



2008 Meeting Minutes Area 5

- December 3, 2008
- November 19, 2008
- October 15, 2008
- September 17, 2008
- August 20, 2008
- July 16, 2008
- June 25, 2008
- May 21, 2008
- April 24-26, 2008
- March 19, 2008
- February 20, 2008
- January 16, 2008

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee Meeting
Annual Meeting Minutes
Arlington, VA
Wednesday, December 3, 2008**

Attendance

Charles Davidson
Sabby Jonathan
Richard Coonradt
MJ Lee
Rich Waterman
Howard Levine
Lee Battershell
Patricia O'Neil
Sandy Finestone
Clifford Young
John Kim
John Rodgers
David Kahn

DFO

John Tam, LTA

TAP Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst
Marla Ofilas, TAP Secretary

Opening - Designated Federal Official (DFO) – John Tam

John opened the meeting and welcomed the members. John provided the names and telephone number of the Local Taxpayer Advocates (LTA's) for the new members. Judi indicated her acting manager; MaryAnn Delzer will arrange meetings with new members and their respective LTA.

Introductions

Introductions were made.



Review Agenda Facilitation of Meeting

Charles provided an overview of the agenda and how the time would be spent. Charles asked if there were any additional issues that members would like to discuss.

- Clifford indicated he would like to introduce members to a site called "LinkedIn". This is a site that TAP members can join and could be another way of communicating with panel members.
- Rich indicated he would like to discuss the 800# issue.
- Sabby indicated he would like to discuss sub-committee's reviewing issues; whether the current process should continue or be changed.

Overview of TAP by Returning Members

Monthly Tele-conferences & Etiquette – Charles

Charles provided the following information in relation to monthly teleconference meetings.

- Cell phones can be problematic and pick up noise. However, if this is the only way to join the call, please use mute.
- When making a statement/asking a question, please identify yourself
- Be aware of hold and possible "hold music", which can seep into the call
- Come to the meeting prepared by ensuring all pre-read documents are read prior to the meeting...the agenda (with call in information) and pre-read materials are sent by Janice a week before the meeting
- If unable to attend a meeting please let Judi, Janice and/or Sabby know in advance; members are encouraged to provide input on issues if unable to attend a meeting...this is important because in order to make any final decisions, there must be a quorum
- Be mindful that members of the public are invited to attend monthly teleconference meetings and we should conduct ourselves in a professional manner at all times

Working Issues – Judi

Judi provided the following brief overview in relation to issues that are assigned to the Area 7 Committee.

- Issues come into TAP from various sources and are assigned to a sub-committee
- Sub-committees make recommendations to the full committee for consensus
- Sub-committees are not required to have Federal Register Notices in order to meet
- The expectation is that members bring opinions and thoughts to the table
- Sub-committees typically meet monthly for an hour

Primary Function of Committees – Rich W.

Rich W. provided the following overview in relation to the function of Area Committees.

- The Area Committees are responsible for reviewing/discussing issue recommendations from sub-committees
- All area members are responsible for conducting and reporting outreach each month
- Issue referrals, which are written in the sub-committees are brought to the full committee for discussion/approval before being sent to the JC

Conducting & Reporting Outreach – Sabby et al

Sabby et al provided the following overview in relation to member participation in conducting and reporting monthly outreach activities.

- Members are expected to devote part of their time to conducting outreach...this includes but is not limited to, talking to local groups, news articles, one-on-one sessions etc.
- Members are encouraged to set a personal goal to complete at least one outreach activity per month in the coming year
- LTA's will assist members with outreach efforts; Judi will connect members with LITC Directors as well
- Nina will be working on outreach in an effort to provide opportunities for members to participate



- Chapter 4 of the Member Handbook addresses outreach and the Outreach Toolkit is a good resource as well
- Judi indicated mileage, parking can be reimbursed for outreach...occasional overnight events may occur and can be expensed as well...members wanting to be reimbursed must let Judi know in advance to ensure funds are available in her budget
- Charles asked that comments include whether any issues came out of outreach
- Charles challenged all to commit to conducting at least one per month
- Marketing materials can be obtained from the TAP staff; please ensure you allow sufficient time for the items to be mailed

Member Participation – Richard C.

Richard provided the following overview in relation to member participation within Area 7.

- Richard shared excerpts from Area 7's Self Assessment from 2007...he shared some of the weakness expressed, which focused on lack of commitment and participation by some of the members
- Sub-committees – Judi indicated the real work happens here and encouraged members to be mindful of this and make every effort to participate on a consistent basis
- TAP staff should be notified if unable to attend any meetings

ACTION: Janice will share the self assessment with new members

Face-to-face Meetings – Sandy

Sandy provided the following overview in relation to face-to-face (FTF) meetings.

- FTF meetings tend to be more productive than monthly tele-conference meetings. They allow you to work issues more in depth and efficiently
- There will be one area FTF in addition to a FTF for issue committees
- Travel days has generally been ½ day Thursday all day Friday, 1/2 day Saturday
- Members decide on the location and dates of the meeting

Function of the Joint Committee – Charles

Charles provided the following overview in relation to the JC.

- Due to way the way TAP is governed by FACA guidelines, any recommendations that go to the IRS has to first go to through the TAP JC
- The JC approves issues before they are referred to the IRS
- Once there is consensus in Area, issues go to the Quality Review Committee for review; they do not review the merit of the issues
- Once issues get to the JC they will review the merits of the issue
- The JC is comprised of all chairs; vice chairs are invited to attend meetings and members are welcome to participate in JC calls as well

Review of TAPSpace – Judi

Judi provided the following overview in relation to TAPSpace.

- Judi pointed out that Chapter 4 of the Member Handbook gives instructions for logging on to the system
- TAPSpace access is limited to members, staff & DFO's; outgoing members no longer have access to the system
- Agendas and pre-read materials are generally posted on TAPSpace in a folder
- Meeting minutes are posted on TAPSpace
- The calendar on TAPSpace will have all monthly and face-to-face meetings
- It is expected that members use TAPSpace; any problems should be addressed with Janice and Steve

Press Releases – Judi

Judi provided the following information in relation to press releases for new members.



- Releases will be prepared by staff; Janice will contact members for a quote that will be inserted into a template
- We will use our media staff for publication
- Members are to be mindful that any media interviews should be geared to TAP information only

Sandy suggested another press release for returning members.

ACTION: Janice will check to see if there is an Annual Meeting press release.

Setting a Quorum

Last year the quorum was set at 50% plus one.

DECISION: The full committee agreed to set the quorum at 50%

Setting 2009 Conference Call and Face-to-Face Meeting Schedules

The full committee agreed to keep the current meeting schedule which is, the 3rd Wednesday of each month @ 2:00 PT.

The first meeting for 2009 will be held Wednesday January 21st.

The full committee agreed to hold the FTF meeting Fri – Sat June 5-6th

Potential locations are San Francisco and Reno. Staff will do cost comparisons before a final decision is made on the location.

Elections – Chair & Vice Chair

The full committee elected Sabby Jonathan as Area 7 Chair. Sandy Finestone was elected as Vice Chair. Sabby stated his main goals for the upcoming year in Area 7 are;

- To have a fulfilling time in TAP
- To have Area 7 submit issues for elevation
- To always do our best and look good

Sub-committee Break Out Sessions - Members met in sub-committees (A & B) to discuss their respective issues. Following is the outcome of the discussions.

Sub-Committee A

#5060 - Education Materials to Increase Self-Prepared Tax Returns

DECISION: This issue will be placed in "Parking Lot" status.

#4511 – CP2000 Request for Documents

ACTION: The sub-committee requested additional research. They would like to know the IRS' process for recording receipt of documents.

#4545 – Customer Service Complaints

DECISION: The sub-committee decided to keep this issue active.

#5019 – Practitioner Hotline

DECISION: The sub-committee decided to keep this issue active.

#4370- Form 990PF – IRS's Response to TAP's Recommendations

DECISION: Richard C. will forward the IRS' response to Maryann Motza to see if she can possibly elevate this issue through the ACT committee.

Sub-Committee B

#5058 – Correspondence Audits

DECISION: The sub-committee decided to keep this issue active.

#5061 – TAS Intake Procedures

Recommendation: The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped.

DECISION: The full committee agreed with the recommendation to drop this issue.



ACTION: The sub-committee would like to Janice to see if there is contact information so that a letter can be sent to the individual.

#5062 – Toll Free Access to Managers

Recommendation: The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped because a similar issue exists in the other sub-committee.

DECISION: The full committee agreed with the recommendation to drop this issue.

#5109 – Cancellation of POA’s

DECISION: The sub-committee decided to keep this issue active.

Structure of Sub-committees

Area 7 currently operates with two sub-committees, A & B. As issues come in Janice assigns them to a sub-committee. Members of the sub-committee review issues to determine what status to put them in (drop, active, parking lot etc.) or whether an issue warrants elevation to the IRS.

Members discussed changing the current screening process of Area 7 issues.

DECISION: Area 7 will be divided into three sub-committees. The full committee will screen all new issues on a quarterly basis. The sub-committees will meet monthly to work active issues.

The respective Taskforce members are as follows:

Taskforce A: Patti (Lead), Charles, David, Richard C, and Howard

Taskforce B: Cliff (Lead), Sabby, Rich W., and Lee

Taskforce C: John K. (Lead), Sandy, John R. and MJ

Active issues were divided among the taskforce groups accordingly:

Taskforce A: #5060 and 4545

Taskforce B: # 5058 and 4511

Taskforce C: #5019, 5062 and 5109

ACTION: Janice will send the sub-committee assignments and propose monthly meeting dates and time.

The next screening of new issues will be done at the March full committee meeting.

