

2012 Meeting Minutes Return Processing Delays

- November 6, 2012
 - October 2, 2012
 - September 4, 2012
 - August 7, 2012
 - July 3, 2012
 - May 31 – June 1, 2012
 - May 1, 2012
 - March 6, 2012
 - February 7, 2012
 - January 3, 2012
-

Taxpayer Advocacy Panel W&I Project Committee Return Processing Delays Meeting Minutes November 6, 2012

Designated Federal Official

- Patti Robb, Acting TAP Program Manager

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- William (Doug) Christopher
- Jeffrey Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-chair
- Harry Eng
- Barbara (Basha) McCrumb
- Eboni Moss

Staff

- Deborah Momon-Townsend, Program Analyst, W&I
- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst, W&I CAS Program Coordination & Support
- Sherri Sneed, Program Analyst, W&I CAS Program Coordination & Support
- Tiffany Todaro, Acting TAP Director
- Janice Spinks, TAP Analyst
- Nina Pang, TAP Analyst
- Kymberly Maine, TAP Secretary



Absent

- Laurie Chivers
- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Ann was not on the call. Patti opened the meeting. Kymberly took roll and quorum was met.

Members of the Public

No members of the public were on the call.

TAP Director Comments

Tiffany thanked the committee members for their time and service and acknowledged the retiring members, Mark, Karie and Eboni. She spoke about the upcoming TAP year, the new member selection and how new issues will be researched.

Approve October Meeting Minutes

The Committee approved the October 2 meeting minutes.

Joint Committee News

Mark provided an update from the last Joint Committee call:

- The IRS Commissioner Shulman is leaving at the end of the week; Deputy Commissioner Steven Miller will be acting commissioner until a new commissioner is selected.
- The TAP new member selection packet is currently with the commissioner's office.
- The new elected TAP chair and vice-chair are Rich Bilancia and Colleen Hitchcock.
- Mark reminded first and second year members that when they go to their new committees in December, please consider volunteering for a chair or vice-chair position.
- Survey for retiring and returning members, Mark stressed the importance of providing feedback.
- Committee chair report, Mark will be writing his committee chair report. He would like members to provide input regarding issues and activities.
- Four recommendations were reviewed by the Joint Committee

Review Referral

Karie summarized the referral, issue #25823 (Age 65 – Standard Deduction). The Committee will provide approval and/or feedback through email.

Action Item: Nina will email the referral to all committee members, requesting a response back.



Subcommittee Reports

Temporary Credits

Karie thanked the subcommittee and IRS staff for the extra meetings and information so they could write up their referral.

Communications

Harry thanked the subcommittee members for their participation during the year. Their initiative did not result in sending anything forward to the IRS.

Procedural Processing Delays

Jeff thought their subcommittee worked some good issues, he provided a summary of the issues their subcommittee worked. It was determined, however, that the principal issue being considered (concerning notification provided to taxpayers upon the receipt of Form 1040-X by the IRS) would be resolved by the IRS in the near future.

Mark asked all the subcommittee leads to provide him with a brief summary of issues/activities their subcommittee reviewed.

Outreach/Success Stories

Chris was not on the call. Mark asked if members had any major outreach activities they wanted captured, please email him.

Action Item: Nina will send Mark the committee's outreach for the year.

Screening Committee

Laurie was not on the call. Mark indicated that there will be new screening procedures for next year, which was discussed during the October meeting.

Program Owner Comments

Debbie thanked everyone and indicated there will not be a Return Processing Delays Committee next year; she will be working with the Toll-free Committee next year and encouraged returning members to sign up for Toll-free. Deborah commended everyone for their work.

Miscellaneous Items

Janice, Nina, Eboni and Mark thanked everyone for their work and time. Patti thanked everyone on behalf of Susan Jimerson. She also reminded members to respond to the email requesting a project committee choice.

Action Item: Nina will email the November meeting minutes to the committee members requesting feedback/approval.



Closing

The meeting closed.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocate

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- Laurie Chivers (in part)
- William (Doug) Christopher
- Jeffrey Davine (in part)
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-chair
- Harry Eng
- Eboni Moss

Staff

- Deborah Momon-Townsend, Program Analyst, W&I
- Susan Jimerson, TAP Program Manager
- Nina Pang, TAP Analyst
- Kymberly Maine, TAP Secretary

Absent

- Barbara (Basha) McCrumb
- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

The meeting opened. Kymberly took roll and quorum was not met at that moment, but was met later. Nina announced that Chris may not be on the call. Deborah announced that Sherri Sneed had a conflicting meeting.

Members of the Public

No members of the public were on the call.

Joint Committee News

Mark provided an update from the last Joint Committee call:

- Training is planned for the week of December 3. It will include an overview dealing with the Local Taxpayer Advocates (LTAs), process flow and outreach. The training will coincide with the face-to-face meetings that week. Currently, there will be five committees for next year:
 - Communications
 - Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TAC)

- Notices and Correspondences
 - Forms and Publications
 - Toll-free
- There will not be a Return Processing Delays Committee next year. The Communications Committee face-to-face meeting will be held over two different dates, because of the amount of items to be included in that committee, the committee may be too large and may need to be held in two sessions. The face-to-face meeting locations will be broken down to east coast and west coast. The face-to-face meetings will be held the week of December 3 this year and will include training. This will allow all members to receive their training and information at the beginning of the year and allow them to have a running start. Susan provided an update for the upcoming face-to-face/training session scheduled for the week of December 3. The request has been sent out for approval for the meetings. The proposed sites are Oakland, California, Fort Lauderdale or Plantation and Jacksonville, Florida. The training will be interactive so members will be able to communicate with the trainers. There will be IRS staff and TAP members presenting different topics from the agenda on December 5. They took the feedback from the prior year and tried to adjust to the best they could based on the budget and provide a quality orientation session for the members.
- Yesterday was Meet the Candidates day. Members should have received an email from Steve Berkey, Mark encouraged members to vote, third year members are eligible to vote, even though they will not be on the panel next year.
- New screening procedures were reviewed and will be discussed in detail later in the meeting.
- Recruitment – we are awaiting approval.
- Three issue proposals were reviewed by the Joint Committee, including one from this Committee. Two were approved, the Adoption Credit issue and the Bankruptcy Compliance issue. The Decreasing Non-Filers issue, some changes need to be made, they are working on approving this issue.

