



2002 Meeting Minutes Joint Committee

- December 17, 2002
 - November 19, 2002
 - October 22, 2002
-

Joint Committee Teleconference Minutes

December 17, 2002

Members present:

- David Meyer for Mary Balmer
- Mary Lou Beyreis
- Phil Bryant
- Mario Burgos
- Justin Doucette
- Walter Fish
- Gwen Handelman
- Ed Hanna
- Ann Junkins, Designated Federal Official
- Chris Lowe
- Sandy McQuin, Program Manager
- Paul Nagel
- Tom Seuntjens, Chair
- Leonard Steinberg
- Charles Taylor (joined conference late)
- Lillian Woo
- Barbara Toy, Note taker

Members Not Present:

Bob Meldman

Quorum: 14

All members did not receive Monthly Committee Reports early enough to preview before teleconference. The reports show as activity increases more issues will arise and prioritizing of the issues will be more important. Two of the reports had action items for the Joint Committee on how issues will be brought forward and handled by the Joint Committee. In the future, items listed as action items for the Joint Committee will be added to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

Handelman questioned how the activity of distributing the Issue Capturing form and discussion in the committees was stated in the minutes. Seuntjens explained that the fear of an issue being lost was likely to happen in an issue committee when the issue does not fit within the parameters set by the IRS program owners. So, Area chairs were responsible for distributing the form initially but all chairs



should remind their members to complete the form so the issue is brought to their area committee and not lost. The wording of these and two others were added to the minutes and the minutes were then accepted as final.

Hanna asked how we insure issues come to fruition and Seuntjens replied that the form would be used to bring the issue to an Area. After discussion in the Area and possibly forming a subcommittee to do further analysis of the issue, the issue could be sent to the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee assesses the value and prioritizes the issues and then decides the best avenue to elevate to the National Taxpayer Advocate for the Report to Congress or to an IRS Program Owner.

Steinberg asked how different committees could avoid duplication of issues. Seuntjens replied that this was one reason for the Monthly Summary Reports and that the staff would also be providing reports that would categorize the issues and show which were active, or in parking lot. Staff will also research to determine if other committees are working the same or similar issue and share their research and analysis. But, it is possible for more than one area to work different aspects of the same issue.

Face to Face May 2 & 3 meeting location

Washington D. C. was the first choice for location of the May 2 and 3 meeting, Chicago the second. Seuntjens invited comment about the location of the meeting. It was generally felt that although it was not convenient for members traveling from the West Coast, the access to IRS officials and technical experts legitimated the D.C. location.

Seuntjens felt part of the meeting should be learning about the IRS because it is important for the chairs to understand the IRS and position on issues. Handelman asked if someone would be available for a discussion on staffing and other resources for funding teleconferences, outreach, and meetings. Junkins replied that the Director and/or the National Taxpayer Advocate would be available to talk about resources and budgeting issues. Steinberg expressed interest in having the legislative liaison attend the meeting and Meyers suggested someone from the office of Tax Policy of the Treasury who assists the IRS in writing regulations and tax policy and also assists in drafting legislation. Junkins will assist in obtaining speakers on the budget and legislative issues. Chairs should use the time before our next meeting in January to decide what other issues or who else should be invited to meeting.

Action: Inform Toy of your thoughts on this.

The meeting will be held all day Friday and Saturday morning. Travel should be on Thursday or early on Friday and after the meeting, Saturday afternoon.

Discussion of possible meeting locations ensued and McQuin reminded everyone that the meeting is open and has to be accessible to the public.

Self-assessment report form

This form is only the first draft. Each committee should review its goals and prepare an annual report for the Joint Committee. The joint committee will use the reports and prepare its own self-assessment for a final report to the IRS and National Taxpayer Advocate. Action: All chairs should send comments about modifications and other input about the self-assessment form to Toy prior to the January Meeting.

