



# *National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council*

## **MEETING MINUTES**

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### **EHAC Annual Meeting of the Council\***

**July 8-9, 2017**

**Amway Grand Plaza Hotel • Grand Rapids, Michigan**

#### **Saturday, July 8, 2017**

**1.0 Call to Order:** Chairman Tim Murphy called the meeting to order at 8am EST.

#### **1.1 Welcome and Introductions**

**EHAC Council Attendees:** Chairman - Tim Murphy, Secretary - Laura Suppes, Undergraduate Program Coordinator - Steve Johnson, Graduate Program Coordinator - Sharron LaFollette, Elections Chair - Sandra Long, Director-at-Large – Jim Dingman, Interim Executive Director - Chuck Treser, Pat Bohan, Mel Knight, Tom Turco, Tania M. Busch Isaksen, Jason Finley, Mark Houser, Jason Lewis, Don Williams, Milton Morris, Priscilla Oliver, Welford Roberts.

**EHAC Council Members – absent:** Michelle DiMaggio, Dave Gilkey (joined meeting on Sunday July 9), Mike Fletcher (attempted to join by phone)

**Guest attendees:** Jong Bang (NCCU), Carolyn Harvey

**1.2 Approval of Agenda:** Sharron LaFollette moved to approve the July 8, 2017 EHAC Annual Meeting Agenda. There was a 2<sup>nd</sup> from Tania M. Bush Isaksen. Motion to approve the agenda was unanimously passed.

#### **2.0 Officer Reports**

##### **2.1 Chair's Report**

Chairman Murphy outlined goals for EHAC's future including an increase in dues across the next several years and increasing the systemization of the EHAC accreditation process.

Murphy reported on EHAC's accomplishments including creation of a new website and discussions with potential new programs, which have resulted in several potential candidates for accreditation. Murphy also reported ongoing Board discussion around whether EHAC can facilitate the use of existing online courses at EHAC accredited programs to smaller universities that may be just shy of acquiring EHAC accreditation.

Pat Bohan asked if there was time for discussion around expanding programs? Murphy replied that this would be a later topic of discussion.

##### **2.2 Secretary's Report**

Secretary Laura Suppes provided a summary of action items discussed at the 2016 EHAC annual meeting emphasizing the following points:

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\* **Abbreviations used in these minutes:** Environmental Health (EH), Undergraduate (UG), Graduate (G)

- Funding cuts to AEHAP.
- Board emphasized that it was essential that AEHAP and EHAC conduct business in a fiscally responsible manner that is effectively overseen by Boards of Directors of both organizations. Restructuring was proposed through a strategic planning process that has been implemented as of 2017.
- Strong need to train as many EHAC site visit and primary reviewer volunteers as possible.
- Further review of the minutes and Suppes noted that the minutes from 2016 were approved electronically in August of 2016 after the annual meeting.

## 2.3 Treasurer's Report

**2.3.1 Financial Status:** The FY 2017 YTD Financial Report was provided by Chairman Murphy and Interim Executive Director Chuck Treser, as Treasurer Mike Fletcher was unavailable.

- a. As of June 2017, there is approximately \$94,000 in EHAC's checking and savings accounts.
- b. Liabilities include the major costs for the year that are associated with the EHAC annual meeting and the NEHA AEC conference, which are not reflected in the current balance sheet. As of June 2017, EHAC has a balanced budget with \$94,649.15 in equity.
- c. EHAC can technically survive financially without any new source of income for about a year.
- d. The trial balance provided a more detailed breakdown of EHAC's expenditures:
- e. Murphy cited a major concern, i.e., AEHAP has been seriously subsidizing EHAC for many years to support staff costs for the most part. As staff have begun to more closely track time spent, it is apparent that more time is spent on EHAC administration than AEHAP administration.
- f. Profit and loss from October 2016 – June 2017:
  - Total Expenses reported: \$27,582.47
  - Net Income: \$9,538.04
  - Mel Knight enquired if this is a 9-month budget? Treser replied yes due to EHAC's budget year of Oct. 1 – Sept. 31, 2017.
  - There were no additional questions.

