

**American Academy of Certified Public Managers®  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Omaha, Nebraska  
October 23, 2019**

**Board Members Present:** Dennis Martino, President (via telephone); Jeffrey Dinkins, President-elect; Bill Herman, Secretary; Debbie Smith, Treasurer; Becky Bryant, Director of Membership; Hope Obika Waobikeze, Director of Education and Loretta Tillery, Immediate Past President

**Board Members Absent:** Greg Hyland, Director of Communications

The President convened the meeting at 1:20 PM (CST).

**October 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes:**

**Becky Bryant moved to approve the October 9, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Loretta Tillery. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion carried.**

**Strategic Planning:**

The President indicated the main purpose of this Board meeting was to conduct a strategic planning effort to update the most recent strategic plan developed in 2015. As part of this effort, he noted that he had shared a SWOT analysis form to the Board members before arriving in Omaha as he felt it was important to scan the environment before commencing a planning effort. Loretta Tillery indicated she had developed a planning tool for the Board to use, and suggested the Board handle any other business before beginning that effort.

Jeffrey Dinkins joined the meeting at 1:25 PM.

**AACPM Membership Report:**

Becky Bryant reported since the Board's last meeting the AACPM has gained two new memberships – one from Arkansas and one from Idaho – bringing the total membership up to 131 members.

She noted there are 33 members facing renewal before the end of 2019, and she intends to reach out to them as an extra reminder of the time to renew and to encourage their renewal and participation in the Academy. Becky indicated she has been confused with how the membership data base is currently being handled, noting she used to maintain the membership spreadsheet but now receives a monthly report with some members listed as "pending". She is going to connect with Patty Morgan to determine the exact process and terminology currently in place. She did note that our current annual renewals are all based

on an individual's original enrollment date, so all renewals are individual and spread throughout the year.

Dennis Martino was in process of traveling to Omaha and had to disconnect at 1:30 PM.

Jeffrey Dinkins outlined some mechanical issues being experienced with the County financial system that covers 40 different departments, but the County Manager and Human Resources Director are in full support of training and in having the County cover the CPM memberships for all 200 CPM graduates in the County.

Hope Waobikeze felt the Academy has to make a better effort to reach out to the CPM students and promote the benefit of membership in the AACPM. She strongly believes the AACPM has to increase connections with CPM students.

Jeffrey Dinkins noted he and other CPM graduates in his county were going to attend the graduations at other counties to promote membership in the AACPM.

Becky Bryant noted each year in Arkansas, the CPM Society secures a Governor's Proclamation in support of the CPM Program and graduates, while hosting a Public Employee Recognition Day event at the Statehouse.

Debbie Smith made the overall suggestion the Board members consider how valuable is an AACPM membership if the individual is not willing to pay for it themselves.

Dennis Martino rejoined the meeting at 2:50 PM.

### **Strategic Planning:**

Loretta Tillery shared a strategic planning outline with the Board as a tool to help guide the Board's discussions to update the AACPM's Strategic Plan.

As a starting point for discussion, she posed the question: *"Does AACPM really exist?"* The general sentiment was it did, but only really for active members who know of its existence and benefits. In this area it was noted the support for the AACPM was varied among the CPM Program Managers and that needed to improve in order to get information to all CPPM students.

*"Is our existence still relevant to the profession?"* The general consensus was that it is still relevant and was likened to a "CPA" for an accountant. Although not mandatory to a public sector manager, it was a designation that demonstrated a level of professionalism and training. It also provides opportunities to network, skills training development, webinars, journals, mentorship and ASPA programs and services.

Dennis Martino observed that ASPA is having the same issues and concerns retaining and growing membership, while Bill Herman indicated that was not the case for ICMA for county

and municipal managers, where there is a tighter community with many managers having ICMA participation as a term in their employment contracts.