Speaker Request and Report & Capturing issues forms

The purpose of the speaker request form is to communicate to the TAP members the outreach of the panel either for their area or for their issue committee and also will be used by the program managers to approve the expense. The speaker or panel member that performs the outreach will complete the report part of the form. The form is also used for tracking the different types of outreach and should be used even if there are no expenses to approve. The tracking will help us better focus our outreach efforts and will also be helpful in preparing our annual report. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Issue



form should be completed and a copy sent with the Speaker Report portion if issues arise from the outreach.

Handelman questioned why the Issue form would be sent to the Area Committee if not geographic in nature and why not directly to the Joint Committee for prioritization. If the issue arises in the issue committee but doesn't fit the program owner's parameters, the issue may fit better into another issue committee or not be raised by any one particular area. Handelman will send more of her thoughts on this issue to Seuntjens for consideration. Actions: the issue forms should be distributed to all members by the Area chairs. All members will send the completed forms to their Area Analyst who will perform preliminary research and analysis on the issue and report on the issue at the next area meeting.

Toy will send out draft copies of the reports that will be generated from the databases prior to the January meeting.

Central Location for Records

Members have trouble with attachments received by email--duplicates from more than one staff member, difficulty in downloading, and locating needed forms and records timely. Toy reported that a central location on the Internet including a Web forum was in the formation process and should be available to all members sometime in January 2003.

TAP message products (presentations)

McQuin reported on the message products that were developed and needed a few updates before they were finalized. There is one power point presentation that can be adapted for different types of outreaches and purposes--handouts, talking points, overheads, etc. The presentation contains a template page, which allows each member to personalize the presentation. McQuin thanked the committee members especially Justin Doucette who agreed to modify his original presentation for the entire panel. **Action:** McQuin will send the presentation to all chairs, the chairs should send their comments on the presentations back to McQuin, and final products should be available by January 6, 2003. Fish could not open power point attachment so McQuin will mail paper copy to Fish.

Seuntjens also thanked committee for their work on the message products. Lowe also expressed that the presentation was awesome and asked if there was any discussion of updating the Florida CAP's video. McQuin replied that the cost to do so was very prohibitive but that phase 2 of the message product's committee was to develop a continuous loop power point.

Travel, phone, and calling cards

Junkins reported that government phone cards would be issued to most members by mid-January and to the remainder by late January. Travel cards will not be issued. Airline and other carrier travel will be handled the same manner as it was for orientation and the interviews. Methods for paying for lodging were being looked into and IRS is close to finalizing what method will be used. McQuin stated the calling cards should be delivered by the end of January.

National Office Report

Junkins reported Deryle Temple has been selected as the new director of TAP and will report on January 6, 2003. She is currently the Area Director of Taxpayer Advocate Service in the North East and New York Area and has been with the IRS since 1983. Temple will serve as the Designated Federal Official for the Joint Committee and will be present at the January teleconference.

Junkins reminded the joint committee that face-to-face meetings are not a requirement for the Issue Committees. Each Area is required to hold a least one face-to-face meeting to gather citizen input. The meetings should be open, the public invited and in an easily accessible location.



Junkins also reported that a new process for posting Federal Register notices has been established and the problem of notices posting late has been resolved.

Seuntjens noted that not all chairs had completed their calendar for the first year and stressed the importance of scheduling meetings especially for the areas to reach the grass roots so the meetings can be budgeted. Steinberg mentioned that face-to-face meetings were also important for issue committees to meet with the program owners, work the issue, and perform outreach to the public. Seuntjens replied that face-to-face issue committee meetings were not necessarily being discouraged but each should decide what would make their committee effective and maybe your committee doesn't need one. Fish mentioned that the cheapest place was not necessarily the most effective. Junkins stated that we should be cautious about the perception we create when meetings are held in "resort" locations during the height of the season.

Miscellaneous

Junkins read the proposed holiday message proposed by Seuntjens and the staff. It was approved and will be sent out to all members by December 20, 2002.