**2.3.2 Proposed Budget:** Treser and Murphy then presented a proposed Interim Budget for FY2018

- a. EHAC Functional Flow Chart (created by Carla Brown) – regarding future EHAC directions:
  - Treser introduced a flow chart of potential scenarios for EHAC's future related to budget stasis or increases. Treser explained and justified the need for fee and dues increases with the following points:
    - EHAC accredited programs are getting a great bargain for EHAC accreditation. Carolyn Harvey added that CEPH accreditation is four or five times more costly than EHAC. Murphy explained that ABET re-accreditation is \$10-15,000.
    - EHAC accreditation is as good or better than other environmental health related accreditation. Currently this process is volunteer oriented and includes a volunteer executive director. While employing volunteer site visitors and reviewers is a sustainable approach, a volunteer ED is not. Therefore, the flow chart illustrates severe decline of the organization unless a full-time ED is present and funds to support this position are raised via dues and fee increases.

- Treser introduced several budget scenarios created by Carla Brown which provide several different options based on various possible increases in accreditation and re-accreditation fees and yearly dues. Treser explained that the Board would like Council approval of an interim budget that can be revised by the Board once AEHAP decides upon a direction. Busch Isaksen advocated that the 2018 budget decision be a full Council decision. Oliver asked “Where is the salary for potential ED in the budget?”  
**The Council decided to approve a static budget for 2017-2018 that the entire Council will review and vote upon in the near future.**
  - Treser explained that it is imperative to EHAC’s future success to raise fees and dues as soon as possible, but Council must also be aware of the hardship this will place on current and potential programs. Further, budgets are in place for this academic year, so an immediate increase will be difficult for Program Directors to manage. Treser also pointed out that the budget scenarios are based upon EHAC existing as a stand-alone organization – separate and with no support from AEHAP. If AEHAP closes, EHAC would have to assume AEHAP’s marketing and recruitment roles.
- b. Questions were raised regarding the budget scenarios:
- Mel Knight asked if the fee and due increases are “one size fits all”. Discussion included the possibility of basing fee structure on program size. Harvey submitted that she feels that fee based on program size is the most logical solution but there was little support for a program based fee structure. Busch Isaksen was not in favor of basing fee on program size because there is no incentive for program growth. Busch Isaksen suggested that programs needing more help should pay more vs. programs that are robust and don’t need help. Murphy suggested that programs will cap enrollment based on overall size of their program – what they can handle (rather than capping because of an accreditation fee increase due to increased program size). Knight asked why AEHAP has historically been considered the “parent” organization for EHAC when EHAC is the reason for AEHAP existing at this point. Treser responded that this situation developed because of significant financial support of AEHAP by the CDC. CDC support also moved EHAC in the direction of focused recruitment of small, rural and diversity oriented colleges. Treser submitted that AEHAP is not necessarily the “parent” organization of EHAC but AEHAP was given money to promote environmental health and one of the primary ways to do that was to promote EHAC accreditation. Knight emphasized that accreditation fee and dues are hard money vs. CDC money or other grant money (soft) and therefore, if linked closely, primary organization should be EHAC. Treser pointed out that neither is the “parent” of the other – technically and legally they are two separate organizations, with some common mission and goals. EHAC is an accrediting body, while AEHAP promotes EH education and the accreditation of EH educational programs.
  - Busch Isaksen asked if budget Proposal 1A - \$89,000 - covers all EHAC expenditures for the year. Murphy replied, yes – but minimally and allows no room for growth. Murphy explained that because there has not been a discussion around EHAC’s growth at the Council level, the Board wanted to present a small increase in dues and