Approve September Meeting Minutes

The Committee approved the September 4 meeting minutes.

Referral Update

The referral was approved by the Joint Committee.

Subcommittee Reports

Communications

Harry did not have anything to report, he was not at the last subcommittee meeting so they did not make much progress since their last meeting.



Temporary Credits

Karie indicated their subcommittee did not progress much either. Their speaker did not show but they did receive some information which allowed them to figure out they needed different and additional information. They have another meeting scheduled this Friday and will have two subject matter experts on the call.

Mark added that they only have a month to go and the subcommittees need to determine whether they can get an issue written and submitted in that short time to the Joint Committee.

Action Item: Subcommittees need to decide whether they have an issue to work. Harry mentioned that he will contact his subcommittee members to discuss their next steps. Nina indicated she would have the notes typed up for the Communications subcommittee call later that day

Mark informed that since this committee would not be around in 2013, but if there was a referral in the works, they could refer it to the Joint Committee for placement and it could be reviewed by a new committee. Eboni agreed, if there was an issue with research and background information already gathered that if a committee completed their project and there was still time left, it may be possible for the committee to pick up their referral to work.

Outreach/Success Stories

The outreach person was not on the call and no one had any outreach success stories to share. Eboni reminded everyone to turn in their outreach sheets.

Screening Committee

Mark reviewed the new screening procedures. This will also be discussed during the face-to-face meeting and training session.

Program Owner Comments

Deborah did not have any comments but she did hope everyone got their recommendations together so feedback could be provided before the year ends.

TAP Org Chart

This was distributed during the Joint Committee meeting, Mark wanted everyone to see the relationship of how everyone stood in the TAP and Systemic Advocacy organization.

Systemic Advocacy Org Chart

Mark informed the Committee that the Systemic Advocacy organizational chart was distributed at the last JC meeting.



Annual Meeting

Susan provided additional information. They are still awaiting approval for the meeting, but TAP is planning like there is a meeting. The meeting will be the week of December 3. The actual orientation training day will be December 5. The meeting location will depend on which project committee members are selected for. Susan thought there should be an email coming out soon, requesting members to make their project committee selections.

Miscellaneous Items

Susan thanked the committee for their hard work on completing the referral timely. She thought it was a good referral and hoped for a good response from the IRS.

Closing

The next meeting is November 6. The meeting closed.



**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocate

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- Laurie Chivers
- Jeffrey Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-chair
- Harry Eng
- Barbara (Basha) McCrumb

Staff

- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst, W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Sherri Sneed, Program Analyst, W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Deborah Momon-Townsend, Program Analyst, W&I
- Darlene Fanning, Senior Tax Analyst, Systemic Advocacy
- Susan Jimerson, TAP Program Manager
- Nina Pang, TAP Analyst

Absent

- William (Doug) Christopher
- Eboni Moss
- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Ann was not on the call at the start of the meeting, so Susan opened the meeting. Nina took roll and quorum was met. Nina announced that Doug will not be on the call.

Members of the Public

No members of the public were on the call.

Joint Committee News

Mark updated the Committee.

- TAP wanted to create a newsletter to keep members more informed, frequency unknown at this time. They hope it will start next year.

- TAP Director assignment, Tiffany Todaro's acting assignment ended and Steve Berkey was offered the acting assignment. Things have changed and Tiffany is going to continue as acting director until a permanent director is selected.
- Virtual training for next year, the hope is this training will be conducted during the face-to-face meetings which will be held earlier in the year, the Joint Committee (JC) is working on this. This should help all the members and committees start up sooner and be more productive. Susan added the purposed date for the meetings will be the week of December 3. Rena wanted that date and they are working to accomplish this.
- Recruitment – the review process is in the works. The names of the newly selected members are being routed up. Hopefully, we should have our new members identified in November and assigned to their project committees before the December 3 meeting.

Approve August Meeting Minutes

The Committee approved the August 7 meeting minutes.

Screening Committee Update

Laurie provided an update. She had brought up an issue which the Screening Committee did not agree with, no envelopes provided for taxpayers. Mark said he would bring up the envelope issue at the next JC call. The Screening Committee is no longer meeting twice a month; it is now once a month. Laurie also mentioned that there was an adoption credit issue which should have been forwarded to this committee.

Referral Submission Timeline and Review Referral

Karie emailed the referral to members and they discussed the changes she had made. The Committee discussed making changes to Form 8453, *U.S. Individual Income Tax Transmittal for an IRS e-file Return* and including Form 8839, *Qualified Adoption Expenses* to the Form 8453 list. Karie made additional changes to the referral and emailed a new draft. Nina explained the timeline. The Committee wanted to submit their referral within 24 hours and they hoped the referral would be on the September JC agenda. After the JC reviewers complete their review, the Committee would like the document emailed out and they will discuss the comments through email, any major feedback should be directed to Karie.

Decision: The Committee agreed to forward the referral after reviewing this final draft and any comments from the JC reviewers will be dealt with over email rather than at the October full Committee meeting.



Subcommittee Reports

Communications

Harry reported their subcommittee met and discussed their new issue, expansion of electronic filing. They are in the process of evaluating the issue. Debbie mentioned that Nina had sent her an email requesting a subject matter expert (SME) to join their next call on September 28. Debbie has forwarded the request to Submission Processing and either she or Sherri will let Nina know who the SME will be.

