

Minutes of the Meeting of the NCME Board of Directors

October 29 and 30, 2004
Washington, D.C.

Attending: David Frisbie (President); James Impara (Vice President); Suzanne Lane (Past President); and the following Directors: Terry Ackerman, Douglas Becker, Linda Cook, Jeri Benson, Wayne Camara (Saturday only) and Duncan MacQuarrie. Central Office staff participating in the meeting were Felice J. Levine (Executive Director), Robert Smith (Director of Meetings, Saturday only); and Gerald Sroufe (NCME Administrative Officer).

Friday, October 29

Welcome and Review of the Agenda. President David Frisbie welcomed the members of the NCME board and central office staff. It was confirmed that all Board members would be participating until the close of the meeting on Saturday, to assure full coverage of the committee reports and to consider follow-on activities from decisions reached during the two days. The agenda was reviewed without modification, notice being taken that a substantial period would be devoted to consideration, in executive session, of the selection of a management firm from among several that have been reviewed extensively.

The minutes of the July 24-25 Board of Directors' meeting were approved with minor editing changes.

Frisbie reported on the successful outcome of negotiations about items that had been raised by the Board in anticipation of reaching a signed agreement with Blackwell Publishing. These included a review at each stage by the Executive Committee and a final review by an attorney who specializes in contracts. JEM and EM:IP will be published by Blackwell beginning with the March 2005 issues. Among the points discussed were the NCME costs and a transition allocation, an editorial stipend, and guaranteed royalty payment to be received by NCME. Also discussed were changes in subscription rates, marketing strategy by Blackwell, and a seven-year contract period. One intriguing aspect of the negotiations was the Board's acceptance of changing the labels of the issues from Winter, Summer, etc., to the actual month of issue (e. g., December, March), because the new publisher has markets in countries where the seasons are reversed.

Board members raised additional questions, through which assurances were provided that the look and feel of the journals would not be changed unless requested by NCME, and that the publisher felt there would be no problem increasing the subscription rate to institutions because the journals were under-priced at the present time. It was observed that NCME publications represented Blackwell's first measurement journals and that they were anxious for them to succeed, and that there were some unique marketing resources (e.g., the Library Consortium) available through the publisher that should increase distribution and sales of NCME publications.

Suzanne Lane has agreed to serve as the NCME liaison to Blackwell for transition matters. She reported on a recent meeting with the publisher, attended by David Frisbie and Jim Impara, and the two journal editors, Mike Kolen (JEM) and Steve Ferrara (EM:IP). Topics discussed at the meeting included procedures related to the electronic review process and Blackwell's policy of charging authors for making alterations at the proof stage. Some other changes were discussed with Blackwell: dropping the annual index; modification of the paper used in EM:IP (heavy, glossy); and moving submission information to the website. Lane also described the possibility of NCME members using a members-only menu item on the NCME homepage to link directly with Blackwell's Synergy system, which permits electronic access to the journals.

Blackwell will provide a yearly press release for an article in each of its journals, raising the question of who should prepare the initial release for the NCME journals. It was determined that the Publications Committee would be asked to propose a plan of action on this matter for Board review at the April 2005 meeting. It was indicated that NCME's management firm, rather than Blackwell, would be expected to serve as the point of contact for subscription problems and back issues, and that old stock would be transferred from AERA to the management firm.

Executive Session. The Board of Directors assessed the qualities of the management firms that had provided proposals to secure NCME as clients using frameworks that had been developed subsequent to the July presentations. It was moved by Doug Becker, seconded by Suzanne Lane, to enter into a contract with The Rees Group for management services. The motion passed unanimously. The Board then developed a set of follow-up questions to be discussed by the Board prior to signing a final contract. It is anticipated that Rees will have representatives at the April meeting of the Board of Directors, although the basic contract is not expected to begin until July 1. Frisbie will notify the NCME membership of the changes associated with publications and management services.

Saturday, October 30

President's Reports.

