating revenue typically comes from convention registration fees. The other major income source of membership fees has declined sharply because of both the loss of active chapters and decreased numbers of members in the few chapters that have managed to remain active. The end result is that we are quickly approaching an untenable financial position. In an attempt to reverse this trend of declining membership, the board has engaged in a number of efforts throughout the year to reach out to previously active chapters and to schools that have had chapters in the more distant past.

Another situation that needs to be addressed is the decreased interest in service on the Board of Governors, both by advisors and other professionals, and – especially – by students. We've just completed an entire year with the two current student board positions unfilled. Student involvement in the planning and execution of NEMA initiatives and activities is essential. Our organization exists to serve students, and we can only accomplish that mission if we have effective communication with, and collaboration by, those very students. The board took the unusual step this year of not holding elections for open Board of Governor positions precisely because of this historic dearth of candidates. Our goal is to solicit interest in students and professionals to serve either as board members or in an advisory capacity in the upcoming school year. Board membership can be augmented through a provision of our Constitution that allows for one-year appointments.

The current board had devoted innumerable hours in too-frequent Zoom meetings, both to plan the convention and to brainstorm about and to create activities and resources for the students and chapters we serve. It's rewarding work, but tiring, as well. We need to know whether there is the desire to continue what we feel is the important NEMA mission. We also have the practical need for more professionals and students to share the work of managing the organization, and imagining what the organization can and should become to keep pace with evolving student needs.

Some of the current board members are willing to continue their work, either to fulfill unexpired terms, or by appointment for another year. There are, however, board members whose personal situations will keep them from continuing their service. It's important to recognize all of the board members who have worked throughout the year in faithful service: Dr. Ginger Blackstone, Dr. Jamie Byrne-McCullum, Prof. Ray Eaton, Mrs. Gina Johnson, Dr. Steven Koehn, Dr. Jeff Smith, and Dr. David von Palko. Finally, a special measure of gratitude needs to be expressed to the ex-officio board member, our Executive Director Mr. Jim Wilson. Jim is the glue that keeps us together, and the first contact for advisors, other professionals, and students. Without Jim's – literally – tireless work, there simply wouldn't be a NEMA, NBS-AERho.