Member Comments – None

Closing: Sabby thanked everyone for their participation and John closed the meeting.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee Meeting
Minutes
November 19, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Charles Davidson
Dave Jones
Margaret Ferguson
Rich Waterman
Wayne Whitehead
Wayne Tanna
MJ Lee
Richard Coonradt
Howard Levine

Guest

Gil Yanuck

Absent

Sandy Finestone
Sabby Jonathan

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst
Nina Pang, TAP Analyst

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members, noting this was the last teleconference before the Annual Meeting.

Janice took roll and a quorum was met.

John gave special recognition to those leaving, (Wayne Whitehead, Wayne Tanna, Greg Gurse, Margaret Ferguson, Dave Jones, and Howard Stahl) thanking them for all of their hard work and commitment to TAP over the past years.

Charles indicated he appreciated the efforts of all of those leaving and thanked them for their hard work.

Approval of October Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to approve the October meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved.

Comments from Acting TAP Director – Shawn Collins

Shawn thanked all retiring members and expressed how much their volunteerism was appreciated. She also let them know how she recognized the passion and commitment they each had for the Program and that their hard work and efforts have not gone unnoticed.

Joint Committee Report – Charles Davidson

Charles indicated Issue Sub-committee B has an issue that was forwarded to the IRS. Charles congratulated them for their work on this particular issue. The JC has been working hard on the Annual Meeting and Charles noted that a lot of time will be devoted to working issues. Charles indicated Hank would like all committee reports in by the 20th



MJ reminded those running for Chair/Vice Chair of the training on Friday and to plan travel accordingly.

Area 7 Self-Assessment – Charles Davidson

Charles briefly summarized the feedback he received from members. He indicated the feedback was broken down in general categories and he included the specific feedback in the overall report.

Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

4733 Recordkeeping for Deceased – The Sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped with a letter being sent to the taxpayer. The reason being, there are no special circumstances for recordkeeping as it relates to deceased.

DECISION – The full committee agreed with the recommendation to drop the issue.

5056 - Availability of ES Tax Payment History – The Sub-committee recommended this issue be parked with follow up in 6 months to see how the IRS deals with it.

DECISION – The full committee agreed with the sub-committee’s recommendation.

5057- W2 Information of E-services – The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped. The information should be obtained from the state and not the IRS; the IRS is not responsible for providing this information.

DECISION – The full committee agreed with the recommendation to drop this issue.

5060 Education Materials to increase self-prepared tax returns – The sub-committee will work this issue at the Annual Meeting.

5097- Fraudulent Understanding of Income in Divorces – The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped; this is not something the IRS can address and it appears the issue is legislative.

DECISION – The full committee agreed with the recommendation to drop this issue.

4511 CP 2000 Request for documents – The sub-committee will work this issue at the Annual Meeting.

4545 Customer Service Complaints – The sub-committee will work this issue at the Annual Meeting.

4661 Feedback on IRS web-site – The sub-committee will keep this issue in the parking lot to be worked in the future.

4865 Local TAC Services – The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped; there is nothing the IRS can do in relation to changing the statute on refunds. The sub-committee also noted there is sufficient information publicized informing taxpayers of the statute of limitations for claiming refunds.

DECISION – The full committee agreed with the recommendation to drop this issue.

5019 Practitioner Hotline – MJ will contact the taxpayer for more details and the sub-committee will discuss this issue at the Annual Meeting.

Sub-Committee B

In Sandy’s absence, Janice provided a brief overview of the issues discussed at the sub-committee’s November meeting.

5058 Correspondence Audits – This issue will be discussed at the Annual Meeting.

5061 TAS Intake Procedures – The sub-committee made the recommendation to refer this issue to John Tam and Sabby will contact John to see if he will be available to attend the sub-committee meeting at the Annual Meeting to provide insight on this issue.



5062 Toll Free Access to Managers – This issue will be worked at the Annual Meeting. Research will be done for related issues before the sub-committee proceeds with any recommendations.

5109 Cancellation of POA's – This issue will be worked at the Annual Meeting.

4508 - Tax Forum Fees for Students – Judi indicated this issue is out of TAP's scope and therefore has to be dropped.

DECISION – Issue will be dropped.

Charles advised the sub-committees to prioritize the issues to work with the goal of writing a referral during their respective break out sessions at the Annual Meeting.

Outreach

In Sabby's absence, Charles noted October was a bit slower and there was the same number of participants. Charles indicated there will be discussion about creative ways to conduct outreach at the Annual Meeting.

Annual Meeting Agenda

One change so far is discussion leaders for presentations

Judi indicated she would like Sabby's presentation on outreach to include discussion about actually doing of outreach.

ACTION: Janice will make the change and finalize the agenda.

Member Comments/Other Business

Judi provided her kudos to those retiring and expressed great appreciation for their Commitment, passion and enthusiasm. She let them know that she will personally miss each of them.

ACTION: Janice will make sub-committee assignments prior to the Annual Meeting.

Judi indicated Issue Committee assignments will be posted by November 21st.

Closing: John thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee Meeting
Minutes
October 15, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Staff

Mary Ann Delzer, Acting Program Manager

Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst

Nina Pang, TAP Analyst

Attendance

Rich Waterman

Richard Coonradt

Charles Davidson

Greg Gurse

Margaret Ferguson

Sandy Finestone

Sabby Jonathan

MJ Lee

Guest – potential new Area 7 Members

John Patterson

Larry Pearsly

Howard Levine

Chris Young

John Rogers

Santa Cruz

Lee Battershield

Absent

Dave Jones

Wayne Whitehead

Wayne Tanna

Howard Stahl

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members. Janice took roll and a quorum was met.

John announced that the IRS has established a new Identity Theft Unit in order to provide taxpayer assistance to those facing this dilemma.

Joint Committee Report – Charles Davidson

Charles welcomed the prospective new members and indicated they have been invited to attend Area meetings for the next couple of months.

Charles indicated there will be one more Area Committee meeting before the Annual Meeting.

Approval of August & September meeting minutes – The meeting minutes were approved with corrections

Joint Committee (JC) Face-to-Face Meeting – The JC held its last FTF meeting in Atlanta. A large amount of time was devoted to discussing the various issue referrals that had been submitted. There were 14 issues elevated to the JC, 3 of which were referred to the Systemic Advocacy Management System (SAMS). It was noted that we had a very good year with issues being elevated in relation to what was submitted last year.



Area 7 had three issues elevated to the JC this year.

Recruitment – The final list has been sent to Treasury and it is expected that approval will be made by the end of October so new members can be notified in a timely manner.

Committee Projects – The Communication Committee is working on web 2.0 projects. Anyone with web experience and/or is interested in working with them should let Charles know or contact Mark Paris.

Chair Elections – Selections should be complete prior to the Annual Meeting. Charles encouraged everyone to think about running for Issue Committee Chair positions as well as Area Chair. Both Area and Issue Chairs are expected to attend the JC meeting each month in addition to two FTF meetings. The Chairs serve as spoke person for their respective committees. Chairs should be an effective communicator, ensure adequate research is done on issues, and be willing and able to delegate responsibilities. This year the chair training will be held at the conclusion of the annual meeting, which will allow Vice Chairs to attend as well. Anyone considering running for any chair position should plan to stay an extra day (Friday); the meeting should be done by 3:00.

The Area Committees will have a 6 hour break out session. Charles asked members to think of topics of interest and send them to him for possible inclusion on the agenda.

The Communication Committee would like to know of any additional improvements needed on TAPSpace. Feedback can be forwarded to Charles or Mark.

They are looking for area members to contribute to the New Member Orientation during the Annual Meeting. The session will be 3-4 hours. Anyone interested should contact Charles or Anita Fields.

Annual Report and Committee Evaluation

Charles sent e-mail asking all to complete the SWAT Assessment. Charles will compile the information into an area analysis. He would like 100% participation and would like the information by Friday (October) He has most of the outreach information. If something not reported please let Charles know.

Issue #4921 – John Tam – John provided feedback on an issue he agreed to pursue. As he read through the write up it appeared the POA was venting/asking the panel to relay his frustration to the Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS). After reviewing the issue further, John recommended that the referral be closed based on the fact that there is no contact information and that the POA was venting. The practitioner did not leave contact information; just an e-mail address.

DECISION – All agreed with the recommendation to drop the issue.

Sub-Committee A -

#4931 – The description of the issue is not very clear. MJ attempted to contact the individual and did not receive a response. Therefore the sub-committee recommended the issue be dropped. MJ indicated if Rich W. wanted to create another issue out of this one he could do so, however, this issue as it stands does not have enough information.

DECISION – All agreed with the recommendation to drop the issue.

Sub-Committee B – Sandy Finestone

#4558 – Rich W. indicated the comments from the JC have been incorporated and the issue has already been approved by the JC and needs to be resubmitted with one minor edit.

ACTION: Janice will make the correction and re-submit to the referral to the JC for their November meeting.

#4918 – The sub-committee is planning to drop this issue. They will be sending a letter to the individual submitting the issue. Sandy has a draft letter which basically explains what TAP does/does not do. They will refer the individual to TAS and provide a TAS and Audit brochure. This is not an issue



we can manage but they felt compelled to respond to the taxpayer's frustration. John indicated it is a bit premature to refer to TAS at this point and a better solution would be to contact compliance. John researched the publications and noted that Pub 1 has a paragraph which indicates what to do if you are dissatisfied with the service received. He also indicated the Pub for the examination process is 556.

DECISION – The issue will be dropped with a letter sent to the taxpayer referencing the aforementioned publications.

Additionally, the sub-committee will look at how to incorporate the customer service issue into a new issue or an existing issue.

ACTION: Sabby will draft a new issue and send to it to Janice.

