

**Taxpayer Assistance Center Improvements Project Committee
Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 14, 2024**

Designated Federal Officer

- Susan Jimerson Designated Federal Officer

Attendance

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|
| • Jackson Bauzon | Los Angeles, CA | Member |
| • Shequeila Birdsong | Amherst, NY | Member |
| • Anthony Jackson Jr. | New Orleans, LA | Member |
| • Mary Lawler | Dearborn, MI | Member |
| • John Rodgers | Anchorage, AK | Member |
| • Richard Rodriguez | Stockton, CA | Member |
| • Jim Simpson | Phoenix, AZ | Member |
| • Berlinda White | Cheyenne, WY | Member |

Member Absent

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------|
| • Paulina Fernandez | San Antonio, TX | Member |
| • David Newingham | Henderson, NV | Member |

Visiting Member

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| • Debra Kurita | Fullerton, CA | National TAP
Chair |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|

Staff

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Shawn Collins | Acting, TAP Director |
| • Matthew O’Sullivan | TAP Program Analyst |
| • Rosalind Matherne | TAP Program Analyst |
| • Jose Cintron Santiago | TAP Program Analyst |
| • Kelvin Johnson | TAP Program Analyst |
| • Conchata Holloway | TAP Program Analyst |
| • Annie Gold | TAP Administrative Assistant |
| • Durdu Gulden | TAP Program Analyst |

Members of the Public

None

Quorum

Quorum was met.

Welcome and DFO Report

Susan Jimerson opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the call. The meeting was held in Microsoft Teams both visual and audio. A call-in line is also provided if needed. The meeting has been scheduled for two hours. An overview of the agenda was provided along with a few housekeeping procedures.

National Office Update

Shawn Collins welcomed everyone to the call. To the returning members, appreciation was expressed for a second or third year back with TAP. To the new members, assurance was given that they will have the best experience they have had. Members were advised to let the Staff know of any issues or problems. The Staff may not be able to fix everything but will do their best to make sure they are resolved. Appreciation and thank you were expressed to all. Collins is looking forward to working with each member through this experience.

Self-Introductions

Matthew O'Sullivan began the introductions with the members and Staff were given the opportunity to introduce themselves. Debra Kurita, TAP National Chair encourage ed members to put their name in for a leadership role and assured them the Staff and mentors will be there to assist them.

Meeting Procedures

O'Sullivan shared the following ground rules for meeting procedures:

- Everyone may share their ideas or opinions.
- Listen to each other and give each person the opportunity to be heard.
- Adhere to allowed meetings time. It is very important to start on time and end on time.
- Ground rules set an important foundation on how TAP is expected to work together and accomplish the mission.
- All members are expected to participate fully.
- Members are expected to work together.
- It is ok to disagree yet listen and respect each other.
- Members are advised to use the raised hand function on MS Teams if they have a question.
- Members are expected to share and avoid dominating the discussion.
- Address problems one at a time
- Stay with time schedule.
- Courteous to staff and each other
- Try and suspend judgement until everyone has been heard.
- Ok to disagree on comments or facts, the team works together as a collaborative team.
- Removal has been done. Usually when members do not show up or they violate some rules.
- Disrespect is not tolerated.
- Quorum is important. Fifty percent plus one is quorum.

- If members are unable to attend a meeting, they are asked to alert the Staff as soon as possible to make them aware of the situation.

Methods of communications

- Project related emails needs to be copied to Taxpayeradvocacypanel@irs.gov email box.
- Telephone calls and meetings will be held by using MS Teams
- External communication is subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) guidelines.
- Try to avoid cc messages to all.

Meeting etiquette

- Arrive five minutes prior to meetings.
- Identify self when on the phone so everyone will know who is speaking.
- Limit distractions and avoid sidebar conversations.
- Mute phones when not speaking.
- Always try and participate.
- Do not get discouraged.
- Your opinions matter.

Email etiquette

- Refrain from replying to all unless it necessary.
- Be respectful of others time and feelings.

Meetings will have an Agenda prepared, revised, and approved by the Chair and DFO. It will be shared prior to meetings along with the pre-reads or any reading materials needed prior to meeting. All meeting minutes will be posted onto www.TAPSpace.org if members should have problems retrieving the information, contact O'Sullivan and he will forward the information.

Quorum is half plus one. TAC needs six or more members to have quorum. Members were encouraged to participate and attend all meetings. Consensus is an opinion or position reached by the group. General agreement governed by consensus. It is vital to move committee work forward.