*What does “CPM” mean to the individual and the employer?* Unlike a required professional certification like “CPA”, it was felt the “CPM” was looked at more like a college degree that indicates the individual graduated from a nationally recognized program and achieved an approved standard of professional management training. Due to public sector manager’s responsibility to hold and maintain the public trust, there was a sense of the difference between a public sector managers versus a private sector manager.

*What value does AACPM membership provide?* There was a general sense that the Academy had not branded itself or the value it provides. Most individual felt the networking tools, training opportunities, cadre of professionals and potential award and scholarship recognition were all tangible values of Academy membership. It was stressed there was a lot of wealth of knowledge in the AACPM, and the partnership and networking could not be underestimated as a value.

Jeffrey Dinkins noted he had serious problems with the AACPM website as he found it lacking and hard to use. He felt anyone interested in the AACPM would be turned off or away from the website. While the AACPM offers professionals training, networking, webinars and mentoring opportunities, it was not easily identified on the website.

### **What is the American Academy of Certified Public Managers®?**

Loretta Tillery presented the current statement of the AACPM: *“The American Academy of Certified Public Managers (AACPM) is a professional association of public sector managers established in 1984 to promote a high professional, educational and ethical standard in public management. The AACPM is an organizational member of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA).”*

Board members felt it was too wordy and not fully accurate any longer. The general consensus was this could be reduced to the following: *“The American Academy of Certified Public Managers is a professional association of public sector managers that promotes high professional, educational and ethical standards in public management.”*

### **AACPM Purpose**

*The purpose of the American Academy of Certified Public Managers shall be as follows:*

- *To unite Certified Public Managers;*
- *To encourage the acceptance of public management as a profession established upon an underlying body of knowledge;*
- *To promote high professional, educational and ethical standards in public management;*

- *To improve communication, cooperation and coordination among public entities;*
- *To foster leadership through example and innovation ;*
- *To facilitate positive changes while enhancing the delivery of public service.”*

There was sentiment among the Board members that bullets #1, #2 and #3 were still relevant. It was suggested Bullet #4 was more of a goal than a mission statement. Dennis Martino said it sounds like a Herculean task.

Bullets #5 and #6 could be combined and the word “facilitate” be changed to “recognize”. Dennis Martino and Bill Herman both talked about the Askew Awards being one of the ways to provide this recognition. Dennis Martino indicated there had been more requests for Askew Awards this year than in the recent past. Bill Herman suggested the Academy has failed at not having an Askew Award Committee, and noted how in the past the Committee was co-chaired by a member of the AACPM and the NCPMC to bridge the communications efforts between the two entities. The Academy also published information on each Askew recipients and project on its web site, as well as booklet format for the presentation ceremony at the annual conference.

Boards members suggested that all of the purposes listed currently are really goals and not purposes. It was felt they could eliminate the purpose statement and add the items to the goals of the Academy.

**Mission Statement:**

Loretta Tillery provided the Board with the following material concerning the AACPM mission:

*“The mission statement provides a road map to reach the vision. The initial AACPM mission statement was developed in 1989. It was “to promote effective public management by establishing the Certified Public Manager® credential as the recognized standard for professional practice.”*

*As the AACPM evolved, so has its mission. Our current mission is:*

*Promoting professionalism, excellence and quality principles in public management through:*

- *Endorsement of dynamic leaders, high ethical standards and education, development, and training dedicated to serving the public interest;*
- *Advocacy of the Certified Public Manager® program as an ideal comprehensive management development program;*
- *Performance as a professional association to maintain the highest standards for management and management training.”*

It was suggested that a simple statement for the AACPM mission should be put together that becomes the elevator pitch. Hope Waobikeze felt it would be important to stress the

difference between public and private sector functions and management, and to highlight the mentorships and networking available through the AACPM.

As discussion evolved, the overall consensus of the Board members was the Mission Statement could be as follows: *“The mission of the AACPM is to promote and encourage professionalism, excellence, quality principles, dynamic leadership, high ethical standards, education, development and training for the public management profession.”*

Dennis Martino indicated he would need to leave the meeting to board his plane. He stressed part of the overall efforts of the Board is a need to figure out a way to keep the lights on. He left the meeting at 2:45 PM.