Outreach – Sabby Jonathan

Sabby indicated we are holding steady in the area of outreach. This month 7 members participated in outreach. He thanked everyone for their efforts.

Sandy indicated she will go back and re-send outreach she may not have submitted in previous months.

Member Comments/Other Business – Charles Davidson

Review Annual Meeting Agenda – Area 7 will have 6 hours, which will be a working meeting. Charles anticipates having at least two active issues to work per sub-committee. The goal is to give new members an idea of how the sub-committee and full committee operate.

Charles asked members to review the agenda and let him or MaryAnn know if anything needs to be added. We will rely on returning members to participate in presentations.

MaryAnn reiterated leadership plans and to let Marla know so they can stay Friday. Shawn is working on the issue committees and an e-mail will be forthcoming for members to indicate their issue committee preference.

Closing – John thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee Meeting
Minutes
September 17, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Wayne Whitehead
Wayne Tanna
Charles Davidson
MJ Lee
Margaret Ferguson
Sabby Jonathan
Dave Jones
Sandy Finestone

Absent:

Julia Ling
Greg Gurse
Richard Waterman
Richard Coonradt
Howard Stahl

Guest:

Gil Yanuck

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst
Nina Pang, TAP Analyst

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Janice took roll and a quorum was met.
John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members.

Announcements:

John indicated Nina Olsen will visit Hawaii Sept 25th for a Town Hall meeting.

Those wanting to run for Chair or Vice Chair should submit names to Shaun Berry & Joe Fields by the stated deadline.

Judi will be out of the office all of October and Maryann Delzer will be acting for her during the entire month of October.

Joint Committee Report – Charles Davidson

Recommendations for new TAP members have been approved by Nina Olsen and special counsel. They will go to the Commissioner and then to Treasury. It is anticipated that final approval will be complete by the end of October.

According to Hank, to date twelve issues have been elevated to the IRS.

The final Joint Committee meeting will be held October 2-3 in Atlanta. Area 7 has one issue referral (#4558 1099-B Reporting) that will be reviewed.



Annual Meeting update – The agenda (draft) has been compiled and is available on TAPSpace for review. The meeting dates are 12-1 – 5th; travel on 1st and 5th Those considering running for Chair/Vice Chair should plan to stay all day Friday and for chair training. The deadline for submitting nominations for Chair/Vice Chair is Sept 22nd. Those interested in running should prepare a one page platform, which will be placed on TAPSpace. Balloting will end 11-4 and the elected individuals will be announced 11-12. Charles attended the Tax Forum held in Las Vegas. There was an overwhelming attendance and we gave away a great deal of TAP of marketing material. A Focus Group session was held were 6-7 issues will be brought forward for Area 7 to review.

Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

#4786 – IRS Information Available to Visually Impaired – Dave discussed this at the Notice Committee meeting and they indicated this may be a potential issue for Forms & Pubs. Wayne indicated any issue going forward to another committee should go through the normal process (through QRC)

ACTION:Janice will check the database to see if this kind of issue has been sent to the IRS in the past.

DECISION: The issue will be placed in the parking lot until research is complete.

#5019 Practitioner Line – The sub-committee asked for input from the other members. Judi suggested they go outside of the area for input as well.

ACTION:Janice to post something in the discussion room for others to weigh in. MJ will talk to Richard about this before posting anything.

#4931 How to Obtain an ITIN – Before we proceed with working the issue, MJ will contact the taxpayer for more information

Sub-Committee B – Sandy Finestone

#4918 (No Title) – Nina and Sandy will draft a letter to the taxpayer and review it with the sub-committee before going forward.

#4921 TAS Services – This issue will be placed in the Parking Lot. We will find out which TAS office was contacted and respond to the taxpayer.

ACTION:Janice will provide contact information to John Tam for him to check out the individual situation and respond accordingly.

#4922 Powers Of Attorney - This issue is being assigned to Sabby.

ACTION: Janice will verify the guidance/direction for employees when they receive a POA via fax

#4923 Examinations by Mail – This issue will be worked by the sub-committee.

#4558 1099-B Reporting – The issue referral from Richard is ready to go forward to the QRC and ultimately to the JC for review at the face-to-face meeting.

ACTION: Janice will send it forward to the QRC with the intent of having it on the JC face-to-face agenda.

Outreach – Sabby Jonathan

There was a little improvement in the month of August; 19 events by 6 members were reported. Charles indicated he does see the names of those that do outreach and is pleased to say that everyone does participate.

Dave asked everyone to remember to mention VITA when doing outreach.

Sabby indicated he is working on creating 1-2 VITA sites in his area in addition to increasing awareness of TAP.



Member Comments/Other Business

ACTION: Janice will begin posting all research reports as pre-read.

Janice will begin drafting the Annual Meeting agenda. When we meet in October we will have a draft prepared for input and a final draft will be ready for November.

Charles expressed Kudos to Nina for the work she did during the Las Vegas Tax Forum.

Wayne indicated he has over 100 pictures for the slide show at the Annual Meeting and indicated this will be a nice addition to the meeting.

Closing

Charles thanked everyone for their attendance and participation. John closed the meeting.



**Area 7 Committee Meeting
Teleconference Minutes
August 20, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

Teresa Thompson

Attendance

Richard Coonradt
Margaret Ferguson
Sandra Finestone
Greg Gursej
Sabby Jonathan, Chair
David Jones
Merijane Lee
Julia Ling
Richard Waterman
Wayne Whitehead

Absent

Charles Davidson
Wayne Tanna

Guest

Gil Yanuck

Staff

Dave Coffman, TAP Program Analyst
Marla Ofilas, TAP Secretary

Opening

Teresa opened the meeting and Sabby welcomed the members. Roll call was completed and a quorum was met.

Approval of July Meeting Minutes

The committee reviewed the minutes from the July meeting.

DECISION: The committee approved the July meeting minutes as submitted.

Joint Committee Report – Wayne Whitehead

Wayne reported the following information:

- TIGTA is scheduled to conduct an audit of the Taxpayer Advocacy Program. It is uncertain at this time exactly what areas of the program will be audited.
- The Joint Committee will be meeting in Atlanta in October for their final face-to-face meeting of the year.
- Shawn Collins will be the acting TAP Director while Bernie is on a detail. Wayne was unsure if she would participate in the TAP Annual Business meeting in Washington D.C.

Issue Sub-Committee Reports

- **Sub-committee A**

- **Issue 4787 – No Title**

The subcommittee received a web-comment from a member of the public; which the members felt was not a suggestion, rather someone venting their frustration about the government. The subcommittee recommends that the issue be dropped.

DECISION: The full committee agreed with the subcommittee decision to drop issue 4787.



- **Issue 4865 – Local TAC Service**

The subcommittee reviewed an issue from a taxpayer recommending that the IRS inform the public of the three-year rule for claiming a refund and better training of TAC employees. The taxpayer was due a refund; however, time lapsed and the taxpayer felt it should have been explained to her during one of her four trips to the TAC office for tax return preparation.

The subcommittee is still researching this issue.

- **Issue 4920 – Taxpayer Installment Agreements**

The subcommittee received an issue from a taxpayer that feels installment agreements should not default when the Internal Revenue Service conducts an audit or issues a CP notice regarding underreported income, which could result in additional tax. The new balance should be added to the Installment Agreement and not cost the taxpayer an additional fee to reinstate the agreement. The subcommittee discussed this issue during their meeting and agreed the issue should be dropped due to the current policy. Installment agreement fees are mandated and the members felt they are not compelled to suggest changes be made and therefore recommended the issue be dropped.

DECISION: The full committee agreed with the subcommittee’s recommendation to drop the issue.

- **Sub-committee B**

- **4508 – Tax Forum Fees**

The members reviewed an issue where the taxpayer feels the Tax Forum fees are too high. The current fee is \$179 (\$14.00 increase from last year) and is for everyone that attends. The subcommittee is still researching this issue and will provide an update during the next teleconference.

- **4558 – Form 1099-B**

This issue involves brokerage accounts owned by two individuals. The partners receive a 1099B each year with only one person's SSN. When they report the sale on their return, they split the sale of the stock and end up receiving a notice from the IRS.

The subcommittee has agreed to work the issue and will ask Richard W. to champion the issue.

- **4680 – 1099 Misc.**

The subcommittee suggested this issue be placed in the parking lot and re-examine it in a year to see how it may/may not be affecting people. The full committee would like to see the issue worked. Richard W. explained that Bob Erickson, Program Owner of Forms and Pubs, indicated that this issue had been brought up several times; however, it doesn't mean that the committee can't work it.

DECISION: The full committee agreed that the subcommittee review this issue again before placing it in the parking lot.

- **4367 – Elevated Issue Update**

Sabby reported that elevated issue, 4367 California Tax Education Council (CTEC) Info on IRS website, was approved by the Joint Committee. The issue will now be elevated to the IRS.

Outreach

Sabby reported that there was an improvement of outreach. Sabby thanked everyone for their efforts. Sabby reminded everyone to provide their outreach reports to Janice.

Member Comments

There were no member comments.

Closing

Sabby thanked the members for their participation. Teresa closed the meeting.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Charles Davidson, Chair
MJ Lee
Wayne Whitehead
Julia Ling
Wayne Tanna
Dave Jones
Sandy Finestone
Greg Gurse
Richard Coonradt
Margaret Ferguson
Richard Waterman
Sabby Jonathan

Absent:

Howard Stahl

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst
Nina Pang, TAP Analyst

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members.
Janice took roll and a quorum was met.

Announcements

- The Objectives Report has been released by the NTA. The topics are interesting and John found the supplement to be even more interesting. If anyone wants to know about TAS they should read through that supplement. TAP is also mentioned in detail.
- Wayne asked again for pictures of TAP activities which will be used for a slide show that is being put together for the Annual Meeting.
- Charles thanked Wayne for the work he did putting together the Annual Report.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved with no changes.