- fees around a mostly static budget. This static budget would require borrowing from EHAC's reserves.
- Murphy stated that the Board expects pushback regarding a fee/dues increase. Murphy added that he cannot support an immediate significant fee/dues increase but would support a step-wise increase. Sharron LaFollette submitted that programs are already pushing back against the change in wording from guidelines to requirements and worries that a fee increase will push some programs further away. Priscilla Oliver encouraged communicating the need for an increase in due/fees and EHAC accreditation value to those in charge of the budgets at Colleges, rather than only communicating with program directors. Knight submitted that EHAC's fee/dues are miniscule in the big picture and decisions to accredit are based mostly upon the value of the accreditation. LaFollette added that the State of Illinois is in dire financial crisis and they are cutting funding to universities significantly – Illinois schools have had a 17% drop in student population. They may also be dropping any but state level accreditations. Knight pointed out that means they would be dropping EHAC accreditation then, regardless of a fee/due increase.
  - John Bang (North Carolina Central University) asked if EHAC is able to receive funding from for profit organizations/corporations? Treser responded that EHAC can accept corporate funding but in order to avoid appearances of impropriety, it would be better for AEHAP to accept that kind of funding and pass it on to EHAC, or use it to support hardship programs, etc. AEHAP is set up and can accept this kind of funding. Additionally, if AEHAP were to dissolve, a separate 501c(3) under EHAC might need to be created to receive corporate donations.
- c. Lafollette led discussion on how EHAC is serving programs and the value of EHAC accreditation. Jim Dingman added a question regarding the value of accreditation. Treser pointed out that letters of support from EHAC and AEHAP helped to save one program (CSU San Bernardino) from program cuts that would have eliminated EHAC accreditation this year. Discussion of value of EHAC included:
- REHS exam – EHAC graduates can sit for this exam immediately upon graduation. Historically this was a huge benefit of accreditation, however, NEHA updated its REHS exam and it is no longer relevant to recent environmental health graduates (it is focused on practitioners with several years of experience in the field). Murphy reported on a recent meeting with NEHA Executive Director David Dyjack during which he asked Dyjack to consider creating a graduate oriented credential similar to that given by ABET (Graduate Safety Professional – GST) to graduates of EHAC accredited institutions. Dyjack cited the prohibitive cost of developing a different exam. Murphy suggested allowing EHAC volunteers to develop this type of exam. [Murphy commented that the University of Findlay is the only EH program accredited by both EHAC and ABET.]
  - Busch Isaksen submitted that EHAC (AEHAP) needs to develop assistance for programs with financial hardship cases – potentially AEHAP could find grants/scholarships for helping with increased cost. That is assuming AEHAP

continues – but Murphy said EHAC could do this kind of supplementing as well. Treser added – that’s why the proposed budget is interim until AEHAP decides a direction.

**Motion:** Busch Isaksen moved to continue current budget at same spending rate into the next fiscal year – 2017-2018. The motion was seconded by Jim Dingman and passed with a unanimous vote. A new budget including fee structure changes will be discussed and approved by full Council after AEHAP’s strategic planning session.

## 2.4 Executive Director’s Report

2.4.1 **State of the Council:** Treser reported that the current state of the Council was stable, but that challenges in the near future needed to be addressed, and asked for contributions from Council regarding future directions for EHAC.

2.4.2 **Annual Update of Programs:** Leslie Mitchell provided some data from the 2017 Annual Update Report.

### a. Report

- 29 UG and 9 G programs
- We are losing Lake Superior State University in Michigan in 2017 because there is no administrative support and low enrollment numbers.
- Enrollment rates decreased a bit as well as graduation rates, but still above 10 year average enrollment.
- Diversity trends have declined slightly (domestic diversity, not international students).
- Gender comparison report: more female than male.
- Higher private sector percentages for employment than public.
- Mitchell provided some notes on her report.
  - On campus recruitment techniques are outreach to undeclared majors, peer-to-peer communication.
  - Off campus recruitment are career day events, participation in local events and alumni outreach.
- Online opportunities: 1 school is fully online and 60% offer online courses.
- Program health: Grad programs are healthier, but 50% are concerned about enrollment at UG and G levels.
- Accreditation trends: 2013-2017 even gains and losses of programs.
- Conclusions: lack of knowledge about EH degrees, enrollment down, UG graduation rates are down, G graduation rates are steady, job placement rates are high, face to face recruitment is best way to get students.

### b. Discussion:

- It was suggested that EHAC have schools specify in next survey if federal jobs are with military.
- A member asked if there ever been a study showing effectiveness of recruitment efforts? The response was “No”.
- Another member suggested that the office should create a research effort to gather this information. Create a questionnaire for students to determine why they chose EH.
- Questions related to the Annual report included:
  - 1) How are Env. Health students finding out about EH programs?
  - 2) What type of recruitment efforts (on and off-campus) are working?
    - Carolyn Harvey offered an example of a successful recruitment strategy being conducted by Eastern Kentucky University. The environmental health science

department has partnered with a local community college to create a co-op program in which students do some of their schooling at the community college and finish up at EKU's environmental health science department.