Temporary Credits

Karie indicated she gave out incorrect information at the last meeting, their subcommittee did not receive any math error authority research but they are now researching the topic. In the next meeting or two, they should be able to determine if this is a valid issue for them. Nina informed the Committee that Darlene Fanning will be on their next subcommittee call to discuss math error assessment.

Outreach/Success Stories

Harry reported his participation at the Chicago Tax Forum on TAP's behalf. He noticed the confusion participants had with TAP and the Taxpayer Advocacy Service (TAS) and clarified the difference. He felt they touched a lot of people and will see what effect this will have in the future months.

Mark reported he will be attending the Long Island Tax Symposium in November.

Basha reported she attended a congressional liaison meeting in Delaware and thought it was a good networking opportunity.

Program Owner Comments – Debbie Awalt

- The new IRS.gov website is up and running. She encouraged everyone to go online and look. If anyone had any feedback, she wanted to hear about it. She also added that any saved favorites may not be available.
- The IRS phone system was down this morning due to a weekend power outage. She thought they were up now.
- Debbie will be out of the office for about a month or so and will not be on the October call. Sherri Sneed will be covering for her while she is out. If anyone needs anything, please send request it the same way as before, through the TAP analyst who will send it to Deborah, with a cc to Sherry and Debbie.



Election Procedures

Mark reported Steve Berkey sent out an email indicating any first or second year members interested in TAP chair or vice-chair, to apply. He explained the election process and encouraged members to apply.

Systemic Advocacy Org Chart

Mark informed the Committee that the Systemic Advocacy organizational chart was distributed at the last JC meeting.

Closing

The next meeting is October 2. The meeting closed.

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocate

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- Jeffrey Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack
- Barbara (Basha) McCrumb
- Eboni Moss

Staff

- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst, W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Deborah Momon-Townsend, Program Analyst, W&I
- Tim Shepard, TAP Analyst & Acting TAP Program Manager
- Nina Pang, TAP Analyst
- Kymberly Maine, TAP Secretary

Absent

- Laurie Chivers
- William (Doug) Christopher
- Harry Eng
- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Tim opened the meeting. Kymberly took roll and quorum was met. Mark announced that Harry will not be on the call.

Members of the Public

No members of the public were on the call.

Subcommittee Report

Temporary Credits

Karie went through all of Harry's comments and she recommended they reject all of his stylistic changes but thought the report should stay in the past tense to reflect the past policies as being problematic and so it does not sound like they are accusing the IRS of doing something they may have already changed. Karie went on to explain that Harry thought one of their claims was not factually accurate, found in the Background, Research and Analysis section, "Taxpayers who claim credits such as the Earned Income Credit are

required to submit documentation but are still permitted to submit electronic returns.” Karie tried to research this but could not find an immediate answer when she looked and will defer to Harry’s judgment on that. Karie provided possible changes. She thought after they wordsmith the document, it would be ready. The rest of the Committee agreed and thought the document would be ready to go.

Action Item: Karie will make the discussed changes and email the document out to everyone.

Approve May/June FTF and July Meeting Minutes

The Face-to-Face meeting minutes (May 31 – June 1, 2012) meeting minutes were approved. The Committee also approved the July meeting minutes.

Joint Committee News

Mark updated the Committee from both the June and July Joint Committee meetings:

- 29 new issues were reviewed from the Screening Committee
- Systemic Advocacy opened an ITIN project. TAP will no longer work any ITIN issues; they will all be forwarded to Systemic Advocacy.
- Joint Committee will no longer review the Screening Committee’s new issue recommendations. They found the Joint Committee was just echoing the Screening Committee’s recommendations. This part of the process, where the Joint Committee further reviews the issue was eliminated. The Screening Committee will continue to screen and make recommendations for each issue, decide which project committee to forward it to or place it in the parking lot. The Joint Committee will only be involved if there is a discrepancy, if the Screening Committee or the project committee feels the issue does not belong to TAP, then the Joint Committee will get involved.
- Screening Committee will notify the issue submitter, if contact information is available, as to the status of the issue. This will be done as soon as the issue is reviewed.
- Reviewed nine project committee recommendations and approved all, five from focus group referrals, three from Tax Forms and Publications and one from the Refund Processing Communication Project Committee.
- 2013 projects which were based on how taxpayers interact with the IRS, six project committee recommendations:
 - Tax Forms and Publications
 - Toll-free – phone contact
 - Communications – expand the use of electronic media, contact with IRS, use of email
 - Notice Clarity
 - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
 - Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC)

Each member of the Joint Committee wrote up recommendations for each of the six recommendations to be submitted to the IRS for review and acceptance. This will be submitted to Rena next week and forwarded on.

- TAP Virtual Training for new and returning members will take place at the end of the year. The Joint Committee discussed how and when it will take place. TAP will attempt to conduct their face-to-face meetings early, in either December and/or January. They hope to include the training during these face-to-face meetings. They plan to hold meetings for two or two and a half days instead of the one or one and a half day meetings. Project committee members will receive the same information at the same time, get a good understanding of their project and mission, so they are all start from the same point. Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), a new web-based interactive training system is being tested. Mark thought, the face-to-face meetings could be coordinated, interactive contact between the trainers and trainees so they will be able to ask questions. Outreach, what it is and how to do it, how to work issues, an overview of the IRS, TAS and TAP, mentoring and what the role of a member is, will be included.
- Social media – TAP is on Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn. When members are conducting outreach, please mention this. People can get information or submit issues this way. TAPSpace was discussed, whether it is needed with all these other medias available.