### **Vision**

Current documents state *“The vision of an organization states its destination. For the AACPM, it is “World class leaders and managers for the public sector.”*

Debbie Smith stressed this statement has been the driving force for her 30 years with the CPM. She indicated it was truly what was in her heart through all of the experiences she has had with CPM, and felt it should remain a key component.

Through discussions, it was slightly modified to state: *“The vision form the AACPM, is that every Certified Public Manager® be recognized as world class leaders and managers for the public sector.”*

### **Goals**

Current documents state: *“The high level, overarching goals of the AACPM are as follows:*

- *To provide effective OPERATIONS conducive to a national organization;*
- *To improve and enhance COMMUNICATIONS between AACPM, ASPA, CPM Societies, the Membership, the Consortium, the CPM Education Foundation, and others;*
- *To encourage active MEMBERSHIP and to recognize outstanding individuals and accomplishments by members;*
- *To provide tangible MEMBER SERVICES;*
- *To develop a system of METRICS to assess progress.”*

There was some initial suggestion one of the goals of the AACPM should be to advocate for the CPM training program.

In advance of the meeting four potential goals were submitted to the Board members including:

Goal 1. To increase Membership to 200 by July 15, 2020

## Objectives for Goal 1

1. Challenge each State to recruit new members.
2. Create a list of reasons to join the Academy to disseminate by February 1, 2020
3. Update and distribute the AACPM Brochure.
4. Assign a membership committee member to every State.

Goal 2. Recruit volunteers from the full membership to serve on standing committees by April 1, 2020

Goal 3. Review the Constitution and bylaws for the purpose of alignment and relevance.

Goal 4. Create a Sustainability Committee. Purpose: To determine the viability of the Academy. The Sustainability Committee shall review our financial status, our membership status, our attendance at recent conferences, the number of nominations received for Board positions.

Following substantial discussion, the consensus for revised goals for the AACPM was as follows:

*“The high level, overarching goals of the AACPM are as follows:*

- *To provide effective OPERATIONS conducive to a national organization;*
- *To improve and enhance COMMUNICATIONS between AACPM, ASPA, the Membership, CPM Societies, the Consortium, the CPM Education Foundation, and others;*
- *To provide tangible member services, encourage active MEMBERSHIP and to recognize outstanding individuals and accomplishments by members;*
- *To provide EDUCATION through training and continuing professional development;*
- *To develop a system of METRICS to assess performance and achievement of our goals.”*

The meeting was recessed at 3:00 PM. The Board resumed meeting at 3:15 PM.

### **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

The Board performed a SWOT Analysis of the AACPM and, through those discussions, the following were identified:

#### **Strengths:**

- Dedicated Board members

- Collaborative relationship with the NCPMC
- Partnerships with like-minded organizations
- Dedication to professional development
- Leadership skills
- Professional program administrator
- A positive attitude
- Long-term members
- Provide training to the public sector

**Weaknesses:**

- We don't know our members
- Low and inactive membership
- No marketing plan
- Reluctance of members to run for office
- Finances are precarious due to spending more than we take in
- Changing demographics (fewer people join organization and, if they do, they do not participate)
- Employers not funding professional memberships
- Website needs updating and must remain relevant
- Need a social media presence
- Needs more national and local level interaction and communication
- Three years required for President-elect
- One-year term for President

**Opportunities:**

- CPM programs are thriving in most states which should provide more people to be recruited for membership.
- Redefine our purpose.
- Make changes to how the Academy meets.