Junkins mentioned that during the Holidays many of the TAP employees will be taking leave and with James McGurn taking another position, TAP staff may not be able to respond as quickly as in the past.

Seuntjens and the TAP staff are working on an orientation highlights conference call for the members that were not able to attend the October orientation. The calls are tentatively scheduled for January 9 and 16, 2003.

Seuntjens mentioned the difficulties of running meetings by conference call and that he and the staff put together guidelines of conference call etiquette that will be sent out to all chairs by December 20, 2002. All chairs should get comments back to Toy on these guidelines.

Close

Happy Holidays were wished to everyone.

Junkins mentioned this was her last teleconference as DFO and that she was returning to her original job in Labor/Management Relationships.

NEXT MEETING: January 21, 2003 Conference Call 1:00 p.m. ET

ASSIGNMENTS:

Toy

- Add items listed as action items for the Joint Committee on the Monthly Committee Reports to the agenda.
- Report on suggestions on agenda topics and possible speakers for the May meeting.
- Send out draft copies of the reports that will be generated from the databases prior to the January meeting.
- Send out Holiday message to all members by December 20, 2002.
- Send out guidelines of conference call etiquette to all chairs by December 20, 2002.

All Joint Committee Members

- Junkins will assist in obtaining speakers on the budget and legislative issues. Chairs should use the time before our next meeting in January to decide what other issues and possible



speakers should be included in the May meeting. Inform Toy of your thoughts prior to the January teleconference.

- Send comments about modifications and other input about the self-assessment form to Toy prior to the January Meeting.
- Send comments to McQuin about message products after receipt.
- Comment back to Toy on guidelines of conference call etiquette.

Junkins

- Assist in obtaining speakers on the budget and legislative issues.

Handelman

- Send more of her thoughts on capturing issues to Seuntjens for consideration.

McQuin

- Send out draft presentation, solicit their comments, and prepare final draft prior to January 3, 2003.
- McQuin to mail paper copy of presentation to Fish.

Area Chairs

- Distribute the blank Speaker Report and Request and issue forms to all members.
- Inform all members to send completed issue forms to their area analysts who will perform preliminary research and analysis on the issue and report on the issue at the next area meeting.



Joint Committee Teleconference Minutes

November 19, 2002

Members present:

- Mary Balmer
- Mary Lou Beyreis
- Mario Burgos
- Justin Doucette
- James Grimaldi for Walter Fish
- Gwen Handelman
- Ed Hanna
- Ann Junkins, Designated Federal Official (first half hour of call)
- Chris Lowe
- Chris Lowe for Charles Taylor
- Sandy McQuin, Designated Federal Official (second half of call)
- Bob Meldman
- Paul Nagel
- Tom Seuntjens, Chair
- Lillian Woo
- Barbara Toy, Note taker

Members Not Present:

- Phil Bryant
- Leonard Steinberg

Quorum: 13

After a discussion of quorum and voting privileges of proxies, it was decided by no objections that proxies would have binding voting privileges. In addition, vice chairs would be the first proxy of choice and if not available, a substitute should then be designated. Chairs should notify Toy of substitutions.

Action item: Toy will modify operating procedures to reflect voting privileges of proxy.

Approval of Minutes

The draft minutes from November 19, 2002, were accepted as final after motioned by Lowe and seconded by Beyreis.

Monthly Reports

The ending date for the monthly reports due the 14th of each month is the end of the previous calendar month. Reports should be sent to Toy who will consolidate and email to entire joint committee. Beyreis noted confusion that "Read" in email subject caused and it was agreed that notation would be either "Action" or "FYI".

Self-Assessment Report

Seuntjens will put together a draft form for the self-assessment before next meeting. Toy will distribute to each member prior to next meeting.

April 15, 2003 Meeting

After brief discussion and no objections arose, the meeting scheduled for April 15, 2003, 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT was moved to April 22, 2002, at the same time.