Program Owner Comments – Debbie Awalt

- New look for the irs.gov website. It was originally to happen by now, but was pushed back to end of August. The change should happen about September 1. It will have a new look and should be easier to navigate.
- Since the budget and resources are tight, the IRS is always looking for ways to send taxpayers to the web, instead of answering their call, if they can be assisted another way. The IRS added to a recorded message indicating if taxpayers want to make a payment with their credit card, they are referred to IRS.gov to find out more information. If they do get to an IRS assistor, the assistor will ask them if they have internet access and refer them to IRS.gov which would reduce the time on the call and allow the IRS to assist more taxpayers who are not on the web.
- The IRS is in the process of updating their internal manuals. This includes the instructions to the 1040 line.
- They received the referral from the Refund Processing Communication Project Committee; there were 21 recommendations in the package.
- Debbie also thought the Toll-free Project Committee's referral was on its way to Quality Review so she expected that referral soon. Debbie thought once the referral is submitted, they could have a response in a month or so. They hope to have responses to everyone prior to the end of the year since some volunteers will be retiring.

Screening Committee

No update provided, representative not on the call.

Review Parking Lot Issues/Consolidate Subcommittees

Mark asked the Committee to identify a new issue to work from the parking lot list.

Members thought most were individual problems. The electronic filing issue was discussed

along with the statistics which were part of the pre-reads. The Committee thought the IRS was working on trying to make the electronic filing system available almost year-round and they did not have any new issues to work. Karie thought the Committee could look at how quickly the IRS was working on the year-round electronic filing issue and how many prior years can be e-filed.

Karie informed the Committee that her subcommittee did have an issue, math error authority. They had received research since the face-to-face meeting but had not proceeded further. Karie believed this was a very controversial subject. The Committee decided to collapse the Procedural Processing Delays (PPD) subcommittee and the members join the other two subcommittees.

Decision: The PPD subcommittee was collapsed and Mark will join the Communications subcommittee which will look at the electronic filing issue and Jeff and Laurie will join the Temporary Credits subcommittee which will look at the math authority issue.

Outreach/Success Stories

Mark reminded members to contact their Local Taxpayer Advocate (LTA) and let them know that members were available to go on outreach events. Every LTA has an outreach plan for all their outreach events for the entire year. Mark also mentioned that he sent the TAP logo to some of his local legislative offices and informed them of the purpose of TAP and asked them to include this in their electronic newsletters. Nina also reminded members to turn in their outreach if they have not already sent it in.

Closing

The next meeting is September 4. The meeting closed.

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
July 3, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocate

Attendance

- William (Doug) Christopher
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-Chair
- Barbara McCrumb
- Harry Eng

Staff

- Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst; W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Darlene Fanning, SA Program Analyst
- Deborah Mammond-Townsend

Absent

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- Laurie Chivers
- Jeffrey Davine
- Eboni Moss
- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Ann opened the meeting. Kymberly took roll; quorum was not met.

Approval of Face-to-Face Meeting Minutes

Due to there not being quorum, the meeting minutes could not be approved. TAP staff will attempt to get approval via email. If this proves unsuccessful, they will be approved during the August meeting.

Program Owner Comments – Debra Awalt

Debbie noted the majority of returns have been processed and deadlines are being met. The Amended Returns are an ongoing process and they are working on getting the application on irs.gov where people can check the status of their amended return and also a phone application in Spanish and English. They continue to try and get people to move toward efile. With the new Modernized Efile System (MES) system prior year returns can now be efiled anytime during the current year. She anticipates additional forms will be added that can be efiled and the option to upload and attach PDF files will be added as part of future enhancements.

Joint Committee Update

No report provided; representative not present

Screening Committee Update

No update provided

Parking Lot Issues

Janice advised those on the call to review the issues to see if there are any issues that could potentially be rolled into a project.

Sub-committee Reports – Temporary Credits

Karie indicated she would work on updating the referral and get it sent out for approval via email.

Outreach Representative

No report provided; representative not present

Outreach Success Stories

No report provided

Miscellaneous Issues

Harry brought up a potential issue regarding foreign held assets. Karie advised him to write the issue up and send it to the TAP staff so that it could be added to the database. Harry noted it would take a couple of weeks to get this done.

Closing

The meeting was closed

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Seattle, WA
May 31, 2012 – June 1, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocate

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- William (Bill) Brayton
- Laurie Chivers
- William Christopher
- Jeffrey Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-Chair
- Harry Eng
- Barbara McCrumb
- Eboni Moss

Staff

- Susan Jimerson, TAP Program Manager
- Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst; W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Nina Pang, TAP Program Analyst
- Kymberly Maine, TAP Secretary

Absent

- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Don Larson provided an overview of the building's safety procedures and other relevant information for the out of town guest.

Susan welcomed the members and introduced the Designated Federal Official, Ann Logan. Ann officially opened the meeting.

Panel members and staff introduced themselves, sharing brief background information.

Joint Committee Update – Mark Bernstein

Mark provided the following JC update

- Final project referrals are to be sent to Russ Pool prior to being elevated to the IRS
- Issues regarding identity theft via outreach will not be worked by the TAP...the IRS has formed a committee in its criminal investigation unit to work these issues

- New issues coming in will not be sent to teams, rather they will be reviewed by the JC in July
- TAC surveys – any time spent discussing TAP during this process should be counted as outreach
- TAP Recruitment – the ranking process is done; solicitations are going out asking for volunteers to assist with the interview process...anyone interested should respond accordingly

Approval of May Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Review Project Timelines

Mark noted that the sub-teams will break out and hopefully each team will be able to produce a finished product.

Program Owner Comments – Debbie Awalt

Debbie provided the following observations regarding W & I

- The IRS had a successful filing season – there were some glitches in the system that caused some refund delays
- The IRS is using a new system to assist with return processing – modernized efile
- They are working on a ways to get more businesses to efile

Meeting/Project Committee Focus/Referral Process

Jeff Karie & Harry will serve as the QR team to review referrals prior to being elevated to the JC.