Recurring meetings will have the same conference call number and access code. MS Teams will be used for the conference calls. On occasions, a telephone number will be provided to call in to a meeting. MS Teams is the most used method.

Matthew O'Sullivan shared the follow information. TAP has its own website:

- www.TAPSpace.org is a private website for TAP. All documents generated by the committees are housed there. Documents from the Annual Report are kept there. Each committee has their own account where members can pull information from their committee documents. Some of the documents may contain sensitive information and will not be share through email but are posted on www.TAPSpace.org Also is where members must post the Activity Reports. This is important when doing Outreach activities. The hours are able to be tracked exactly what is being

done and the number of hours will determine what award type members will receive at the end of their term with TAP.

- O’Sullivan is one of the Administrators for www.TAPSpace.org when there are problems with the site. Currently, some issues are being worked.
- the public facing site, www.ImproveIRS.org public information about when TAP meetings will be held. Meeting minutes are posted there, a list of members by states are posted there, Taxpayers and members of the public can submit suggestions and issues for consideration for the improvement of IRS.
- The public facing website for the Internal Revenue Service is www.IRS.gov Both the Staff and members use information from this site to find data, make suggestions on how to improve the site to communicate better with Taxpayers, Taxpayers can set up online accounts. Members were encouraged to familiarize themselves with www.IRS.gov

So You Want to Be A Chair

O’Sullivan shared the duties and responsibilities of the Chair position:

- The Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the members of the committee.
- Types of Chair positions; Project Committee Chair, Project Committee Vice Chair
- There are two subcommittee that will have Subcommittee Leads
- The Joint Committee is directed by the overall TAP Chair and Vice Chair

Roles and Responsibility of the TAP Chair

- Ensure additional time is made for Chair duties.
- Have strong organizational and communications skills.
- Be able to engage with members of the committee.
- Ensure members understand TAP mission and objectives.
- Ensure the activities are planned to achieve the mission.
- Gain a basic understanding of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requirements. Training will be provided.
- Effectively communicate with members and ensure members receive consistent information.
- Be the spokesperson for the Project Committee and represents the Committee interest.
- To be the point of contact for TAC Project Committee
- Acts as the point of contact with the DFO and communicates with Staff regularly.
- Serves as the committee representative on the Joint Committee.
- The Joint Committee is the governing body for TAP approving and forwarding projects by the project committees.
- Advocates for recommendations submitted by the committee and represents the committee best interest at the Joint Committee
- Provide input for the committee on projects with a monthly report and collaborate with other committees.
- Share information with members to understand TAP mission and goals.

- Help establish and maintain an optimistic view about TAP and its mission.
- Link volunteer participation to the broader mission of TAP organization
- Share Joint Committee decisions and information with the committee members and solicits their views on matters to be addressed by the Joint Committee
- Encourage participation in Outreach activities.
- Keep all members in the loop.
- Circulate relevant documents.
- Make sure members understands issues and background.
- Promote member engagement.
- Listen to members and attend meetings, do not show favoritism and be available for members.
- Show appreciation, recognize achievements of members, and personalize the feedback.

Richard Rodriguez self-nominated for Chair. Jim Simpson moved. Congratulations Richard Rodriguez, TAC Chair

Roles and responsibilities of the Vice Chair

- Assist the Chair
- Assume Chair responsibilities when the Chair is unavailable.
- Challenge members to conduct Outreach.
- Focus on members Outreach activities.
- Responsible for coordinating Outreach activities for the committee
- If the Vice Chair is unable to perform the duties another member can assume the duties
- Given the position on TAP Outreach and meets monthly.
- Provide Outreach training, tips, and suggestions.
- Make sure members submit the monthly Outreach Activity report that must be filed through www.TAPSPace.org account.
- Rodriguez added he will work with the Vice Chair for support.

Collins assured the member who volunteers for this position will not be alone. TAC has a strong leader in the Chair. Rodriguez has been doing this for a while. He will be there to assist.

Jim Simpson self-nominated for the Vice Chair position. Rodriguez moved. Congratulations, Jim Simpson, TAC Vice-Chair.

Minutes Approval

TAC November 14, 2023, Minutes were approved as written. Jim Simpson moved and Berlinda White seconded.

Meeting Date and Time

Rodriguez opened the discussion to establish the following:

- TAC Full Committee meetings will occur on the second Tuesday of each month beginning at 3:00PM, EST.