Face to Face Meeting

Toy reported that travel cost comparisons for Chicago, Dallas, Denver, St. Louis, and Washington, D.C. The cost difference was negligible - less than \$200. Members of the Joint Committee should send their preferences to Toy on location of the meeting.

Getting Started Issues

Hanna suggested combining issue and area committee meetings in one location at same time to reduce amount of time panel members spend in travel. For example, if held over weekend, members would meet in the issue committees Friday afternoon and with their area committee on Saturday. Junkins expressed concern that this arrangement would defeat the purpose of having separate area committees. The intention of the White House and Treasury in the design was for areas to act as "listening posts" and interact directly with taxpayers in their areas. Holding a meeting in each area gives taxpayers an opportunity if they so choose to meet and present issues to the panel. It was discussed that prior experience from the Citizen Advocacy Panel (CAP) is that holding public meetings is not successful and other forms of outreach were more effective. Doucette and Woo expressed their preference of local area meetings and interest already expressed in attending the area committee's first face-to-face meeting if not too costly or inconvenient. Seuntjens' thoughts were the discussion brought out that committees were operating so differently that combined meetings rather than individual ones would not be preferable. Junkins stated that there was doubt combined meeting idea would be approved and issue was dropped.

(Junkins departed at this point in the meeting and McQuin became DFO)

Discussion then changed to meeting location preferences. Consideration should be given to travel time and staying away from the coasts would reduce travel time; locating meetings in airport hubs also makes travel more convenient. Consideration should also be given to locating meetings where access to resources and executives is more convenient. **Action items:** joint committee members should email Toy with first and second meeting location choices; Toy should check Nina Olson's calendar for possible attendance at joint committee meeting on Friday, May 3, 2002.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) budget has not been finalized so no decisions can be made on frequency and location of face-to-face meetings. However, it is best to schedule meetings and then cancel if it becomes necessary.

Action item from last meeting was for area chairs to contact previous CAP chairs and discuss issues. Doucette, Meldman, and Hanna have already discussed issues with the former chairs. Woo will contact and Fish not present to report. Next steps, area committees should not lose the issues that the prior CAP's brought forward, but should bring these issues forward to their area committees, address with their other grass roots issues, and prioritize.

Capturing Issues

Issue Committee members have expressed frustration with issues being too focused by the IRS program owners. All issues will be captured and none lost. Issues not dealt with in a particular issue committee should be brought to the area committee as a grass roots issue. McQuin agreed to develop system and form for bringing these issues to the area chair. A draft form that mirrors the database that will be used to capture all grass roots issues will be sent to the joint committee for comment. This form will be used for any issues raised that do not fit into the auspices of the issue committees or any issues brought directly to panel members through outreach efforts or other activities.

(Staff will capture issues brought to the panel through the web site comments, correspondence, and the toll free number).

Chairs should pass along to all the members that no issues will be lost and there is a system for capturing all issues.



Reaching Grassroots

Seuntjens noted members should not hold individual town hall meetings and should be careful to keep their outreach efforts in a somewhat controlled environment. Members should use their local taxpayer advocate as a resource to locate outreach opportunities to professional and other types of organizations. McQuin reminded members that their area analyst should also be utilized as a resource for outreach opportunities and that all outreach opportunities should be run through the analyst so there are no surprises for travel expense reimbursements.

There is a draft form for a Speaker Request and Report form. This is a multi-use form: Analysts will use to request panel member participation in an outreach opportunity, program managers will use the form to pre-approve outreach expenses, and panel members will use the form to report and comment on the outreach experience. **Action item:** distribute form to joint committee members for distribution to all members.

Speakers will be given a template for getting out the TAP message that they will be free to adapt to their personal style. Individual panel members and staff have already developed products. McQuin will head a team that will gather all the products review them and redistribute to area chairs. Area chairs should send all products to McQuin and name a representative from their area to be a member of the team. McQuin and team should have products available by mid-December.