Laurie Chivers will represent the committee on JC QR team.

The committee took time to review the project development and elevation process document.

Outreach

Mark reiterated the importance of outreach in order to gather new issues. Members were asked for outreach success stories; the following were noted

- Eboni attended a tax forum where the National Taxpayer Advocate spoke; she was able to meet with Ms. Olsen and speak with her about the TAP
- Mark attended a congressional liaison meeting....

Mark reminded everyone to ensure issues are captured when conducting outreach of any kind.

Susan informed the committee that travel expenses need to be approved prior to attending any outreach events. Travel authorizations are being done by Kym. Relative information should be sent to her well in advance of travel taking place.

Mark reminded everyone to stay in contact with their Local Taxpayer Advocate. The acting TAP director wants to know if members have not had contact or been unable to contact their LTA.

Information was requested regarding logistics for the upcoming Tax Forums.

Action Item: National office staff will be asked to provide this information.

Subcommittee Project/Issue Focus

The subcommittee leads provided a brief overview regarding the status of their respective projects.

Temporary Credits – Karie indicated the team would be working on finalizing their draft referral. Information was requested concerning the actual cost of e-file vs. paper filing.

Procedural Processing Delays – Jeff indicated the team had some research to look through and would be making a determination on which direction to take their project.

Communication – Harry indicated the team had some research to look through and would be making a determination on which direction to take their project.

The subcommittees broke into their respective groups to work their projects.

Friday June 1, 2012

The members convened for the second half of the meeting.

Travel Vouchers

Kymberly provided an overview of the travel voucher process and the procedures for getting reimbursed. Travel vouchers were provided for the group to fill out and sign. She also passed out the expense form for members to record expenses for easier tracking.

The Temp Credit subcommittee presented their draft referral for review/approval. Some changes were noted...another draft was prepared and sent to the committee members

Sub-committee Reports

Procedural Processing Delays – Jeff indicated they dropped the 1040 X issue because the IRS is working on improving the process. They are looking at another issue which involves the possibility of electronic filing year round.

Debbie noted that Electronic Filing Year Round is still being pursued by the IRS; she will conduct research on this.

Communications – Harry indicated the group recommended dropping the issues they were looking at. After thorough examination, they didn't feel there was a set of recommendations they could make that would be cost effective. The group will revisit the parking lot and review the issues for a new project.

Temporary Credits – Karie presented the groups final draft for review/feedback. Discussion about the referral ensued; several changes were incorporated. The final draft will be completed for elevation to the JC. The group will explore Math Error Authority with respect to credits, specifically looking at how it's used in relation to credits.

Committee Quality Review Team – internal is sub-leads and for the JC it's Laurie Chivers

Program Owner Comments

Debbie noted that she will work with Janice in gathering all of the information requested.

Miscellaneous Issues

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocacy

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- William (Bill) Brayton
- Laurie Chivers
- William (Doug) Christopher
- Jeffrey (Jeff) Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-Chair
- Barbara (Basha) McCrumb
- Eboni Moss

Absent

- Harry Eng
- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Staff

- Susan Jimerson, TAP Program Manager
- Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
- Debbie Awalt, Program Analyst; W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Darlene Fanning, TAS Senior Tax Analyst, Systemic Advocacy
- Deborah Momon-Townsend, W&I Program Manager
- Nina Pang, TAP Analyst
- Kymberly (Kym) Hand, TAP Secretary

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Ann opened the meeting and Mark welcomed the members. Kym took roll and a quorum was met.

Approval of March and April Meeting Minutes

Due to there being no Federal Register Notice for the April meeting, the committee approved the March and April minutes.

Joint Committee (JC) Update – Mark Bernstein

- Mark indicated the acting TAP Director will be Tiffany Todaro. She is the Local Taxpayer Advocate from Oakland. Her 90-day detail will start May 6
- Recruitment for new panel members is well under way. As of the end of April there were 335 completed applications with over 400 still in process. The application

period is now closed. TAP staff will be reviewing the applications in Washington DC and interviews will begin sometime in June; members will be asked to assist in the interview process.

- The face-to-face meetings have begun. Mark reminded everyone to take photos during the meetings and any outreach events. We will not have a face to face annual meeting in December and these photos will be needed to populate TAPSpace and the TAP Annual Report
- Two items were sent out to members, a calculator exercise, and the annual survey. Please complete these so the results can be analyzed and planning can start for the December virtual annual meeting
- The Taxpayer Assistance Center surveys went out; 700 surveys were completed and are in the review process. The results should be out shortly. If any member has surveys or personal comments, please send them to Susan Gilbert
- There was discussion regarding the Screening Committee; specifically who should contact the issue submitter regarding the status. The JC will continue this discussion during their face-to-face meeting in July. In the meantime, contact will be made by the panel member where the issue originated. If the individual does not feel they can appropriately address the issue or feel uncomfortable making contact, one of the JC members will do so
- The Annual Report is being finalized; please send in your photos.
- The JC face-to-face meeting will be July 18 – 20, 2012, in Indianapolis

Subcommittee Reports

Temporary Credits – Lead, Karie Davis-Nozemack

Karie noted during their last subcommittee meeting, the group finalized some recommendations regarding the adoption credit; a preliminary draft referral has been prepared. They plan to finalize their draft at the face-to-face and if possible, present it to the full committee for discussion and approval so that it can be presented at the June JC meeting. The subcommittee also plans to look for their next issue during the face-to-face meeting and begin research as well.

Procedural Processing Delays – Lead, Jeff Devine

Jeff noted the group is continuing their focus on processing issues involving 1040X returns; specifically issues regarding long processing time, difficulty in obtaining status updates, returns and/or attachments being lost, or not being able to e-file their amended return. The recommendation they will be going forward with involves a computer-generated response upon receipt of the return. This would alleviate taxpayer stress and ease the IRS workload by not having to field calls until the normal processing time has elapsed. The subcommittee plans to continue their discussion and prepare their recommendation at the face-to-face meeting.

