



**Taxpayer Communications Committee  
Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 29, 2023**

**Designated Federal Officer**

- Susan Jimerson                      TAP West Chief

**Attendance**

- Melanie Almeida                      Sandpoint, ID                      Member
- Denise Besson                      Trufant, MI                      Member
- Michelle Brookens                      Taylorville, IL                      Member
- Candace Smith                      Mustang, OK                      Member
- Joanne Thurston                      Marietta, GA                      Member
- James (Jim) Wiseman                      Brentwood, TN                      Member

**Members Absent**

- Richard Bell                      Corpus Christi, TX                      Member
- Ruth Guyon                      Bellevue, NE                      Member
- Tracey Randall-York                      Ontario, CA                      Member

**Visiting Member**

- Eugene Lillie                      West Deptford, NJ                      National Chair

**Staff**

- Frank Bustos                      Acting, TAP Director
- Conchata Holloway                      TAP Program Analyst
- Hannah Jair                      TAP Program Analyst
- Rosalind Matherne                      TAP Program Analyst
- Matthew O’Sullivan                      TAP Program Analyst
- Annie Gold                      TAP Administrative Assistant
- Ann Tabat                      TAP Program Analyst

**Roll Call**

Annie Gold conducted the roll call.

**Quorum**

A quorum was met.

**Welcome and DFO Report**



Susan Jimerson opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the call. She introduced herself; the TAP Manager for TAP West and she provides oversight to TCC. She expressed how excited everyone is to get the year started. There is a lot to be done. She shared the following opening comments:

- The meeting is being hosted in Microsoft TEAMS for the visual and audio portion of the meeting
- Members who do not have access to Microsoft TEAMS can participate by calling the telephone number that was provided in the invite for the audio portion
- Members were asked to mute their microphones when not speaking during the call. Pressing \*6 to mute and \*6 again to unmute. This helps to block some of the background noise
- Members having questions were encouraged to use the raised hand option in TEAMS
- Meetings start and end on time to adhere to time constraints. Member consent will be obtained to extend the meeting if needed
- The TAP Staff is available to assist members
- Members have expectations of the Staff. There is expectation of the members to attend meetings, participate, take on tasks and contribute to complete projects
- Members can contact Jimerson by phone or email
- Conchata Holloway is always available to assist

A review of the agenda was shared.

### **National Office Update**

Frank Bustos thanked members for their attendance on the call and for their contributions to TAP. He expressed his appreciation for members who have been in contact with him on the Face-to-Face conference being held in May. He thanked them for their flexibility and willingness to attend the first half or second. It is important for all to meet. He added the combination of first, second-, and third-year members coming together and evolving with all the different experiences. He is looking forward to working with the committee.

### **Self Introductions**

Conchata Holloway, Program Analyst overseeing TCC welcomed members to TAP 2023. She introduced herself and expressed her excitement to work with the committee. Each member was allowed to introduce and share information about themselves. Lastly, the staff introduced themselves to the committee.

### **Meeting Procedures and Ground Rules**



Holloway stated the following meeting procedures and rules to assure TAP follows the FACA guidelines:

- All ideas and opinions matter
- Everyone's time is respected
- Meetings will start and end on time
- No interruptions, all members will be heard
- Sharing is welcome as long as one person does not dominate
- Respect is very important
- Methods of communication used: emails – make sure to send copies to include the [TaxpayerAdvocacyPanel@irs.gov](mailto:TaxpayerAdvocacyPanel@irs.gov) mailbox and Holloway. Telephones, fax machines – eFax, and MS-TEAMS. Bustos added the TAP National Chair rejoined the meeting
- Dr. Eugene Lillie welcomed members and shared brief information on what is expected for this TAP year. He believes each member would be able to submit over one hundred referrals to IRS. There are a lot of things out there when doing Outreach that Taxpayers are concerned about. There will be focus groups that will be informative and a lot of information from IRS will be received. Members were encouraged to put as much time into the program as possible and their efforts will be rewarded knowing they helped make the Service friendlier
- Telephone etiquette is very important. Members should arrive five minutes prior to the start of calls, when speaking always introduce yourselves
- Limit sidebar conversations. Respect everyone time
- Mute telephones when not speaking to cut down on background noises and distractions
- Participation is very important and needed from everyone
- Email etiquette requires not replying to all if it is not necessary
- Agendas are required and provided at all meetings. They will be posted on [www.TAPSpace.org](http://www.TAPSpace.org) and copies will be sent to each member within five days of each meeting. Pre-reads will be included will have the prior meeting minutes for the month, research done, responses received from IRS and the referrals. Members advised to write down any questions to be addressed during the meeting. Jimerson added [www.TAPSpace.org](http://www.TAPSpace.org) is an excellent resource for finding information. The link to [www.TAPSpace.org](http://www.TAPSpace.org) will always be included in the Pre-reads. Documents from the Screening Committee will not be included but accessible through [www.TAPSpace.org](http://www.TAPSpace.org)

- Quorum was established by TCC as one half plus one. Everyone is needed to make quorum, at least fifty percent plus one. Votes are not allowed without quorum. Participation is needed for the full committee meetings. Jimerson point out the By Laws state how quorum must be met prior to making a motion for approval. The fifty percent plus one will continue until there is a motion for change. Bustos agreed and added a member may recommend adjusting the quorum to change if needed
- MS TEAMS is another method of communication. It is an amazing tool that allows sharing of visuals and to work live. Holloway will share information for meetings once the dates and times are established. The conference line and access code will be the same and should be saved. The Ad Hoc meetings will have a different number. Pre reads and Agendas will be added on [www.TAPSpace.org](http://www.TAPSpace.org)
- [www.TAPSpace.org](http://www.TAPSpace.org) is TAP internal site where all TAP work is stored. Members needing assistance with the site should reach out to Holloway
- [www.ImproveIRS.org](http://www.ImproveIRS.org) is a historical site available to the public. Recommendations are submitted and is a good way to do research that is open to the public

### **So You Want to be a Chair**

Holloway opened the floor for any member to nominate or self-nominate.