- Busch Isaksen suggested that recruiting needs to start in elementary and middle schools – as middle schools are the new high schools as far as when students are making decisions about what academic tracks to take – science/math/college tracks, etc. Murphy concurred and has found that if students haven't decided that they want science in middle school – they will not be prepared in the math area – so it's crucial to reach out to kids early.
- Welford Roberts suggested asking more detailed questions regarding employment of graduates – particularly to identify those going into the military or US Public Health Service.

**2.4.3 New Website Announcement:** Mitchell provided a brief update on the progress of EHAC's new website. Some Council members reported technical issues with the site. Mitchell responded that she will consult with the website contractor in the near future to mitigate these issues. Mitchell requested pictures and described plans for a searchable database that will include information related to faculty and their expertise.

### **3.0 Standing Committee Reports**

#### **3.1 Nomination Committee Report –**

- a. Sandra Long reported a successful 2017 EHAC Council nominations process with good response for nominations and full participation in voting by all EHAC Council members.
  - New Council members include: Gary Brown, Sharron LaFollette, Tom Deem, Priscilla Oliver, Commander Jason Lewis.
  - Officer nominations: Nominations for EHAC Board Officer positions were requested from the floor. Jim Dingman motioned to table officer nominations until after lunch. The motion passed unanimously.
  - Long reported that a practitioner currently serving on the Council may be resigning due to other commitments. No resignation has been submitted at this time, however, if submitted, Long noted the need for a special election. Long proposed asking 2017 EHAC Council candidates that did not gain Council seats but tied in the number of votes they received, if they are still interested in serving. If they are interested in serving, then there will be an election among those two candidates to fill the empty Council seat.
  - New 2017 EHAC Board members:
    1. Council Chair – Tania M. Busch Isaksen  
(she declined nomination for Undergraduate co-chair position).
    2. Member-at-Large - Jim Dingman
    3. Secretary - Laura Suppes
    4. Treasurer - Mike Fletcher
    5. Undergraduate Program Chair - Steve Johnson
    6. Graduate Program Chair - Sharron LaFollette
    7. Nominations Committee Chair - CAPT Don Williams

**3.2 Undergraduate Committee Report:** Steve Johnson submitted slides and presented his report as follows.

- a. Initial Accreditations: 2 site visits, reviews completed in winter 2016 and spring 2017 (North Carolina Central University and State University of New York Syracuse).
- b. Reaccrediting programs – 3 site visits and reviews completed in winter of 2016 and spring 2017 (University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, University of Washington, Western Carolina University).
- c. Conditions: Mississippi Valley State University's graduate program is under condition to be reviewed in 2018 with the resubmission of a new self-study.
- d. Strengths of Committee: conducted 2 training sessions (by conference calls) in Fall 2016 as review and initial instruction for primary reviewers and site visitors.
- e. Planning to expand training to include a webinar in fall 2017.
- f. Concerns for upcoming 2018 accreditation/reaccreditation cycle:
  - o 12 Undergrad and Graduate programs up for reaccreditation and the potential for several newly accrediting programs will cause a heavy demand for volunteers.
  - o In reference to increased need for volunteers for the 2017-2018 accreditation season, LaFollette asked if there was anyone who could not go on a site visit due to job or personal situations. Jason Finley's travel is somewhat restricted. His job does not prevent his participation but his schedule is restrictive and he must know at least 60 days ahead of schedule to confirm a date. Finley agreed to submit a week in Spring 2018 that he would be available for a site visit.
  - o Training concerns: Treser stated that some of Council members have been trained for conducting site visits, but others have not. Having so many programs to review and visit will provide opportunities for training new Council members. Dingman submitted that he does not think that people other than Council members should conduct site visits. LaFollette suggested that if Council members are taking their one year off between their terms, it should be okay for them to conduct visits. Dingman reiterated his personal opinion that site visits are the responsibility of Council members – whether each member has to conduct 1 or 5 site visits. Bush Isaksen expressed concern about the number of practitioners that will be needed. Treser pointed out that our bylaws specifically permitted non-Council members who were qualified to conduct site visits. Knight expressed that advanced planning and timing are important for successfully conducting all of the visits and reviews and suggested starting to schedule site visits ASAP.
- g. General improvements to process for 2018 forward:
  - o Standardize all reporting for the entire accreditation and reaccreditation process – applications, cover letters, summaries of self-study reviews, checklists for candidates, reviewers and visitors, revise Table 2, Self-Study Reports, Site Visit process and summaries, Letter of Approval, Condition or Denial.
  - o Improve how site visits are conducted. Separate audit duties from consultation.
  - o Create training videos explaining the site visit process, expectations and the self-study review process.