Communications – Lead, Harry Eng

Eboni reported on behalf of Harry, noting that the group has determined the direction for their project. Their focus is on communication with taxpayers in relation to identity theft and certain credits. The focus of their recommendation will be letting taxpayers know that

correspondence was received and when they can expect to hear from the service. They plan to discuss particulars of the recommendation during the face-to-face.

Final Project Submission

Janice polled the committee regarding final submission of the individual projects. Specifically would it be best to submit the recommendations as one or separately. This information was needed in order to determine if new issue numbers need to be assigned to each subcommittee in the database.

Decision: Since the topics are not related and may go to different areas of the IRS the committee agreed the recommendations should be submitted separately. Program owner Debbie Awalt agreed with the decision.

Outreach/Success Stories

Laurie noted she participated in the TAC surveys in a rural area and noted there was a lot of frustration because there was only one employee staffing the site. She shared the concerns raised via the proper channels. Bill mentioned he had a similar experience and will share the information as well.

Face to Face Meeting/Draft Agenda

The draft agenda for the FTF was reviewed. Janice noted changes were made to reflect the correct days of the meeting. Karie expressed concern about the need for the committee to reconvene after the subcommittees meet in their respective meetings. It was noted that adjustments could be made as needed during the meeting.

Action Item: Kym indicated hotel information was forthcoming.

Program Owner Comments

Debbie informed the committee to be aware of inquiries regarding college students requesting transcripts. Notices have been sent to colleges and they have agreed to accept signed copies of returns instead of transcripts.

Debbie noted the IRS had a successful filing season even with a reduced staff. They exceeded their level of service, the number of calls answered, their goal was 61 percent level of service and through March, they were about 67 percent level of service. The calls they were receiving were the more complicated calls.

Deborah informed the committee that all recommendations should be sent directly to her; she will control and send them to the appropriate business unit project manager. Different recommendations should be sent separately. Mark reminded everyone that the referral will need to go through the quality review process before being elevated.

Miscellaneous Issues

Mark informed the committee that he and Bill had a good conversation about mentoring. Karie and Laurie agreed to meet during the face-to-face meeting.



Janice asked everyone to send their requests for research so that everything will be ready when they arrive in Seattle.

Closing

Mark thanked everyone and closed the meeting

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocacy

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- William (Bill) Brayton
- William (Doug) Christopher
- Jeffrey (Jeff) Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-Chair
- Harry Eng
- Barbara McCrumb
- Eboni Moss
- Laurie Chivers

Staff

- Susan Jimerson, TAP Program Manager
- Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
- Debbie Awalt, Program Analyst; W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Nina Pang, TAP Program Analyst
- Deborah Momon-Townsend, W&I Program Manager
- Darlene Fanning, Senior Tax Analyst, Systemic Advocacy

Absent

- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Nina took roll; quorum was met. Ann welcomed everyone and formally opened the meeting.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Introduction of Seattle Manager

Susan introduced herself to the committee. Susan comes to the TAP from the Collection Function where she was a Revenue Officer Group Manager. She stated she is looking forward to working in the TAP and with the panel members.

Joint Committee Update – Karie

Karie reported on Mark's behalf. She noted that the majority of the call was spent discussing the new JC screening committee, ensuring they had a clear understanding of the charge before them. She stressed that it is very important that the JC Screening Committee is kept abreast of the issues that the subcommittees are working on.

Screening Committee Update – Laurie Chivers

Laurie indicated they have a lot of issues to sort out and have been diligently working on getting through them. They are also in the process of clarifying what their actual charge is for the committee.

Sub-committee Reports

Procedural Processing Delays – Jeff Davine – Jeff reported that the group will focus on processing delays contributed to 1040X returns. They received some information related to the numbers of returns prepared over a period of time; however, they need additional information. They also requested a Subject Matter Expert (SME) and a flow chart regarding the 1040X return processing procedures.

Going forward they will determine whether or not the 1040X issue is viable; if not, they will look at some of the other issues related to overall return processing.

Debbie indicated she sent the program analyst some IRM references and will work on securing a SME.

Communications – Harry Eng – Harry noted that his group's focus is on delays of responses from the IRS. They reviewed a template of interim responses taxpayers receive and have more information they would like the program analyst to gather. They will focus on delays caused by lack of acknowledgement by the IRS when documents are sent in and there is no reply from the service.

Debbie asked if they were looking at delays from Accounts Management (AM) or Underreported(UR)/Exam because there is a difference in the IRM sections. Harry indicated they are looking at IRM 21, which is from AM. Debbie noted that UR would have different guidance and advised the group to research those sections of the manual as well.

Mark suggested they look at the issues to determine which area they come from to focus research on that area rather than trying to address the entire IRS.

Temporary Credits – Karie Davis-Nozemack – Karie reported their group is working on processing delays in relation to the adoption credit. They received a wealth of information from the SME regarding the credit and they are in the process of digesting the information and will hone in on the path they are going to take at the next subcommittee meeting.

Outreach/Success Stories

Chris was not present to provide an update. Mark asked for success stories. None was reported.

Face-to-Face Meeting Update

Janice reported that the location for the meeting will be Seattle. Janice reiterated that Kymberly will take care of all travel arrangements and no one should take it upon themselves to make reservations. Hotel accommodations are still pending; information will be shared as soon as it is available.

Program Owner Comments

Debbie had no comments to offer. She reiterated that if there is any information needed please send requests to the program analyst.