Annual Meeting. Frisbie reported that the Annual Meeting program was progressing well and that the program sessions to be highlighted in EMIP were listed in the agenda book. He reported that 95 percent of the submissions this year were handled electronically by a unique system designed by the program chairs.

Questions were raised about the provision of a program slot for the National Association of Test Directors. None could recall the history of the set-aside for this slot, and Jeri Benson (and the Outreach Committee) agreed to look into the matter and report back at the April Board meeting. There was also a question raised about the status of the Diversity Committee session proposal submitted for the 2005 NCME annual meeting; Dave Frisbie agreed to contact the program co-chairs to see whether the proposal had

been accepted. Frisbie reported that David Anderson had agreed to provide leadership to the fitness run again this year and that letters had been sent to sponsors.

Training Sessions. Frisbie called attention to the large number of quality programs provided by the training committee, “training is a bigger part of this year’s meeting.” There are some unresolved issues: What minimums and maximums should be established for training session enrollments? What should the cutoff date be for deciding which sessions will be held? How will enrollees in cancelled sessions be notified and refunded? How can Sunday on-site registration be accomplished for sessions held before the AERA Annual Meeting registration opens? A number of ideas were proposed to resolve the Sunday reservation problem and Frisbie will consider them as he discusses the problem with the Training Committee. Gerald Sroufe encouraged advance determination of maximum numbers for each session that will be programmed into the system, so that there would be no ambiguity about when a session is filled, avoiding over-enrollment and unreasonable burden on the teaching faculty. (This could be done once room assignments are made.)

An additional question was raised about the wide range of fees proposed for the training sessions. It was explained that each had a breakeven point of 10 persons, and that graduate students had urged provision of some inexpensive sessions. Also, the more expensive sessions tended to include publications or expensive materials.

There was extensive discussion about the feasibility of video taping some of the training sessions, both for revenue and to capture significant presentations. The discussion resulted in the assignment of a number of tasks: (1) Robert Smith is to investigate the availability of the McGill Auditorium for video-taping of one four-hour session; (2) Smith is also to contact the audio tape company to see about taping some of the NCME training sessions and program sessions; (3) Frisbie will contact H.D. Hoover to see what type of presentation he had in mind for his workshop, as this is one that Board members were most interested in having audio or video-taped. Other ideas introduced in the discussion included the idea of potential sponsorship of a training film collection by testing companies, and potential for the Training Committee to establish a repository of tapes from training sessions for broad distribution.

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing. Camara, who had been active in APA for planning the work on the 1999 Standards, provided a historical perspective of procedures and issues to the Board. He noted that the current fund available for the work of a revision committee was more adequate than the one provided for the 1999 effort, and that the total cost would probably be about \$1 million. The Board also reviewed statistical information on sales and income of the current Standards. It was suggested that efforts be made by AERA to market the 1999 Standards at the forthcoming meeting of the CCSSO in June and ATP in February.

An immediate step to be taken in the revision process is reconstitution of a management committee, which includes a representative from each of the three sponsors, for the 1999 edition. The function of the committee is to set responsibility for management and sales

and marketing of the current publication. It is anticipated that the management committee will be reinstated in the coming months and nominees are to be sent to David Frisbie for a potential appointment by the April Board meeting. The sentiment of the Board was that some of the funds now held in reserve for publication of the next revision be expended on marketing of the present edition, and that consideration also be given to a price increase. Once the management committee (1999 edition) has been reappointed, a second management committee can be formed for the purpose of planning the procedural aspects associated with forming the committee to revise the Standards. (Members of this management committee would not be members of the next Committee to Revise the Test Standards.)

Executive Director's Reports.