Information Distribution

A decision was made that it is the area chairs responsibility to distribute information to their panel members. This will solve the problem of members receiving duplicate information from both their area and their issue committee and each area committee can decide how, when, and what information they want to receive.

Miscellaneous

Calling cards used for TAP purposes should be standardized. If official process delays issuing calling cards, a standard template should be used for all members. The preference is not to use personal telephone numbers and email addresses but to use the toll free number and the TAP web site address. McQuin stated that staff would make the necessary funds procurement prior to issuance of travel cards. After issuance, staff will continue to make travel arrangements to ensure they fit government travel regulations. **Action item:** McQuin will find out status of travel, phone, and calling cards and report back to joint committee.

There are still a few members (5) that have not passed the final approvals. As new members are added to areas and issue committees, Toy will notify the chair and send out updated committee rosters.

NEXT MEETING: December 17, 2002 Conference Call 1:00 p.m. ET

ASSIGNMENTS:

Seuntjens

- Draft self-assessment form before next meeting.

Toy

- Modify operating procedures to reflect voting privileges of proxy
- Check Nina Olson's calendar for possible attendance at joint committee meeting on Friday, May 3, 2002
- Distribute draft self-assessment form before next meeting



- Chairs should pass along to all members that no issues will be lost and there is a system for capturing all issues.
- Distribute Speaker Request and Report Form to joint committee members for distribution to all members
- Report on first and second preferences for May meeting on the December 17, 2002 teleconference

All Joint Committee Members

- Send first and second preferences to Toy on location of the May 2 and 3, 2002 meeting
- The Area Chairs will distribute the Issue Reporting form to their members. However, all chairs should Inform all other members that no issues will be lost and there is a system for capturing all issues.

Area Chairs

- Set up system of distributing information to all members
- Area chairs should send all products to McQuin and name a representative from their area to be a member of the team
- Distribute Issue Capturing Form to members.

McQuin

- Distribute form for capturing issues to joint committee for feedback
- Along with team, present TAP Message products to Joint Committee prior to 12/17/02 meeting
- Find out status of travel, phone, and calling cards and report back to joint committee.



Joint Committee Teleconference Minutes

October 22, 2002
1:00 PM EDT

Members present:

- Justin Doucette
- Gwen Handelman
- Chris Lowe
- Sandy McQuin, Designated Federal Official
- Bob Meldman
- Paul Nagel
- Tom Seuntjens
- Leonard Steinberg
- Charles Taylor
- Lillian Woo
- Barbara Toy, Note taker
- (Mary Balmer and Ed Hanna dialed in after roll call)

Members not present:

- Mary Lou Beyreis
- Mario Burgos
- Justin Doucette
- Walter Fish
- Ann Junkins

The purpose of the conference call is to establish standard procedures. The agenda for this conference call was sent in draft form; in the future, the agenda will list the discussion leader, expected outcome, and time allotted.

Approval of Minutes

The draft notes from October 10, 2002 were accepted with the following clarification. The Joint Committee will make sure the issue is ready to go forward. If it is not complete or is not nation-wide in scope, the issue can be returned to the area for further explanation or work. The joint committee can also assign an issue that is broader than any designated issue committee to the Ad Hoc committee who will work the issue with the program owner.

Old Business

The Joint Committee quorum was originally set at ♦; after discussion; the quorum was amended to nine members.

Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Guidance

The TAP Guidance document describes each committee and the responsibilities of chairs, vice-chairs and panel members. Each member of the joint committee should become familiar with the guidance document and in particular the joint committee's responsibilities on page seven, A through H.