- Subcommittee 1 will meet on the first Tuesday of each month beginning at 3:00PM, EST. Subcommittee 1 members: Jackson Bauzon, Anthony Jackson Jr., Mary Lawler, Richard Rodriguez, and Berlinda White
- Subcommittee 2 will meet on the first Thursday of each month beginning at 3:00PM, EST. Subcommittee 2 members: Jim Simpson, Shequeila Birdsong, Paulina Fernandez, David Newingham, and John Rodgers
- Screening Committee members: Rodriguez, Simpson, Rodgers, White and
- Quality Review (QR) members: Simpson and anticipating one additional volunteer to assist.
- O'Sullivan is the Analyst for the Internal Communication Committee (ICC). ICC publish the TAP Newsletter, administer the TAP Facebook page, developed the new SpeakUp Brochures, designed the cover for the Annual Report and are the Administrators for the new Facebook page. Rodriguez asked for volunteers and will contact Newingham to see if he would like to be the volunteer for ICC. Simpson stated he will be a back up to assist. Members were encouraged to consider being a part and to reach out to Rodriguez or the Analyst

Issue Responses

O'Sullivan shared the following:

- Issue 55988, Allowing Taxpayers to fill out form stating their issue and TAC appointments was submitted, forwarded to the Joint Committee, and went to IRS. Per the Publication, the recommendation was scheduled for implementation in Fiscal year 2024. Currently still waiting for the closed referral stating it was accepted. Holloway followed up and stated a response was due by on Friday, March 15, 2024, but she will be following up today.
- Issue 66143, Taxpayer Record Keeping was received last year. IRS asked for an extension to April 02, 2024. Holloway will follow up on this response. O'Sullivan will share the response received and placed on the agenda to accept or push back as needed.
- O'Sullivan shared overview of issues that are in the Parking Lot to hold. Issue 67378, Taxpayers needing to make appointments. Issues in the Parking Lot will be shared with both subcommittees to work.

Action Items

O'Sullivan stated he will complete the following action items:

- Set up and schedule meetings dates and times: TAC Full Committee second Tuesday at 3:00PM, EST; Subcommittee 1 first Tuesday of the month at 3:00PM, EST; Subcommittee 2 first Thursday of the month at 3:00PM, EST. Rodriguez, Bauzon, Jackson, Lawler and White on Subcommittee 1 and Simpson, Birdsong, Fernandez, Newingham and Rodgers on Subcommittee 2
- Screening Committee volunteers are Rodriguez, Simpson, Rodgers, and White

- QR members will be determined.
- ICC Simpson volunteered as back up, follow up with Newingham and Fernandez
- Post the approved November 14, 2023, minutes to www.TAPSpace.org and forward to Kevin Brown for posting www.ImproveIRS.org
- Send members a copy of the updated Roster.
- Send notifications to the other committees with information on who is the Chair, Vice Chair, ICC
- O'Sullivan is available for questions and or concerns.
- Rodriguez thanked everyone for their participation. Members with any ideas specifically for TAC were encouraged to reach out to him. Members were encouraged to document time on the Activity Reports. Everything members do is considered a part of the report. Members were also encouraged to document everything, create a separate Gmail or Yahoo accounts for TAP. Reach out with any questions or concerns. He is looking forward to working with members for the year and thank you for the opportunity.

Roundtable

Jimerson shared the following information for the Face-to-Face meeting:

- FTF May 08, 2024, through May 10, 2024
- May 08, 2024, will be the all-day training with TCC members.
- May 09, 2024, will be all day meeting.
- May 10, 2024, will be a half day closing out at 12:00PM, EST.
- The location for the FTF will be held in Oklahoma City
- Annie Gold will be reaching out to each member to obtain travel information.
- April 22, 2024, at 1:30PM, EST, the Joint Committee will have their monthly meeting consisting of TAP National Chair, Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs to review referrals. The meeting will be open to the public. Members are encouraged to attend to listen in. Contact the Staff to be provided with the link to attend the meeting that will last for 1.5hrs
- Simpson inquired about a possible word press issue when entering Activity hours. O'Sullivan will follow up and share as the issue is resolved.
- Kurita expressed congratulations to Rodriguez and Simpson. She is looking forward to working with everyone.

Collins thanked everyone for their participation and time. She is looking forward to a very good year and working with everyone. Thank you to Rodriguez, Simpson and to everyone who stepped up, you are appreciated.

Closing

Jimerson expressed thank you to the full committee for attending, participating, and stepping up to the plate. Congratulations Rodriguez and Simpson.



The meeting was officially closed at 9:58AM, PST.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 9, 2024
3:00PM EDT, 2:00PM CDT, 1:00PM MDT, 12:00PM PDT**

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