Miscellaneous Issues

- **Tracking volunteer hours** – The tracking sheet was updated so that Outreach and Volunteer hours are reported on one document. Members are asked to submit the document upon request. It was explained that the reason for tracking the volunteer hours stems from ensuring everyone is properly recognized at the end of the year, which is done based on the number of hours spent on TAP related activities.
- Mark reminded members that the hours include time spent on conference calls, outreach, and any type work done for the TAP
- Mark reminded members that they are restricted from handed out TAP promotional items until further notice. The SpeakUp brochures and TAP business cards are the only items that can be used during outreach events

Closing

Mark closed the meeting and reminded everyone that the next meeting is Tuesday, April 3, 2012.

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocate

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- William (Bill) Brayton
- Laurie Chivers
- William (Doug) Christopher
- Jeffrey Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-Chair
- Eboni Moss
- Chris Petersen-Grosse
- Barbara (Basha) McCrumb
- Harry Eng

Staff

- Linda Rivera, Acting, TAP Program Manager
- Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
- Kymberly Hand, TAP Secretary
- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst; W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support
- Deborah Mund-Townsend, W&I Liaison

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Kymberly took roll; quorum was met. In Ann's absence (at the beginning of the meeting) Linda filled in as the DFO and opened the meeting. Mark welcomed the members.

Approval of January Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Joint Committee Update – Mark attended the first JC Meeting, which was more administrative in nature. The following information was shared from the meeting:

- The recruiting period for new members will be held 3-19 – 4-29; members are encouraged to recruit during outreach
- TAP is renewing its Charter...the current one expires 3-17. It will be submitted to Treasury for approval and will be in effect until 4-17-13
- Face to face (FTF) meetings for all Project Committees are in the process of being scheduled...all meetings are being held between April and June

- The Joint Committee meetings are scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of each month
- The TAP Quality Review process was discussed....committees are asked to ensure the correct form and format is being used for any recommendations being sent forward for elevation...the current form is on TAPSpace
- The Outreach Ad-Hoc Committee will have regular conference calls to keep abreast of what is taking place regarding outreach
- The Project Committees should begin forming issues, goals objectives to discuss at the FTF meeting
- Returning members will receive on line surveys to assess the on-line training sessions

Outreach Representative

Mark asked for a volunteer to serve on the outreach committee. The roles include assisting with collecting success stories, coordinating outreach efforts, and participating in bi-monthly meetings. The meetings will begin March 16 and will be held every other month after that; second Friday, 11:00 ET. Chris Petersen-Grosse volunteered to represent the committee.

Outreach Success Stories

Mark asked members to be ready to share stories of successful outreach events. He encouraged members to use a new logo that was created to publicize the TAP. It can be used to in local community outlets, newspapers etc. The Outreach Tool Kit also has letters that can be used to send to newspapers, congressional offices etc. There is also a list of media specialist that can be utilized for assistance in getting publicity in local papers.

Karie reminded everyone that outreach does not have to be formal; it can be simple, organic, or very formal....do whatever works for your style.

Mark noted he attended a Congressional Liaison meeting in New York. There was a presentation on identity theft. Mark brought back 3 issues that were given to the analyst to input for further review

Chris indicated she has been sharing information about the TAP while serving at VITA sites. No major issues have come up thus far.

Laurie noted she attended the EITC Awareness Day. One concern raised was that 20% of people who qualify for the credit end up not taking advantage of it because they are not aware of it. A suggestion was made that perhaps this is something the TAP could work on as a project.

Jeff noted that he attended an EITC tax practitioner seminar – he spent about 10 minutes discussing the TAP and had a few people that were interested in joining.

Mark reminded everyone to keep in touch with their LTA's for potential outreach events and potential venues to make presentations.

Outreach spreadsheet/tracking volunteer hours – Linda discussed the spread sheet and the need for tracking volunteer hours. Going forward the outreach and volunteer hour tracking sheet will be combined so all information is reported at once.

Sub-committee Reports

- **Procedural Processing Delays** – Jeff reported they met and their goal is to look into procedural delays. In reviewing the issues they thought one area they will focus on initially is 1040X. They will look at others but will start there. Research was requested by Janice in relation to the numbers filed each year. They will be looking for patterns, and the primary reason people file amended returns. Once all information is gathered they will review and determined what/if any specific areas can be tackled.
- **Communications** – Eboni identified issues from the list dealing with communications via correspondence. They want to look at the interim/stall letter policy and any other instances where other letters are sent that delay processing of returns.
- **Temporary Credits** – Karie shared information as to which credits they were concerned with and ultimately decided to focus on changes to adoption credits, which seems to be an area of great concern.

The members of the subcommittee also agreed to gather additional information related to problems with the adoption credit.

FTF Meeting Update – Kymberly indicated Otis is still working on location projections and should have information no later than the end of March. All meetings have been scheduled between May 30, June 1.

Linda indicated the new Seattle/Milwaukee manager has been selected; Susan Jimerson. She will report to the Seattle office February 27, 2012.

Screening Committee Update – Laurie Chivers

Laurie indicated they have met and there are several items that have been reviewed. Russ is compiling the results and they will revisit some unresolved issues.

Program Owner Comments – Deborah Awalt

Deborah indicated there are some good ideas on the table and she is looking forward to working with the groups. She reiterated that talking to people is the best way to gather information/examples regarding the issues being addressed.

Deborah indicated she received a list of inquiries from Janice and has a Subject Matter Expert (SME) lined up to discuss the adoption credit. She has asked for a list of questions/information the group would like the SME to address.

Miscellaneous Issues

Mentors – First year participants were asked if they would like to have a mentor



Basha indicated she has developed a rapport through her subcommittee, which is working fine for her.

Karie will participate in the next JC conference call on behalf of Mark as he will be out of the country.

Closing

Mark thanked everyone for their time and closed the meeting.