Regarding issues broader than the current committee that the issue and area committees want to put into the National Taxpayer Advocate's and the TAP annual report; they should be brought to the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee determines whether the issue receives priority and will be assigned to the Ad Hoc committee, become part of the annual report, or sent forward to the National Taxpayer



Advocate for her report to congress. The Issues will primarily come from the area committees because the Issue Committees will usually bring their issues to the program owner directly; however, if the issues develop broader than the issue committee's charter, than the issue should be presented to the joint committee. The management and administration of issues and the distribution of the workload is the responsibility of the joint committee. The joint committee prioritizes the issues and chooses the issues that are included in the annual report to Nina and in-turn to Congress.

There was discussion on whether issue committees needed to bring the recommendations to joint committee. Recommendations are brought directly to program owner and summary of recommendations are given to joint committee. Issue committee could also send issue to joint committee to be included in annual report.

Self Assessment

The panel needs to complete a self-assessment each year. Each committee will need to do a self-assessment by next September. The joint committee will do the panel assessment at the October meeting. Seuntjens will put together a draft form to ensure consistent content for the self-assessment before next meeting. As part of the assessment, each committee should spend time setting expectations and steps to help meet these goals.

Schedule

The joint committee will hold a telephone conference every third Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. Eastern time, 12:00 noon, Central time, 10:00 a.m. Pacific time. Schedule for the first year is:

- November 19, 2002 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- December 17, 2002 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- January 21, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- February 18, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- March 18, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- April 15, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT (May need to be amended)
- May 20, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- June 17, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- July 15, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- August 19, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT
- September 16, 2003 1:00 p.m. ET, 10:00 a.m. PT

The first joint committee face-to-face meeting will be held May 2 and 3, 2003; time and place to be determined on next teleconference. A second face-to-face meeting prior to the October annual meeting will be determined later.

Ground Rules

The joint committee established as part of its ground rules that agendas, minutes, and reports would be distributed by email. The joint committee generally accepted the operating procedures, behavior during and between meetings as written.

Monthly Committee Reports

Each area and issue committee chair will need to provide a one-page monthly summarized activity report to the joint committee. Seuntjens will provide the monthly report content format. The report will be due the 14th of each month and should be sent to Toy for consolidation and distribution to the Joint Committee. This report will contain a summary of issues and their status. The joint committee will use these reports as a discussion document and in the prioritization process as well as a method to keep each chairperson and their panel members informed of the open issues that are on the table.



Citizen Advocacy Panel (CAP) Chairs

Chairs of the area committees where a CAP chair resides should contact the former chair to discuss open issues. The former chairs should also be invited to participate in initial area meetings to provide continuity. Area1 Chair, Walter Fish will contact the Metro New York CAP chair. Area 3 Chair; Ed Hanna will contact the Florida CAP Chair; Areas 4 & 5 Chairs Bob Meldman and Lillian Woo will contact the Midwest CAP Chair; and Area 6 Chair, Justin Doucette will contact the Pacific Northwest CAP chair. The program analyst for the area will facilitate the contact.

Chair's Responsibilities

It is the chair's responsibility to maximize the input from each member--some prefer to be more silent contributors. The chair has the responsibility to get everyone's participation and especially on conference calls it is important to ask for input specifically by name. On conference calls, test for consensus by asking each member by name.

Open Meetings

Any time issues are discussed and a quorum of committee members is present, the meeting has to be open and notice of the meeting should have been posted for at least 14 days in the Federal Register. Remember the definition of "open meeting" under FACA does not mean you have to accept oral comments from the public. It is the committee's choice to accept oral comments or not. Written comments must be accepted under FACA and you can choose to read into minutes, attach to minutes, or to make other reference to the comments in the minutes. It is good policy to allow some time at the end of each meeting to allow for public comment.

NEXT MEETING: November 19, 2002 Conference Call 1:00 p.m. ET

ASSIGNMENTS:

Seuntjens:

- Draft self-assessment content format.
- Draft Monthly Report content format

All Joint Committee Members:

- Monthly Report due the 14th of each month starting with November 14, 2002, send to Barbara Toy

Fish, Hanna, Meldman, Woo, and Doucette

- Contact CAP chairs