Membership and Finances. Felice Levine introduced reports providing information about NCME membership, subscriptions, investments, and finances. In general, membership has been maintained following a dues increase, subscriptions to NCME journals have been holding steady, and the investment picture has improved along with increased interest rates. Most importantly, the 2004 end of year balance was in the black for the first time in four years. The reports raised two specific questions calling for additional information: (1) What percent of the members of AERA divisions also belong to NCME (65 percent of NCME members are also AERA members)? (2) How to explain the increase in Hanover Securities interest earnings in 2004, which seems larger than anticipated?

The FY05 budget had been approved in April, but revisions were desired because of the new publications contract. In addition to changes in expenditures and earnings from publications, a line for transition expenses was added to the budget, and several other items were modified based on more current information. The revised budget, also anticipating a positive balance, was approved unanimously (motion by Jim Impara, seconded by Terry Ackerman).

Annual Meeting. Frisbie reported that he had written to AERA President Marilyn Cochran-Smith to thank AERA for its past support of NCME and to inquire about the interest of the AERA Council in maintaining a joint annual meeting with NCME. The reply from her showed strong support, based on a unanimous vote of the Council. The AERA Central Office has provided a proposal to host the NCME annual meetings into the future. The NCME Board has been working to develop a list of activities that each association most likely would provide for the annual meeting, and anticipates a decision at the NCME April meeting.

Robert Smith reported on planning for the 2005 Annual Meeting in Montreal. He anticipates that most NCME meetings will be held at the Sofitel; the annual NCME breakfast will be at either the Omni or Ritz. NCME program co-chairs will need to notify Robert Smith about which sessions are to be audio-taped.

Committee Reports:

Membership and Recognition Area. Camara circulated a list of “lapsed members” to Board members for their notation, thinking that many may have moved or may not be aware of their lapsed membership. One question raised in discussion of the committee reports: What is the responsibility of the Board for awards selection? Following discussion, the Board determined that the process of arriving at awards, which actually are NCME awards and not committee awards, would be reviewed by the Board. A motion by Wayne Camara, seconded by Suzanne Lane, was passed: Beginning with the 2005 awards, the recommendation for each award recipient should be forwarded to the Executive Committee through the Area Director for awards, for certification of the selection process. The award committee report should include information about the process used in soliciting nominations and in rating the candidates. It is intended that the Executive Committee would fail to certify a committee’s process only in exceptional circumstances. Camara offered appreciation to Linda Cook for undertaking a mailing to members to solicit award nominations. He identified an issue for future discussion: criteria for establishing and supporting new awards.

The Board approved an expenditure of \$500 (motion by Wayne Camara, seconded by Jim Impara) to permit the membership committee to undertake a mailing aimed at recapturing lapsed members; the Central Office is to provide labels for all lapsed members prior to 2004. In order to keep the momentum of the membership recruitment efforts going during the transition to a new management firm, the Board provided encouragement for the committee’s plan to conduct a survey of lapsed members (i.e., a committee survey, not an NCME or Board of Directors Survey). The Board also endorsed a plan to establish a “member recruiter” in appropriate organizations as proposed by the committee. Finally, the Board discussed in positive terms a proposed brochure to assist in membership recruitment and returned it to the committee with suggestions for minor revisions.

Publications Committee. Doug Becker identified three key appointments scheduled to be made next year: the editor of ITEMS, the website editor, and the editor of the newsletter. Board members suggested some options, such as encouraging one or more of those involved to stay on an additional year to help return the appointment sequence to normal. (Jim Impara recommended that the Web Editor be asked to continue his term for as many years as necessary to get us back on schedule.) Attention was called to the use of the NCME breakfast survey as a resource in identifying candidates for nomination. The Board discussed its aspirations for the website to be a platform for a variety of activities of the organization. Becker noted that the website editor is expected to make content decisions in addition to posting items on the website. Terry Ackerman distributed some materials to help the Board envision what other websites were like in format and content; he provided a content analysis of a number of websites, and a checklist of content developed by the University of Wisconsin. Frisbie said he would share notes from discussions about the original development of the website, including lists of desirable features. Linda Cook is to send Doug Becker (the Publications Committee) a set of

standards that have been developed to assure that needs of persons with disabilities were provided for in webpage design. It is anticipated that the Publications Committee will continue to explore website issues and report to the Board at the April meeting.