Joint Committee Report

There was no specific information to report as there has not been a meeting since the JC FTF. However, Hank is waiting for an update of active and elevated issues from the committee chairs.

Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

Issue #4370 – Dave indicated he was unable to open the document in order to review and provide feedback.

ACTION: Janice will convert to a PDF file and re-post

Background – This issue was approved in April for submission to Forms/Pubs. However, during the JC FTF Hank and Charles discussed whether it actually belongs to Forms/Pubs. As a result of this



dialogue, it was suggested that the issue be altered so that it is a change to the process and not just the form. The content of the issue did not change. All of the QR feedback has been incorporated and the referral has been revised and posted for anyone to make feedback/comments.

DECISION: Consensus was reached for issue to go forward in the revised format.

Sub-Committee B – Sandy Finestone

#4553 F. 982 – It was indicated that this issue has been addressed by Nina Olsen. Charles indicated Sandy can still work the issue as long as it is not a legislative matter.

The other issue is regarding free file and Sandy needs to verify if another area is working this matter. Wayne indicated Area 3 is working a similar issue.

Wayne indicated Ken Wright Chair of Area 5 is working an issue regarding cancellation of debt.

ACTION: Sandy will follow up on these issues in the other areas before recommending these be dropped by Area 7.

Working Issues

Decisions have been made among the sub-committees how issues will be worked.

Each sub-committee will only work 1-3 issues at a time. These issues will be placed in “active” status. The remaining issues will be placed in “parking lot” status.

ACTION: Janice is in the process of updating the active issue list and each sub-committee will review the issues and decide which ones need to be dropped and which ones will remain to be worked.

Issue #4367- California Tax Education Council - The referral has been completed and is ready to be forward to the QRC.

ACTION: Janice will send the referral to Charles and the QRC.

Recruitment Update – Judi Nicholas

Judi indicated all interviews have been completed. The recommended list of names has been sent to Bernie for his concurrence. The fingerprint cards and tax waivers have been sent to prospective members. The staff is compiling a list with demographics for Nina O. to review during the TAS Symposium. Judi has 2 prospective members in Alaska, 6 alternates in California (will be selecting 4), 2 in Hawaii and a couple of alternates in Nevada. We have a good demographic mix for the panel. It is expected that the names will be forwarded to the Commissioner in early August, which will put us two months ahead of schedule.

Judi informed the members that all TAP staff will be out of the office the week of 7-28-08.

Outreach – Sabby Jonathan

The month of June showed low activity.

Observations – There are 13 members in Area 7 and there has not been a month with full participation in outreach. It would be nice to increase the number of member participation. Sabby discussed a report that was generated for the months of Jan-Jun 08; per the report, Richard C. and Wayne T. have been doing well in their outreach efforts.

Judi pulled reports for 07 vs 08 and per the report we are ahead of where we were this time last year.

Judi asked members to also think of outreach in terms of passing out information via newsletters etc.

Charles challenged everyone to report at least one outreach for the month of July.

Member Comments/Other Business

Question - Sabby asked if there was an organization in the valley that he could work with in relation to EITC and setting up a VITA site if not, who should he contact. Judi indicated he should contact SPEC.

ACTION: Janice will find out who Sabby should contact in SPEC in relation to starting a VITA site in his area.



Closing

Charles thanked everyone and John closed the meeting.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Wayne Whitehead
Wayne Tanna
Charles Davidson, Chair
Richard Coonradt
Howard Stahl
MJ Lee
Margaret Ferguson
Dave Jones
Richard Waterman
Greg Gurse
Sandy Finestone
Sabby Jonathan

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
Nina Pang, TAP Jr. Analyst

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members. John indicated Area 7 is still without a director. He will keep us posted on the status of selections.

Janice took roll and a quorum was met.

No announcements from committee members.

MJ indicated she attended a Congressional Aide Seminar hosted by LTA, John Tam. MJ noted that John does a good job in relation to promoting TAP in his presentation and the manual that is handed out to participants.

Approval of April FTF & May Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes for April and May were approved as posted on TAPSpace.

Joint Committee (JC) Report – Charles Davidson

Charles reported that the JC meeting held in St. Louis was successful. Following is a summary of some issues addressed;

- The TAP Annual Report is almost complete. It is in final stages of review and will be going to print the week of 6-30-08. All members will receive a copy.
- **The TAP Annual Meeting** – This year's meeting will be 12-1-08 through 12-5-08 in Washington DC. The JC discussed how to make the meeting more dynamic and interesting. The meeting days will be Tuesday through Thursday. Anyone interested in running for chair positions are asked to keep travel plans in mind as Friday will be a full day (for those elected) and members should expect to fly out late Friday evening or Saturday morning.
- All Area/Issue FTF meetings have been held. If anyone has photos of your meetings, please forward them to Wayne Whitehead.
- **Projects finishing up for 2008** - The Commissioner will get a copy of the Annual Report. TAP will participate in 3 Tax Forums; Las Vegas, Florida, and San Diego.
- **Leadership process for next year** - E-mails will be coming out about this within the next week. The elections for chair/vice will be handled same as last year. (Charles gave brief overview of the process for the new member's information). MJ indicated there would not be



any campaigning allowed this year. Members will only be allowed to post information on TAPSpace for consideration in being elected.

Volunteers Needed

- **Anaheim Parade** – Allena Kaplan, a former Area 7 Chair is looking for a TAP member to participate in the 4th of July Parade in Anaheim, CA. There were no volunteers. Wayne asked if it was possible for her to promote TAP as a former Area Chair. Judi indicated she would follow up on this to see if it is feasible.
- **Las Vegas Tax Forum** – Judi stated we have no volunteers from Area 7 to attend the forum. Sandi indicated she will be attending the forum (as a participant) and would be happy to assist. Judi would like to discuss Sandi's class schedule in relation to being able to staff the booth. Judi stated she would like a full time person from Area 7. Charles volunteered to be the full time person and Sandi (as her schedule permits) will provide backup.

ACTION: Janice will discuss Sandi's schedule to determine the amount of time she would be available to assist Charles.

Issue/Research Status – Janice Spinks

Janice reported that all of the research requested by Sub-committee B has been completed. The research requested by Sub-committee A is almost complete. There are about four issues that require in depth research. Janice stated all research should be complete in time for the next sub-committee meetings.

Active Issues – Judi Nicholas

Judi requested the sub-committees look at the preliminary research and pick a top issue to work and the remainder of the issues can be moved to the parking lot. She would also like the sub-committees to prioritize the issues, have back up issues and decide which ones could be dropped.

Sub-Committee A

Charles discussed Issue Referral #4370 990-PF which was submitted to the QRC for final submission to Forms/Pub. The referral has taken on a different flavor and Charles will bring it back to sub-com for further discussion.

A recommendation made to change the name so that it will not have to go to Forms/Pubs; just to the JC and to TG/TE.

Sub-Committee B

No report. Issues will be discussed at the next sub-committee meeting.

Recruitment – Judi Nicholas

The last interview was 6-25-08. Area 7 will fill vacancies in Hawaii, Alaska, and California (4). There were excellent candidates in the package. The waivers and fingerprint cards are being sent to prospective members. Judi will be meeting with Bernie during the week of 6-30-08 to discuss her recommendations for selections. Bernie will then meet with Nina Olsen in July to go over the names and get her approval. It is expected that the names will be presented to Treasury by the end of August. We should have names of new members by early October. We are on schedule to meet that deadline.

Judi thanked all who assisted with interviews as well as those who volunteered but did not have the opportunity to interview.

Outreach – Sabby Jonathan

Janice asked everyone to submit outreach for June.

Sabby provided an overview of the outreach graph;

- The numbers appear to be remaining steady...we hope to pick up progress
- Members were asked to be diligent in recording and reporting information to Janice



Judi noted that there has been a drop in outreach and encouraged members to be diligent in their activities over the summer.

Charles indicated the JC discussed having a form on TAPSpace that could be used for reporting. He asked for feedback regarding this suggestion, however, none was offered.

Member Comments/Other Business

Charles would like to see at least two – three issues elevated to the JC for their next meeting. They will have another FTF meeting in October.

Wayne indicated the turn around on issues going through the QR process before actually getting on the JC agenda is approximately two weeks.

Judi informed the committee that all TAP Staff will be away for training during the week of July 28th. She will send a reminder notice two weeks prior to our departure.

It was confirmed that the next meeting is July 16th opposed to July 15th as noted on the agenda.

Closing

John thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2008**

Designated Federal Official (DFO)

Judi Nicholas served as the DFO in John Tam's absence.

Attendance

Richard Coonradt
MJ Lee
Julia Ling
Richard Waterman
Dave Jones
Sandy Finestone
Margaret Ferguson
Charles Davidson
Wayne Whitehead
Wayne Tanna

Absent:

Howard Stahl
Sabby Jonathan
Greg Gurse

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst
Nina Pang, TAP Jr. Analyst

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Judi opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members. Janice took roll and a quorum was met. Charles welcomed everyone. Nina Pang, the new Seattle Jr. Analyst was welcomed to her first Area 7 meeting.

Richard indicated he had a great time in Las Vegas and thanked the staff for a great meeting. Wayne W. was thanked again for a good dinner/restaurant selection.

MJ indicated she was working up an issue regarding 1099's/W2's and had a question for those who are tax practitioners. The issue deals with the legibility and font size of these particular documents.

Charles indicated as far as he knew there was a recommended format but no standardization.

Joint Committee (JC) Report – Charles Davidson

The JC is getting ready for their FTF meeting during the week of June 16th in St. Louis. An Ad Hoc committee is being looked at for converting documents into various languages. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee let Charles know.