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
W&I Project Committee
Return Processing Delays
Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2012**

Designated Federal Official

- Ann Logan, Local Taxpayer Advocacy

Attendance

- Mark Bernstein, Chair
- William (Bill) Brayton
- Laurie Chivers
- William Christopher
- Jeffrey Davine
- Karie Davis-Nozemack, Vice-Chair
- Harry Eng
- Barbara McCrumb
- Eboni Moss

Staff

- Shawn Collins, TAP Director
- Linda Rivera, Acting, TAP Program Manager
- Janice Spinks, TAP Program Analyst
- Kymberly Hand, TAP Secretary
- Tim Shepard, TAP Program Analyst
- Debra Awalt, Program Analyst;
- W&I CAS: Program Coordination & Support

Absent

- Chris Petersen-Grosse

Opening/Welcome/Announcements

Ann opened the meeting and Mark welcomed the members. Kymberly took roll and a quorum was met.

Approval of December 2011 Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Review of SAM's Issues

There were a number of issues gathered from the SAM's database that relate to return processing delays. The issues were placed into various categories and the thought is to form subcommittees to review the issues per category. It was noted that the Home Buyers Credit and Power of Attorney (POA) issues will be eliminated from the categories; the IRS is aware of these issues and is working on addressing them.

Three subcommittees will be formed consisting of at least three members each to look at the categories, discuss the issues and come back to the February call indicating which issues are worthy of further review, if additional research is needed and or do we need the assistance of Subject Matter Experts (SME) etc.

Mark asked for three members to serve as subcommittee leads; Harry, Karie and Jeff volunteered. The issues will be divided between the three groups.

It was suggested that the categories be identified so that individuals could choose the subcommittee based on their interest in a particular topic.

Debbie reminded the group that there is another committee looking at Refund Processing and Communications. She asked that the committee keep in mind that there may be some overlapping of information. The Milwaukee office is handling that project and Janice will work with them to ensure they keep the projects separate and or share information as appropriate.

Karie asked if there were any other issues the members felt should be looked at. Laurie asked about the issues that are closed on the list; Mark indicated if we are looking at the project in general terms, all issues can be looked at initially. Harry suggested that while the homebuyer credit issues have been addressed, it is systemic and there may be other credits that come about that will cause delays and could potentially be an area of focus. Karie suggested a subcommittee that looks at credits. Mark agreed that the committee could look at the temporary credits and if the TITGA reports are available we could review them.

Debbie indicated TIGTA/GAO is looking at the adoption credit.

Bill noted that there were several 1040X complaints on the list. Mark indicated those will be addressed under general processing complaints.

Janice suggested the list of categories be sent via email and allow the members to select their preference; she will then form the subcommittees accordingly.

The categories that will be listed for members to choose from include:

1. Temporary Credits (adoption, FTHBC, etc) in Return Processing
2. E-filing of Returns
3. Processing Procedure & Delays (including 1040X procedure)
4. Communication w/ Taxpayers during Return Processing
5. SS#/ITIN/Entity Issues in Return Processing (including employment tax filings)

Action Items

Karie will send Janice a list of the various categories and she will send an email soliciting preferences and set up meetings accordingly.

Review RPD Flow Charts

Mark indicated the flow charts were sent out for information so everyone could get a general idea of the process. He asked if there were any questions about them. Bill noted there was not a flow chart for the 1040X process. Mark indicated the process is basically the same however, since there appeared to be some differences, Mark asked Debbie if she could provide a 1040X processing flow chart.

Additionally, those issues will be included in the general processing delay category.

Action Item: Debbie will provide a flow chart for the 1040X process.

Outreach Activities – Kymberly

It was confirmed that December and future outreach activities will be reported via the Project Committee staff. It was reiterated that there are no longer Area committees.

Kymberly advised the group of her expectations in regards to reporting the information. She will send an email with a spreadsheet asking for the prior month's activities, providing a deadline for returning the information.

Janice encouraged the members to keep this project in mind as they are out conducting outreach and to solicit examples/issues related to the project scope.

Action Item

Kym will send out the template for reporting outreach.

Face to Face Meeting Dates, etc.

Linda noted at this point the only thing we can do is set tentative dates for the meeting in early May or June. At this point we can not speak on locations; details forthcoming.

Action Item

Janice will send out potential dates for the meeting via email.

Mark asked Eboni about Joint Committee (JC) conference calls. Eboni indicated this is being worked out and the information will be provided very soon.

Program Owner Comments

Debbie indicated Janice will contact her regarding requests for information related to the project. Janice and Linda reiterated that no one is to contact the Program Owner directly for information; all requests must come through TAP Staff.

Debbie indicated there are no TIGTA reports available about the adoption credits as of yet, however, there are a number of reports on their website in relation to the homebuyer credit.

Karie encouraged the committee not to be shy about asking for research/information from the program owners, especially since the project is not being driven by them. It is very important that the committee takes advantage of their expertise.

Miscellaneous Issues

Linda asked the new members if they had any questions and o concerns.

Laurie asked if the information/training from the December All TAP Meeting had been posted on TAPSpace. Linda indicated they are still working on posting the information.

Laurie asked if members who are in the same state typically work together, i.e outreach events. Linda indicated that is certainly fine to do, however, any outreach events must have prior approval for any potential expenses that may need to be reimbursed.

Shawn welcomed the new members (William, Barbara, Christopher, and Laurie) and thanked them for taking time out of their schedules to join the TAP. She stated she is looking forward to working and getting to know each of them.

Shawn congratulated and thanked Mark and Karie for stepping up to serve as the Chair/vice Chair of the committee.

Shawn stated TAP is going through a transitional period, which is a good thing; however, in order for TAP to be a success; outreach is going to be an integral part of a successful outcome. She asked members to please be mindful to bring in grassroots issues via outreach for the JC to look at.

Shawn indicated she plans to be on each of the Project Committee calls and also plans to attend as many face to face meetings that she can.

The next meeting is February 7, 2012.

There was no public participation.

Closing

M ark thanked everyone for their participation. Ann officially closed the meeting.