#### 4.0 Protocol visit

4.1 AEHAP – postponed until Sunday morning.

#### 4.2 NEHA – President Riggs and President-elect Adam London

- Riggs reported that NEHA is restructuring to be more friendly and attractive to millennials and Gen-Xers.
- NEHA Board and Executive Director are concerned about coordination between EHAC and NEHA – especially around credentialing. There is a desire to be more interactive and responsive to students and graduates. NEHA wants student graduates that are ready to hit the ground running because there are gaps that are not getting filled by qualified professionals. Need qualified people to fill areas where there are lots of retirees, as well. NEHA is focusing on creating a smooth flow from student to graduate to professional.
- Treser expressed that he and EHAC are energized by new leadership at NEHA and NEHA's desire to place emphasis on the transition from student to professional. Treser reiterated EHAC's and AEHAP's desire to reinstate SNEHA (Student National Environmental Health Association) chapters at EHAC accredited programs and EHAC's willingness to assist with this effort.
- Murphy suggested that London charge EHAC/AHEAP with creating student chapters policies/programs for NEHA and his desire to align this transition and the need to be deliberate about merging student/graduates into the professional environment (NEHA).
- **Credentialing suggestions:** Murphy pointed out a challenge around the current REHS credentialing exam. The current exam is focused on professionals that have several years of field experience, whereas the past exam was focused on knowledge available to recent environmental health graduates. Therefore, there needs to be a credential specifically designed for graduates either by a new exam or by a credential bestowed for EHAC graduates only. President Riggs submitted that historically there was a credential geared for graduates known as "registered sanitarian trainee (RST). Riggs understands the need for that initial credential. London agreed and has charged a NEHA committee to look at the credentialing process and to make a recommendation regarding the graduate/practitioner situation to the NEHA board by spring time. Murphy requested that London populate this committee with some members from the EHAC Council and London agreed that was a helpful idea. London also reported that he wants committees to expand to pull in some members from the Association to recruit and cultivate future leaders and to broaden their perspective.

**Discussion ensued:** Busch Isaksen suggested changing "trainee" to "apprenticeship" or the like. Finley suggested that if there is a review of the exam then there should be a review of the study manual for the REHS exam. Treser suggested that millennials have not in general been joiners or people interested in doing volunteer work. Need to focus on younger generations and allow mistakes but offer mentoring. Riggs agreed and suggested that they are trying to make the credentialing much more valuable. Riggs commented that there are many states that do not require the REHS and NEHA needs to hear from academics that REHS is very important (22 states do not require REHS to practice). NEHA wants to make it a universal credential that is required nationwide. Murphy asked what NEHA is doing to get

the credential required. London suggested that young people are looking for meaningful careers and lives and EH provides this to young people. How do we begin to tell this story better? NEHA is arguing in Michigan and other places that there needs to be a basic level of security that is produced by credentialing. Finley asked if some states do not require REHS at all? Correct. Bohan pointed out the importance of performance standards being stood against the work being completed. Riggs reported that WA does not require REHS while Oregon does and cited this situation as a good research topic to determine if there is any difference in Environmental Health statistics between these states due to the REHS requirement in Oregon and lack of the requirement in Washington. Busch Isaksen pointed out that while the state of WA does not require and REHS credential, many local jurisdictions in WA do have the REHS/RS requirement.