The Quality Review Committee (QRC) filled their vacant spot with Bob Haines.

There are a couple of issues from areas that will be reviewed during June's FTF meeting.

Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

#4727 – Different Rates of Social Security - The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped as it is legislative.

DECISION: Consensus was reached to drop the issue.



#4787 – Unfairness of Tax System – The sub-committee recommended this issue be dropped. It was evident that the taxpayer was “venting”.

DECISION: Consensus was reached to drop the issue.

#4370 – This issue will be elevated and the referral will be sent to QRC, after which, it will be forwarded to the Forms & Pubs committee.

Janice asked for clarification regarding research reports as pre-read.

DECISION: All agreed that pre-read will only consist of those reports where a recommendation needs consensus by the full committee.

Sub-Committee B – Sandy Finestone

#4505 – Free filing Software – This Issue will remain active. The full committee was asked for approval to move forward with the referral. There was no champion identified in the sub-committee and volunteers will be sought among the full committee.

DECISION: Consensus was reached to move forward with the referral. The target date for completion of the referral is June 30th.

#4553 F. 982 – Margaret will follow up on this issue; pending research by Janice.

#4192 1099-INT – Wayne W. prepared a letter which was sent to the taxpayer by Janice via e-mail. No follow up reply has been received from the taxpayer.

ACTION: The issue will be closed.

#4367 IRS web-site – A referral has been completed and is ready to be reviewed by the QRC. The full committee agreed to forward the referral to the JC. Sandy will follow through with the issue.

Recruitment – Judi Nicholas

Judi reported there are 600 applicants nationwide to date. Area 7 has a little over 60 for all four states, most of which are from California. The process consists of ranking the applications and putting them in score order. After which, Judi will meet with Bernie to discuss her selected interviewees and to obtain his approval. Upon Bernie’s approval, interviews will be scheduled. It is anticipated that the schedule of interview dates and times will be complete the 1st week of June.

Those participating on the interview panel will receive the questions and scoring sheet. Interviews will be conducted in 3 hour blocks, morning and afternoon. Panel members will be asked to dial in 30 minutes before the interview to discuss the process and to divide the questions.

A team is being put together to look at changes to the applications/questions.

Outreach – Charles Davidson

Charles encouraged everyone to keep up their outreach efforts during the summer. Although the participation rate was a bit lower this month, when the details were read there were a good number of one-on-one events. The number of member participation is pretty good overall.

During the JC FTF Charles will lead a discussion with Ben Chapman regarding commitments; whether members should document/outline commitments each month.

Charles asked for feedback regarding this concept. Following are some of the comments made;

- *“If people are committed they will write it down or not”*
- *“I would rather not have to be held to making commitments...we may lose volunteers if members feel as if they are being “demanded” to do something as a volunteer”*
- *“I would go for commitments as long as it is done anonymously and not published to the entire panel”*

Best practices – Charles asked for feedback on success stories. The following was provided;

- Wayne indicated he is on an e-mail list which he uses as opportunities to go to events where he will go and pass out brochures



- Margaret indicated she attended a congressional education day held by the LTA where she was given 5 minutes to speak about TAP. She also handed out 10 brochures to each of the Congressional Aides for distribution to their constituents.

ACTION: Charles will take the feedback to the JC.

Member Comments/Other Business

Due to the JC FTF meeting we will need to re-schedule June's meeting. All agreed to June 25th 2:00 p.m.

ACTION: Janice will send a calendar appointment and send Patti an e-mail to change the Federal Register Notice.

Those unable to attend their respective sub-committee meeting on June 11th were asked to send Janice an e-mail. If enough members will be absent the meetings will be re-scheduled.

Closing

Judi thanked everyone for their participation and the meeting was adjourned.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee
Face-to-face Meeting Minutes
April 24 – 26 2008
Las Vegas, Nevada**

- Thursday, April 24, 2008
- Friday, April 25, 2008
- Saturday, April 26, 2008

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Charles Davidson, Chair
MJ Lee
Sabby Jonathan
Sandy Finestone
Greg Gurse
Dave Jones
Margaret Ferguson
Richard Coonradt
Wayne Tanna
Julia Ling
Wayne Whitehead
Richard Waterman

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Marla Ofilas, TAP Secretary
Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst

Absent

Richard Waterman

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Opening

John opened the meeting with a few announcements. The Area Director, Joe Benton was invited to attend the meeting however he has since announced his retirement. John indicated had he been present he would have undoubtedly thanked everyone (members and staff) for their hard work and dedication to the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP).

Welcome/Announcements

Charles welcomed the members and thanked the staff for all of their hard work in preparing for the meeting.

Review Agenda/Facilitation of Meeting

Charles briefly reviewed the outline of the agenda. Day one would be spent sharing information and hearing an overview of issues from the sub-committee chairs. Day two would be a full working day for each sub-committee where issues would be addressed in depth. Day three would be a report/review of all the issues that were worked in the respective sub-committees.

Member Introductions

Everyone took the time to introduce themselves.



Debra Grant, Las Vegas LTA was present and took a moment to introduce herself to the committee. Richard Coonradt (Nevada panel member) scheduled time to meet with her individually.

Meeting Purpose/TAP Mission – Judi Nicholas

Judi discussed the intention of the meeting and encouraged new members to ask questions to ensure they had a clear understanding of the TAP.

Judi provided the following information as it relates to the mission of TAP;

- Area committees are charged with elevating issues to the IRS (products/services) how to make it easier for the general public
- Sub-committees report what issues their committee is working on so that everyone is informed and to prevent duplication of issues

During the sub-committee breakout sessions members are charged with looking at each issue (does it affect a lot of people etc.) and make a determination, which would then be brought before the full committee for consensus on any recommendations

Joint Committee (JC) Report – Charles Davidson

Election of new chairs – Hank would like to see TAP move toward electing committee chairs prior to the annual meeting. This will be discussed further within the JC. One of the JC chairs has been asked to lead a sub-committee for the chair election process.

Wayne Whitehead has been asked to lead a sub-committee to work on the TAP Annual Report. The 2007 report is in final edit stage and should be sent to the printer within the next couple of weeks.

Town Hall Meetings- It has been reported that all of the meetings have gone well. The last one will be held in Springfield, Ill. For the sake of new members, Judi provided a brief overview of what generally takes place at Town Hall meetings. Nina generally attends which is a good draw for public participation. The Area hosting the Town Hall will generally hold a focus group meeting, which is a good opportunity for gathering new issues. For instance, there were 35 new issues documented from the Birmingham Town Hall.

The location of the Town Halls is random and is generally based on areas where Nina has not visited. Sabby asked about outreach in relation to Town Halls and suggested a scaled down version with LTA's. Judi thought this was a good idea and indicated she would forward the information. Charles indicated that the TAP Charter has been approved, which allows TAP to continue operating.

Budget issues – Judi indicated TAP's budget projections vs. what funds we actually have is about \$60K. As a result, staff is looking at areas where we can cut expenses, for instance meeting space, travel expenses, events (i.e. Bernie will not attend area meetings) etc.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes

Judi reiterated the intent is not to go over the meeting minutes rather to approve them given everyone has reviewed them on TAPSpace.

Greg moved that the minutes be approved as submitted on TAPSpace.

There were no objections and the minutes were approved.

The Issue Process

- **Forms/Pubs Issues** – Judi provided an overview of this sub-committee and explained that they have requested that the TAP Area Committees refer any issues related to forms/pubs be sent through this sub-committee. Prior to referring, the Area Committee will do preliminary research about the issue and if any recommendations are in order, the Area Committee will then refer the issue to the forms/pubs committee. If an issue warrants being elevated, a



referral will be prepared, routed to the Quality Review Committee (QRC) and once approved the referral will be forwarded to the Forms/Pubs committee for further review.

- **Setting target date for elevated issues-** Hank is interested in each area setting a target date for issues to be elevated. This date will then be input on the database. Judi asked each sub-committee to set target dates for any issues they deem appropriate for elevating to the JC.

Judi will discuss with staff the possibility of capturing dropped issues and the most common reason for them being dropped.

Filtering process – This should take place within the sub-committee. Issues will then be brought to the full committee for consensus as to whether they should be dropped or sent forward to the NTA...all agreed this would be a good process to follow

- **Quality Review Process** – Major changes have been made in the Quality Review (QR) structure and procedures. Due to Barbara Foley's new job, staff support has moved to Area 7, Judi will provide managerial support and Janice will serve as the analyst. Members of QR consist of Wayne Whitehead, Hank Mosler, Kelly Wingard, and Ken Wright. There was a 5th member who has unfortunately resigned. An e-mail has gone out soliciting a new member.

Issue referral form – Wayne reviewed the referral form and indicated the information has to be in the format as laid out in the handout.

Issue referral guide – This provides guidelines for writing the referral and is a very useful tool. Once the referral is done it will be sent to Janice who will post the referral on TAPSpace for all JC members to review. The QRC is not charged with reviewing the merits of the issue, rather they review the referral for grammatical errors and to ensure it is in the proper format. Once all components are complete and a new referral is prepared, the issue will be sent to Susan Gilbert for placement on the JC meeting agenda.

Issue Sub-committee A – Issue Report – Dave Jones

- Members of the sub-committee are Charles, Richard C., MJ, Julia and Greg. Dave provided an overview of the sub-committee's issues. They currently have seven active issues, five new issues and about 7 issues where he needs to verify the status.

Issue Sub-committee B – Issue Report – Sandy Finestone

- Members of the sub-committee are Margaret, Wayne W, Richard W., Wayne T, and Howard. Sandy provided an overview of the sub-committee's issues and a brief overview of issues that have been dropped since the annual meeting. Sandy indicated she would also like to pursue locating the originator of issues in order to provide feedback.