The problem of manuscript flow was considered in response to the report of the editor of EM:IP. While recognizing the problem of competition for journal articles, and the uniqueness of writing for EM:IP, the Board was attracted to the following ideas to stimulate manuscripts: (1) Look to those completing the NCME breakfast survey as potential authors to be solicited; (2) review the NCME annual meeting program for potential manuscripts; (3) talk with those who have published previously in NCME journals; (4) suggest that junior scholars might co-author with established authors; (5) solicit articles from retired members; and (6) hold a “meet the editors” session at the NCME Annual Meeting.

Outreach Area. Jeri Benson noted that her area included both outreach and recruitment of education measurement specialists, and that the two committees had begun to work collaboratively. One project that appears to be almost completed is the Directory of Graduate Programs for posting on the NCME website. Another project nearing completion is the Career Brochure intended for distribution to university psychology and math departments to inform students about the possibility and potential of a career in measurement. The Board thought it would be appropriate to mention demand for professionals in the field and salary levels in the brochure. The Board also suggested some additions to the potential mailing list for the brochure (e. g., SIOP, faculty at undergraduate universities in math departments); recommended placing it on the NCME website; and recommended it include a poster-size version for department bulletin boards. A budget for printing and dissemination of the brochure is needed from the committee.

The Board of Directors agreed that the “Biographies of Measurement Professionals” project had proven difficult to develop despite best efforts of those involved. The Board felt the project was no longer timely and that it would be best at this point to discontinue the project. The Board urged the committee to devote its attention to supporting graduate training programs by providing good recruitment materials as their most important task at this time.

A committee question regarding how to post documents to the NCME website provided an occasion to remind the Board that existing policy is to have materials routed through the publications chair (Doug Becker) to the Website Editor (David Miller).

Graduate Student Committee. Duncan MacQuarrie reported on a snafu at the last NCME Annual Meeting about the signs recognizing contributors to the graduate student no host reception. Sroufe indicated that they had been printed and delivered to the hotel, but they simply were not set out. The discussion of sponsors provoked consideration of the need for a general plan of fundraising over the near and long term. It was noted that there was some competition among NCME activities for money from the same sponsors

and that it might be possible to devise a range of sponsorship opportunities at the Annual Meeting (e.g., fitness run; breakfast).

Organization Governance Structure.

Frisbie called attention to the need to begin consideration of some modification of the present governance structure of NCME. One problem to be addressed is the differential burden on the various area directors, another is possibilities for more logical groupings of activity. For example, training and development might be separated from the annual meeting to open up new opportunities for thinking about mid-year training sessions. Another example was the possibility of providing a home for the JCTP issues and activities in one of the standing committees which could make the relationship more productive for both NCME and JCTP. Other considerations included the need for an NCME financial officer, to be achieved either through a by-laws change or through reorganization of the Board of Directors, to work closely with the management firm. This person might assist in developing the draft budget for Board consideration, help seek new sources of revenue, review investment policies, and review monthly financial reports. Clearly these considerations were at the beginning stages of development, and their resolution would have bearing on the number of persons on the Board, length of terms, and rethinking of functions. To accomplish these changes prior to the target date of January 2006, an ad hoc committee will be appointed by Frisbie to consider the items that might require changes in the bylaws.

In order to achieve greater equity among the responsibilities of NCME Board members in the short run, it was moved by Wayne Camara, seconded by Jim Impara, that, beginning immediately, responsibility for the Diversity Issues Committee will be moved from the Membership and Recognition Area to the Standards Area; responsibility for the Classroom Assessment Award committee will be moved from the Outreach Area to the Awards Area; and responsibility for the Membership Committee will be moved from the Membership and Recognition Area to the Vice-President.

Respectfully submitted,
Gerald Sroufe