- Return to using an Askew Award Committee co-chaired by a Consortium member and an AACPM member
- Using vice president model instead of president-elect.
- Strengthen relationship with NCPMC
- Online education including webinars are needed
- Online CPM certification
- Social media usage for promotion of the organization
- Engage more members to serve on committees
- Secure sponsors for annual conference

**Threats:**

- Employers not funding professional memberships or training / conference
- Rising costs of doing business as an organization
- Low membership
- The general public and our colleagues do not understand the value of membership in AACPM and CPM certification
- Lack of a sustained financial base
- Holding professional development conference annually
- Face to face board meetings

**Pillars of Strength:**

Loretta Tillery asked the Board to overall identify the pillars of strength of the AACPM as an organization to move forward. The Board identified the following:

- Operations
- Effective Marketing and Communications
- Recruitment & Retention of Membership
- Strong relationship with the Consortium
- Continued Professional Development
- State and National Organization Collaboration

- Metrics

**Member Profile:**

The Board discussed the potential membership of the Academy and whether it should be restricted to CPM students and graduates or if the membership should stay open to CPM and non-CPM alike. The membership was expanded to include non-CPM individuals as part of the process of the AACPM joining as a division of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA). Hope Waobikeze and Bill Herman both strongly felt the organization should just be inclusive of CPM members, while Becky Bryant explained the decision of opening up the membership to non-CPM individuals was viewed as a potential marketing advantage of being able to attract an expanded membership. Jeffrey Dinkins asked whether there has been tangible growth of non-CPM individuals for the membership and it was noted there had not been. Debbie Smith noted that in 2003 when Dr. Ken Henning spoke to the AACPM Conference, he offered the thought that for the future the “CPM” credential might be considered a “Certified Professional Manager” instead of a “Certified Public Manager”. At the time, he suggested it may be the future for sustaining the organization.

Becky Bryant reported the Arkansas CPM Society had expanded its membership categories to mirror those of the AACPM, and their membership is currently 50-50 between CPM and non-CPM individuals. Loretta Tillery suggested from a financial perspective, the AACPM needs a broader universe from which to attract members. But she stressed the organization needs to be able to reach out and attract them.

Jeffrey Dinkins felt in the big picture, the AACPM has not done a good job to reach out to CPM students and he suggested the organization needs to be broader in its perspective. He noted the lifeline of an organization is membership for sustained finances.

The consensus of the Board’s discussions suggested the AACPM Potential Members would include:

- CPM Graduates
- CPM Students
- MPS Graduates
- MPA Students
- Public Managers (mid-level supervisors or higher)
- Retired CPMs
- CPM Alumni

The Board members determined a goal of 200 plus members would sustain the basic operating expenses of the AACPM.

In looking at possible means of reaching out to potential members and to retain the current membership, some efforts suggested included:

- A personal reach out to all current AACPM members by individual members of the Board. To accomplish this, it was suggested the current 131 membership list be divided between the Board members resulting in approximately 16 contacts per Board member.
- Provision of a video from the AACPM President to use at local CPM graduations as a means of congratulations for their achievement and an introduction to the AACPM.
- A need to be clear about what are the benefits of AACPM membership.

### **Board Member Profile:**

In order to encourage and develop AACPM members for serving on the AACPM Board, the following efforts were suggested:

- Utilize some of the AACPM standing committed in our bylaws and SOPs to engage member participation.
- Target current and active members to serve on committees to broaden member involvement and expand work efforts beyond Board members.
- Recruit recent CPM graduates while they are enthusiastic from their successful CPM certification experience.

### **Strategic Marketing:**

Potential activities that should be part of a strategic marketing effort for the AACPM could include:

- Personal telephone and/or e-mail messages to CPM Programs.
- Reintroduce ourselves to remaining CPM Societies
- Reintroduce ourselves and the CPM credential to our profession.
- Actively target CPM students, CPM graduates, MPA students, MPA graduates, MPP Students and MPP graduates for membership
- Survey our current membership to understand their interest and needs from the AACPM

**Adjournment:**

**Bill Herman moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 PM (CST). Seconded by Becky Bryant. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**

The President-elect thanked the participants and adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM (CST).

Respectfully submitted:

William G. Herman, CPM  
Secretary