ACTION: Judi will discuss with the staff ways to encourage taxpayers to leave contact information.

Internal Communication within Area 7 – Judi and Charles

What is working vs. what is not working?

- **E-mail** – The amount of e-mail is overwhelming for some, albeit the information is beneficial. In some instances "reply all" is creating an influx of e-mails that are not applicable to everyone. When on TAPSpace do not reply to messages via TAPSpace because the information will go out to everyone. Charles asked members to ensure to distinguish "TAP" as part of the subject line. Overall the information from this committee is reasonable and beneficial.
- **Communicating via telephone** – Judi asked if we could also have cell phone numbers in case of emergency situations. She assured everyone that we will use cell phone numbers judiciously.
- **TAPSpace** – Judi advised members to let staff know if they are having intermittent problems with the system. Meeting minutes are being posted there each month and the process to follow is; when minutes are posted on TAPSpace, each member is to review them and provide



feedback (if any) within the timeframe given. Negative replies are not necessary. Final approval of meeting minutes will be done at the Area 7 full committee meeting.

- **Sub-committees - Communicating meeting schedules** – Attendance overall has been pretty good. Judi reiterated attendance at sub-committee meetings is not optional. Members were asked to please notify staff if unable to attend any meeting.

Outreach

- **Review 2008 Outreach to date** – A chart was prepared in an attempt to compare 2007 to 2008. It appears the same numbers of members are participating in outreach. Some contributing factors are the number of VITA and tax preparers, which affects the filing season months. Members were reminded that outreach consists of media articles/interviews, chatting with people, one on one discussion, speeches, etc...
- **Outreach Tool Kit Review/Reminders** – TAPSpace has a folder titled "Outreach Toolkit", which has a variety of documents, one being guidelines for LTA's working with TAP. It also contains templates for news releases, talking points, etc. Members were advised to let Judi know if there is any other information that may be useful
- **Reporting Process** – Continue to use the document that is sent each month from Janice
- **Jr. Analyst Role** – Nina Pang is our new Jr. Analyst and she will be charged with looking for outreach opportunities and inform the members. She will communicate the information (dates, location etc.) to members and if anyone is unable to attend that is fine. The Jr. Analyst will also be a liaison for the LTA outreach staff person
- **Sharing – Best Practices**

Advanced Outreach Workshops – This document contains great ideas that have been used by others...this information is posted on TAPSpace and includes the LTA's Outreach Plans

Day 1 Wrap up

Instructions for Friday's work – Sabby provided a brief overview of what to expect for the day. We would split into sub-committees to review respective issues and determine whether issues would be parked, recommended for dropping, or recommended for elevation to the JC.

Friday, April 25, 2008

Opening – John officially opened the meeting and there was a brief overview of what the day would entail.

Absent:

Julia Ling
Howard Stahl

Sub-committee Beak out sessions – The members used the remainder of the day to meet in their respective sub-committee to discuss assigned issues. The full committee will meet on day three to allow the sub-committees to provide reports of issues discussed.

Saturday, April 26, 2008

Absent:

Julia Ling
Howard Stahl

Opening – John officially opened the meeting.

Review Agenda- The day was primarily spent going over what was discussed in the sub-committees as it relates to their assigned issues.

Questions /follow up from previous day – Kudos to Wayne W. for a wonderful and entertaining restaurant for dinner. Both the food and entertainment were excellent.



Sub-committee B will present a referral which will be used in reviewing the Issue Referral Process.

Issue Sub-committee Reports

Sub-committee A – Dave Jones

Dave provided an overview of each of the following issues.

#4276 VITA/TCE Site Location via IRS Web-site (IRS web-site lacks information concerning VITA/TCE sites)

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached in the sub-committee to move forward with this issue.**

#4370 F. 990 PF – Richard provided a draft referral which will go directly to the Forms/Pubs (Sue Sotile & Bob Erickson)...the full committee reviewed the referral and after discussing the proposals there was a suggestion to incorporate creation of some sort of EZ form for private foundations into the recommendations also add minimum threshold that has a material impact based on assets and not income

Judi will discuss this with Bernie to determine the exact process for this particular type of forms/pubs recommendation.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached to add proposal #3, to design an EZ form...and modify the threshold to include assets based on FMV and to send a postcard**
- **ACTION: Richard will send the referral to Janice and she will post it on TAPSpace for review/feedback and indicate it is not going to the JC. The target date for completion of the referral is May 30, 2008.**

#4486 E-Filing for free (Taxpayer feels e-file should be free for everyone)

The sub-committee reached consensus to recommend this issue be dropped. The issue is not valid, is complex and partially legislative. IRS/TAP has no control over private industries and what they charge for e-file services.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

#4497 IRS Phone Service (Service received on toll-free line is unsatisfactory) The sub-committee reached consensus to recommend this issue be dropped. It appears the IRS is looking at this and making substantive improvements. The sub-committee agreed they do not have anything to add to the process.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

#4500- E- Services/Password changes (Procedures relating to password changes on e-services are unclear)

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached in the sub-committee to move forward with this issue.**

#4503 IRS Outreach – (Need additional options for education purposes)

There is a process in place for requesting IRS speakers. Additionally, there is not enough information to determine the actual issue. The sub-committee reached consensus to recommend this issue be dropped.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

#4506 1040 EZ – (1040 EZ is not user friendly)

The sub-committee agreed the information is clearly stated in the instructions as to who can use the form 1040-EZ. Consensus was reached to recommend this issue be dropped.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

#4509 Estimated Tax Payments (Estimated tax payment instructions are not clear/specific)

The sub-committee agreed the ES instructions clearly state the reason and the requirements for the estimated tax package.



- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

#4511 CP 2000 Request for Documents – (The process is time consuming)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this issue.**

#4545 Customer Service Complaints – (no convenient avenue for taxpayers to make complaints)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this issue.**

#4661 Stimulus Payment web-page (there is no mechanism on irs.gov to post feedback about the web-site)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this issue. They also agreed to change the title of the issue to "Feedback on IRS Web site".**

#4670 The Tax System – (The current tax system is confusing, unfair and complex)

The sub-committee agreed to recommend this issue be dropped. This is a legislative matter.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

#4678 Tax Refunds (Tax refund going through a clearing house before being refunded to clients)

The sub-committee agreed to recommend this issue be dropped. Upon review of the issue, it was agreed a mistake was made on the part of the taxpayer and he was not aware the refund transfers go through the Santa Barbara Bank.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached within the full committee to drop this issue.**

Sub-Committee B – Sandy Finestone

Sandy provided an overview of the following issues;

#4639 Downloading F-1099 (Unable to download F. 1099 & 1096)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this Issue.**

#4558 Form 1099-B(1099-B only shows one SSN for joint accounts)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this issue.**

#4680 1099 Misc. Procedures (No protest procedures for F. 1099 MISC)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this issue.**

#4714 IRS/TAS Customer Service (Poor customer service received on toll-free)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this issue.**

#4192 1099-INT Instructions(Different localities are treating/reporting 1099-INT income differently)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to work this Issue.**

#4337 Practitioner Hotline – (level of employee knowledge is inadequate)

- **DECISION: The sub-committee agreed to place this issue in the parking lot and follow-up periodically.**

#4510 3rd Party "check a box on tax returns" – (Third party authorization time frame should coincide with the return statute timeframe)

The sub-committee agreed to recommend this issue be dropped. However, they will look at creating a new issue out of this one.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached among the full committee to drop this issue and allow the sub-committee to create a new issue.**

#4505 Free Filing Software – (E-file trouble shooting should be easier)

- **DECISION: This issue was tabled until the next sub-committee meeting.**



#4553 Form 982 – (Form 982 does not have a link on the info page for Q & A)

- **DECISION: This issue was tabled until the next sub-committee meeting.**

#4367 California Tax Education Council (CTEC) Info on IRS web-site – (IRS web-site lacks key information concerning tax preparers)

The sub-committee completed a draft referral which was used in going over the referral checklist process.

- **DECISION: Consensus was reached to forward the issue referral to the Joint Committee. Target date for the referral is May 30, 2008.**

2008 Tax Forums - Judi Nicholas

TAP customarily participates in nationwide Tax Forums sponsored by the IRS and has a table outside the Exhibition Hall. The table is staffed with TAP members and staff. Last year we held a focus group at the end of the session, which proved to be beneficial and resulted in a number of new issues. This year due to budget restrictions we will reduce the number of forums we will participate in. In light of this, we will staff the Las Vegas forum (the largest forum) with Area 6 & 7 panel members. Judi will solicit interest and the main factor in deciding who attends will be based on travel cost.

It was indicated that a vast majority of the issues from the tax forums did not have any contact information. Judi would like members to be diligent in obtaining contact information.

Charles indicated the mailer that was created by communications would be a good form to use during tax forums as it is a "self mailer" and captures contact information.

Sabby asked if it was permissible to attend a tax forum in your area even if TAP was not officially involved. Judi indicated it is fine and we could request to have a table if a member wanted to hand out TAP Materials. Judi will include the San Diego Tax Forum, which would be no cost to TAP.

TAP Junior Analyst – This is a new position for each of the TAP Offices. Our Jr. Analyst (Nina) will be used to manage outreach and look for other activities. She will also do the monthly outreach reporting and will assist with some of the research requested of Janice and Dave.

Recruitment

Update/Interview Assistance – The application period closed 4-30-08. The applications are to be loaded to member database. TAP staff will then pull the applications and rank them according to state. The interviews will be based on the number of vacancies per state. The interview panel will consist of Panel Members, TAP Manager and an LTA. The interviews will be conducted during the first three weeks in June, via teleconference. The goal is to have all interviews completed by the end of June for Bernie's recommendations. Judi will solicit member participation via e-mail. The final schedule will be completed in June at which time she will send applications and scoring documents to those on the interview panel.