Types of committee Chair positions:

- Project Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs, National TAP Chair and National TAP Vice Chair
- The Joint Committee is directed by the National TAP Chair and Vice Chair who are elected annually
- The TAP Chair is the Joint Committee's Chair and is elected by the entire TAP membership at the end of the year
- The TAP Vice Chair is the Joint Committee Vice Chair and is elected by TAP members at the end of the year
- Neither the TAP Chair nor Vice Chair may serve as Chair of any Project Committee. Jimerson added both positions are very instrumental to the program. The Chair represents the entire TAP membership. The Vice Chair is the lead of Outreach. They represent the body of TAP in presentations, meetings, administration of the program at the Joint Committee level. They make sure the referrals are ready before sending to the IRS.



Members will vote on the Project Committee Chair and Vice Chair during this meeting. There are leads for the sub committees. Members will need to decide who will be the lead.

### **Position Duties**

#### TCC Chair:

- Able to make additional commitment for the position
- Have strong organization and communication skills.
- Keep members engaged
- Ensure members understand the TAP mission, objectives and the activities of committee as planned
- Understand the basis of the FACA guidelines
- Responsible and is the spokesperson for the committee
- Represent the committee's interest and will be the point of contact for the committee, the DFO and communications with the TAP Staff on a regular basis
- Serve as the community representative on the Joint Committee and attends the Joint Committee meetings
- Advocates for the recommendations presented to the Joint Committee
- Communication with the National TAP Chair and Vice Chair
- Communication with committee members via phones, emails, etc.
- Communication with members who do not attend committee meetings
- Provide information in advance to members
- Help establish and maintain an optimistic view
- Link volunteer participation to the broader mission of the TAP organization
- Ensure members understand issues and background
- Listen to members
- Consistently attend meetings
- Show no favoritism
- Lead by example
- Be available for members
- Show appreciation to members and show recognitions often

#### Vice Chair:

- Assist the Committee Chair by assuming duties of the Chair in their absence
- Coordinate Outreach activities for the committee
- Focus on Outreach activities
- Provide Outreach training
- Participate in TAP Outreach committee meetings



- Coordinate and assist in writing the TAP Newsletter
- Lillie added the TAP Vice Chair, Angela Madison, the committee Vice Chair will have the support of all. They will not go into the position blind. There are a lot of support to help. He encouraged members to volunteer for a position

**Nominations:**

- Denise Besson – nominated for TCC Chair  
Voted and approved, **Congratulations TCC Chair, Denise Besson**
- Michelle Brookens – nominated for Vice Chair  
Voted and confirmation to be done during next meeting.

**Minutes Approval**

The Minutes for November 9, 2022, were approved as submitted  
Denise Besson motioned and second

**Meeting dates:**

- TCC Full Committee will be held on the second Thursday of each month beginning at 12:00PM, EST
- Subcommittee 1 will meet on the first Thursday of each month beginning at 12:00PM, EST  
Members: Michelle Brookens, Melanie Almeida, Candace Smith, Jim Wiseman
- Subcommittee 2 will meet on the first Wednesday of each month beginning at 12:00PM, EST  
Members: Denise Besson, Joanne Thurston, (members not present will be assigned to Subcommittee 2)

**\*\*\*Meeting extended ten minutes for completion\*\*\***

**Screening Committee**

Review new and interesting concerns from the Taxpayers  
Joanne Thurston, Candace Smith and Jim Wiseman volunteered for the Screening Committee

**Quality Review (QR)**

Review referrals prior to going to the Joint Committee  
Melanie Almeida volunteered to be on the QR

**Internal Communications Committee (ICC)**



Very busy and impactful committee. They work on the Newsletter, redesign to the [www.ImproveIRS.org](http://www.ImproveIRS.org) website, designed the cover for the TAP Annual Report, responsible for the administration of the TAP Facebook presence. Melanie Almeida volunteered

### **Review of Responses from IRS**

Holloway will assign the responses to the Subcommittees. Members were encouraged to review the responses and write down any questions to be address during the next meeting.

### **Action Items**

Holloway shared the following Action items:

- Forward approved November 9, 2022, Full Committee Minutes to Kevin Brown for posting
- Share meetings dates and times for recurring invites with members
- Send copies of TCC Rosters and spreadsheet with meeting times and dates to members
- Include the review of IRS responses and project committees for next meeting

### **Close**

The meeting was officially closed at 4:05PM, EDT.

**Next Meeting: Face to Face Meeting**

**These minutes have been approved and certified by the committee chairperson.**