Miscellaneous

Dave Jones indicated he is on a sub-committee to test IRS forms (tax forms/ instructions) and publications. He asked members if they would be willing to participate in the process. There were seven individuals who said they would be willing to participate in such a process. Members are asked to send Dave an e-mail expressing interest in working on this project.

Charles indicated this was the last time we would see our retiring members (Wayne Whitehead, Margaret Ferguson, Dave Jones, Greg Gurse, and Wayne Tanna). He expressed thanks and appreciation to each of them for the work they have done over the past three years.

Meeting Closure:

John thanked everyone for taking time from their busy schedules to attend the meeting and stated it was a productive 2 ½ days.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Charles Davidson, Chair
Richard Coonradt
Sabby Jonathan
Dave Jones
MJ Lee
Julia Ling
Howard Stahl
Wayne Tanna
Richard Waterman
Wayne Whitehead

Guest

Gil Yanuck, former TAP Member

Absent

Greg Gurse
Sandy Finestone
Margaret Ferguson

Staff

Judi Nicholas, TAP Program Manager
Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members. Janice took roll and a quorum was met.

John informed everyone of the newly appointed IRS Commissioner, Douglas Shulman.

John indicated there is a calculator on the web-site that can be used to figure the amount of stimulus payments and encouraged members to pass this information on to individuals that may be seeking assistance.

Judi announced the new Junior Analyst position for each TAP Office. The Seattle office Junior Analyst will be starting April 14th. Her name is Nina Pang and she will attend the Area 7 Face-to-Face meeting as well.

Joint Committee Report – Charles Davidson

Charles reported the following:

- The TAP Charter was approved and allows the TAP to continue operating through March 2010
- TAP Recruitment started 3-17-08 and will run through the end of April
- The TAP Annual report is expected to be released by the end of March
- The Town Hall in Birmingham on 2-21-08 was successful – there were at least 35 taxpayers in attendance and a focus group was held, where approximately 20 new issues were documented
- The last Town Hall will be in Springfield, IL on May 6th



- Hank participated in the IRS Oversight Board, which proved to be a good outreach event for the TAP and the recommendations were well received

Wayne W. reported that the Quality Review Committee (QRC) has been formed and consists of Hank, Ken & Wayne. It is recommended that Area committees look for those with good writing and editing skills and form their own QR team to review issues before they go to the JC/QRC for review.

Issue Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

Dave reported the sub-committee currently has 4-5 issues they are actively working and will be prepared to provide updates during the face-to-face meeting.

Issue Sub-Committee B

In Sandy's absence, Judi and Sabby reviewed the recommendations as outlined in the respective research reports. Following is the outcome of each issue recommendation.

#4505 –The recommendation is to suggest having a feedback form/avenue for providing good and bad comments on the free file site, which in turn can be submitted to the IRS.

Richard indicated Nina Olsen's comments refer to this issue and Judi indicated she recalls one of the other areas working on "providing IRS input of marketing products".

ACTION: Janice will conduct research to see if this issue exists in another Area Committee.

DECISION: After the research has been completed, if warranted the sub-committee may proceed with the recommendation to prepare a referral.

#4510 3rd Party Authorizations – Sabby would like to broaden the scope of the issue and provided the following information. The issue is with 3rd party authorizations and POA forms for paid preparers. Specifically, the box on the 1040 authorizes a preparer to discuss the form and is limited; Sabby would like to see IRS broaden the power given to 3rd parties.

ACTION: Janice will conduct research to see if this issue exists in another Area Committee.

DECISION: Consensus was reached to proceed with the recommendation (if warranted after research has been completed).

#4192 1099 INT Instructions – The sub-committee will contact the individual for more information about this issue. The issue will remain active while additional information is obtained.

#4367 California Tax Ed. Council - Consensus was reached to proceed with the recommendation to write a proposal to suggest the inclusion of a sentence under "Tips for Choosing a Tax Preparer" on the web-site.

#4377 Erroneous Payoff Figures – Consensus was reached to drop the issue with a letter being sent to the taxpayer clarifying the process.

Recruitment – Judi Nicholas

Judi reported the following in relation to recruitment:

- The recruitment period opened March 17th and will run through the end of April
- Recruiting in Nevada for an alternate, so far there is one complete application
- Applications in draft status include, 1 for Alaska, 27 for California, 2 for Hawaii and 3 for Nevada
- An e-mail was sent to members from Patti Robb on behalf of the TAP Director with recruiting materials that can be used during outreach and/or given to individuals who may be interested in TAP. Judi stressed that we are looking for diversity (all aspects) on the panel
- A Press Release was sent out 2-18-08 and is posted on the IRS web-site They are also looking at having the release posted in the Wall Street Journal and will be working with local field media specialists...Judi will also send everyone a copy of the press release which can be taken to local papers for possible publication
- Interviews will be conducted June 9th – 27th Judi will solicit assistance via e-mail in early May... there will be about 30-40 applicants to interview and the interviews will be spread out



over the three weeks and will not run the entire day...Judi will schedule members to interview in half day increments

- We will be sending recruitment letters to major employers in the various states letting them know of the recruitment period

A question was raised as to whether members can forward the information to potential employers. Judi indicated this is permissible and asked members to be mindful of diversity if forwarding the materials.

Face-to-Face Meeting – Judi Nicholas

The Face-to-Face meeting is being held in Las Vegas April 24 – 26. We will be staying at the Golden Nugget and will meet in the Federal Building on Thursday and Friday and at the hotel on Saturday. Judi would like to know by the end of the month if anyone will not be able to attend the meeting.

Please respond to Marla regarding travel preferences so that she can finalize all arrangements. Charles provided a brief overview of the meeting agenda, which was modeled after last year's agenda. The first day will consist of an overview of the TAP Program and a brief review of issues of each sub-committee. The full day will consist of sub-committee meetings and the last day will be to provide reports of the work completed by the sub-committees and discuss goals and objectives to the year.

Wayne W. will be in charge of locating a place for the committee dinner.

Charles informed members of a best practice from last year where new members were invited to attend a session at the end of the final day to discuss their TAP experience. This will give new members an opportunity to ask questions and get clarification of any matters about TAP that may not be clear.

Wayne suggested going over the 2007 Annual Report during the face-to-face meeting.

ACTION: This topic will be added to the agenda.

Dave suggested we prepare a summary description of where each issue stands so that all members can review.

Outreach – Sabby Jonathan

Janice indicated there were 10 events and 5 members reported

ACTION: Janice to complete a report comparing 2007 (month by month) to 2008.

The committee would also like a current month report and a cumulative report that compares data to the prior year.

Sabby encouraged members to continue looking for additional outreach opportunities where the IRS is holding any kind of public forum where members of TAP could have a presence.

Charles indicated time will be spent discussing how to interface with the IRS during the face-to-face.

Member Comments/Other Business

Returning Member Surveys – Charles reminded members to complete their surveys and return them to Janice.

ACTION: Janice will prepare a list of issues for each sub-committee noting the status and sub-committee assignments. This information will be included as pre-read material for future meetings.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be the face-to-face in Las Vegas.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Charles Davidson
Sandy Finestone
Richard Waterman
Sabby Jonathan
Greg Gurse
Dave Jones
Margaret Ferguson
MJ Lee
Wayne Tanna
Wayne Whitehead

Staff

Judi Nicholas, Program Manager
Janice Spinks, Program Analyst

Guest

Gil Yanuck

Absent

Howard Stahl
Richard Coonradt
Julia Ling

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members. Janice took roll and a quorum was met.

John advised members to go to IRS.gov for information regarding the stimulus payment inquiries. There is a series of Q & A's that can be used as talking points in the event this issue comes up during outreach activities.

Judi announced Marla will be back in the office Monday 2-25-08. She also announced that each of the TAP offices have been authorized to hire another analyst and it is anticipated this person will be on board within the next couple of months.

Joint Committee Report – Charles Davidson, et al

MJ provided the following information regarding the Metrics Committee:

- Data has been collected for the New Member Survey, Returning Member Survey and the Exit Survey. There is a notable difference in the survey scales. The committee will be proposing one scale be used on all surveys. MJ indicated Mark Paris is working on this with in the Communication Committee.
- MJ did an analysis on outreach and found members generally are not reporting outreach on a monthly basis.
- MJ will discuss her findings at the next JC meeting and recommend that it be standard for all members to report outreach each month.

Charles provided the following information:



- Steve Berkey will oversee recruitment and will be looking for member participation. The applications should be available on line by March 17, 2008. The goal is to have final approval of new members between September and October.
- The Annual Meeting is tentatively scheduled for the first week of December. The actual dates will be determined based on hotel availability.
- The Communication Committee is rolling out a new feedback form, which will be tested at the Town Hall meeting being held 2-21-08 in Birmingham, AL. Mark Paris, Communication Committee Chair will be in attendance.
- Remaining Town Hall Meetings are scheduled for March 13, 2008 in Durham, NC and May 1, 2008 in Springfield, IL

Judi provided the following information:

- Members were reminded that the Town Hall meetings and recruitment dates are noted on the calendar on TAPSpace.
- Judi asked members to be mindful that we will be replacing Greg Gursej in Alaska, Wayne Tanna in Hawaii and that we will have 3-4 California vacancies. Judi asked members to assist with recruitment in these particular areas.
- Interviews (via telephone) will take place starting June 9th. Judi will solicit member participation sometime in May. She will split the time up and will work within everyone's schedules.
- The goal is to have all recruitment efforts completed by the end of June with final recommendations to Bernie so that he can get the information to Nina by the end of July.

Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

Issues:

- **#4416 – W2 G** – The sub-committee made a recommendation to drop this issue due to it being legislative. There were no objections to the recommendation.
- **#4368 – Copy of Returns Disclosure** – The sub-committee made a recommendation to drop this issue. According to the research completed, there are procedures/guidelines in place to prevent returns being sent to the wrong individual. The sub-committee agreed this was a rare occurrence. There were no objections to the recommendation.
- **#4488 – Flexible Spending Accounts** – Richard researched this issue and according to his findings weight loss issues are not considered a qualified medical expense. Based on the research (and the fact that this is a legislative matter) the sub-committee made a recommendation to drop the issue. There were no objections to the recommendation.
- **#4507 – IRS Web-site Home Page** – Dave indicated he tested the web-site and had no problem navigating the system. Based on this information, the sub-committee made a recommendation to drop the issue. There were no objections to the recommendation.

Sub-Committee B – Sandy Finestone

Issues:

- **#4467 – TAS Authority** – The sub-committee made a recommendation to drop this issue and send a letter to the taxpayer outlining TAS Authority. There were no objections to the recommendation.
- **#4487 – Tax Law-Child Support** – The sub-committee made a recommendation to drop this issue due to it being a legislative matter. There were no objections to the recommendation.
- **#4498 – Audits** – The sub-committee made a recommendation to drop this issue as they do not feel this is within TAP's purview. There were no objections to the recommendation.
- **#4502 – Walk-in Centers** – The sub-committee made a recommendation to drop this issue, noting this matter was addressed in the TAC report. They also put forth a recommendation that there be reference materials available in the walk-in centers for those with five or more applications. There were no objections to the recommendations.



Outreach – Sabby Jonathan

The outreach chart for January was reviewed and discussed.

Members were reminded that one-on-one discussions constitute an outreach event and should be reported each month.

Judi indicated anything members do where they are sharing information about TAP is considered outreach and should be reported as such.

Suggestions made regarding outreach reporting

- Sabby would like to see a comparison on the chart of what was reported last year vs. this year
- A breakdown of what portion of outreach is one-on-one vs. large group events

ACTION

Janice will work on incorporating these suggestions into the monthly chart.

Charles reminded members that they can send their information to Janice anytime during the month. Judi indicated it is her expectation to increase outreach by 10% for the year, which is part of her managerial commitments.

Suggestions for outreach opportunities

- Members were reminded to seek newspaper articles, speaking engagements where TAP is discussed, TV spots etc. constitute outreach
- Placing TAP brochures out in personal business offices
- Rebate checks have generated a lot of inquiries and provides a good segue to talk about TAP

MJ indicated Bernie would like to see everyone report outreach regardless of the number.

Sabby indicated he is developing an excel spreadsheet for reporting outreach which he will send to Janice for posting on TAPSpace for all to use if they choose.

Success stories – Wayne Whitehead attended Maria Shriver’s event, which was held in Los Angeles. The event was set up like a tax forum, which afforded Wayne the opportunity to walk around (speaking to more than 50 people) and hand out TAP material. Members were encouraged to look for these types of events where they could piggyback and promote TAP.

Member Comments/Other Business

Charles reminded members to complete the meeting assessment survey.

Wayne W. informed members if they have any issues relating to the TAC’s, they can be e-mailed to him and he will forward the issue to Sallie Chavez for inclusion in her monthly report to Field Assistance management.

John thanked everyone for their excitement regarding outreach and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 19, 2008



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
Area 7 Committee Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2008**

Designated Federal Official

John Tam

Attendance

Wayne Whitehead
Charles Davidson – Chair
Julia Ling
Rich Waterman
MJ Lee
Margaret Ferguson
Wayne Tanna
Howard Stahl
Dave Jones
Greg Gurse
Richard Coonradt

Guest

Former TAP Member, Gil Yanuck

Staff

Janice Spinks, Program Analyst

Absent

Sabby Jonathan
Sandy Finestone
Judi Nicholas, Program Manger

Roll Call

Roll was taken quorum was met.

Opening/Welcome/Announcements – Charles Davidson

John opened the meeting and Charles welcomed the members. John reminded everyone that the NTA Annual Report to Congress has been issued. Members were encouraged to review the document and use it as a bridge for outreach.

Charles stated no binding decisions could be made during this meeting because there was no Federal Register Notice filed for this particular meeting.

Joint Committee Report – Charles Davidson

Charles, MJ and Wayne were in attendance at the chair training. Following are highlights from the session.

TAP Director's Report

- The TAP Charter is currently in the renewal process
- Recruitment is scheduled for 3-17 – 4-30-08 (If you know anyone interested, encourage them to apply)
- TAP Recruitment Goals for 2008: increase diversity, shorten the new panel member approval timeline, and increase the depth of the member replacement pool
- TAP Annual Report should be out March 2008

2007 Key Events

- Improved the Annual Meeting
- Recruitment



- TAP Member Satisfaction
- Meeting with the Commissioner

2008 Town Hall Meetings

- 2-21-08 Alabama, 3-13-08 North Carolina and 5-01-08 Springfield Illinois

Other Items of Interest

- The Joint Committee (JC) is planning meeting in the spring with the Commissioner
- Hank Mosler is looking for pictures of TAP members in action as well as recommendations for key results
- The Communication Committee is drafting a new form to be used during outreach, which can also be used as a mailer for potential TAP issues. The final version should be out in a couple of weeks

Elevating issues

A committee is being formed to review all elevated issues. Members with good writing skills are being solicited to work on the review process. Anyone interested can contact Charles. Charles invited everyone to attend JC meetings. If interested, let Charles know so he can ensure your name is included on the list to receive pre-read materials.

The meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month @ 2:00 p.m. (ET). Hank wants to implement a meeting satisfaction survey. Charles will be sending a copy of the survey via e-mail and asked that everyone take a moment to respond.

Area 7 Final Report – Wayne Whitehead

Wayne indicated there was a change in the report format. The accomplishments for Area 7 are based primarily on outreach activities. There were some good successes, which included the Tax Forum in Anaheim. Wayne indicated the Congressional Seminars were another way to make contact with the public.

Wayne indicated issue #707-4091 (Tax Forms Information Poster) is a good example of how a one-on-one conversation turned into an issue, was sent forward and was ultimately accepted by the IRS. Wayne encouraged members not to discount this type of outreach and be mindful that they can be productive in soliciting issues.

EITC Day – Charles Davidson

Charles referenced the e-mail Bernie sent to all panel members regarding the EITC Day. Bernie and his staff are trying to coordinate with the TAP offices to have members go out on IRS sponsored events. There are approximately 30-40 events nationwide being scheduled throughout the year. If anyone is interested in participating, you may contact Susan Gilbert or Charles to volunteer. They will coordinate the responses and let members know of the specific dates, times and locations of the events.

Over Site Board Participation – Charles Davidson

Charles indicated Hank Mosler has been invited to appear on a panel discussion for the IRS Oversight Board. This is a board that governs IRS and the panel discussion will focus on how IRS can reach out to taxpayers.

Anyone with ideas on how the IRS can reach people in new and innovative ways can let Charles know and he will send the information to Hank. This meeting is to take place within the next two weeks. Any ideas you may have should be sent to Charles as soon as possible.

Suggestions made

- Margaret made a suggestion to pursue those at the high school level
- MJ further suggested continuing at the Jr. and college level as well



- Gil Yanuck suggested an article be placed in high school newsletters and perhaps offer an after school event.

Wayne indicated Mark Paris, Communication Committee Chair is looking for new and innovative ways to improve awareness of TAP as well. Any ideas in this area can be submitted to that committee.

Sub-Committee A – Dave Jones

No issue recommendations were made during the last meeting; however there was good discussion about each issue, which will be discussed during the sub-committee's February meeting. The sub-committee will focus on spending more time reviewing issues before making recommendations to drop an issue.

Sub-Committee B

Due to unavailability of several members, this sub-committee cancelled their January meeting.

Sub-Committee Meeting Guidelines – Charles Davidson

Charles expressed concern that both sub-committees did not have adequate participation for their meetings. Charles stressed this is where the work gets done and it is important to have these meetings. In light of this Charles opened discussion for members to weigh in on how to get work done if members are unable to attend a meeting.

Suggestions made

- If a member knows they can not attend a meeting, he or she should send information to the sub-committee chair prior to the meeting
- Dave suggested members write down comments about each issue prior to the meetings as a way of being prepared for discussion
- Prior to sub-committee meetings review all research reports and write down what thoughts you may have to refer to during the meeting and if not able to attend the meeting members would send their comments to the chair.

DECISION: If you know you will miss a meeting, send your sub-committee chairs any information you want to be considered in relation to a particular issue.

Richard Waterman indicated it was his understanding that he is on Sub-committee A and will serve as the back-up chair.

ACTION: Janice will confirm this and update her records to reflect the proper committee for Richard W.

Outreach – Charles Davidson

Charles confirmed that there was no solicitation for December outreach. Members were advised to send any December outreach events with January's report.

Janice reminded members that she will send the applicable outreach reporting document at the end of the month.

Charles encouraged members to think seriously of setting personal goals and commitments for outreach for 2008 and to ensure it is reported it timely and accurately.

Member Comments/Other Business

Charles indicated there will be several opportunities available for members to excel. For instance, serving on the Annual Meeting planning committee, the recruitment committee, and the metrics committee, which MJ will be overseeing.

There will be more detailed information about these opportunities in the weeks ahead.

Charles indicated Hank would like all members to update their bios on TAPSpace by the end of this month.



Janice indicated Press Releases for new members can go out as soon as the National Press Release has been released. It is expected that will take place this week.
John Tam thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting.

Next Meeting: February 20, 2008 2:00 pm (PT)