**4.3 COSTEP** – LCDR Matt Albright presented his PowerPoint presentation via telephone. His key points were:

- USPHS overview – currently around 6,500 people employed by USPHS
- JRCOSTEP overview: Paid internship, no obligation after graduation to continue with USPHS, application process. Application dates will remain same as last year (announced between Sept 1 and Nov 4; must submit application by Nov. and final selections are made in March). This is an accelerated timeline to avoid delay in students starting externships. There were 26 viable applications in 2016-2017, while this year was at a low of 19 JRCOSTEP students. USPHS would like to keep number at 25. EHO requirements/benefits: must be from accredited program in EH, new blended retirement systems: no longer required to stay for 20 years to get benefits (still get pension at 20 and 30 years, but benefits are less), new 401k type account matched after 3 years).

Albright asked for questions

- Mel Knight asked if REHS certification is considered in COSTEP choice. Albright did not know but it was pointed out that a requirement for REHS would be undesirable for EHAC programs. Knight commented that Certified Industrial Hygienists don't have the same experience as an REHS. Murphy cited the gap existing between college graduation and professional experience. Murphy submitted that NEHA and AEHAP need stronger partnership – specifically focused on student involvement and via REHS, in order to successfully move students from graduates to professionals. There is a need to move toward more communication with NEHA, academic programs and professions so there is more value. The career track for EHAC EH graduates is not in alignment. Albright added that if there is anything that COSTEP can do to help facilitate this conversation, he and his staff would like to be of assistance.
- Laura Suppes enquired about medical clearance issues that her students have faced during the COSTEP application process. Albright shares Suppes concern about the long delay in notification for successful or unsuccessful candidates due to medical issues. Albright also cited concerns about reasons for medical denials and suggested that this process needs to be more transparent. Bush Isaksen asked if COSTEP is currently conducting drug testing and if so how are they dealing with states where marijuana is legal? Albright did not have an answer for this question.

**3.3 Graduate Committee Report:** Graduate Program Chair - Sharron LaFollette provided a brief report:

- No graduate programs were accredited or reaccredited in 2016-2017.
- There will be approximately five programs reaccrediting in 2018-2019 and one possible graduate initial accreditation.
- LaFollette stated graduate program site visitors need to be graduate faculty. There was general agreement. Tim Murphy and Tania M. Busch Isaksen are the only 2017-2018 council members who are also currently faculty in graduate programs. Sharron LaFollette is the only current council member retired as faculty of a graduate program.

**5.0 Accreditation Actions**

**5.1 University of Washington**

Site Visit Report provided by Site Visitor Carolyn Harvey and supported by Co-visitor Jim Dingman:

- Strengths:
  - All students involved in a paid internship.
  - Internship hosts were happy with their EH interns.
  - Supportive administrative staff who assist with advising, gaining internships, and IT services.
- Weaknesses:
  - UW's proposed alternative chemistry series changes do not appear to meet EHAC requirements. Murphy asked about the chemistry requirements in catalog. The UW catalog provides chemistry alternatives depending on the educational track that student chooses. The alternative chemistry series combines general, organic and biochemistry with lab and was created for allied health students. Chemistry majors are required to take 15 hours of chemistry. Busch Isaksen explained that this chemistry series was created for students that were unable to enter the nursing and/or other similar programs.
- Letter of Explanation requested during Site Visit: Harvey and Dingman requested a letter stating/explaining how the new chemistry course meets EHAC requirements for organic chemistry and lab. Major concern from Council was the potential "watering down" of UW's chemistry requirement and concern that the new class would not meet the rigor of EHAC's requirements. Busch Isaksen suggested that the course is not watered down but taught in a different way. Murphy ask if other EHAC science requirements are met - yes via physics and biology courses. LaFollette requested more information on the syllabus for the new chemistry course. Johnson submitted that the current accreditation decision is for the existing curriculum rather than proposed changes, citing that currently, the restructured chemistry class is a proposal and will be subject to new requirements and future consideration.

**Motion:** Harvey moved to give UW Department of Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences a 6 year accreditation based upon current submission.

**Discussion:** The Council went into closed session, discussed the program under consideration and agreed that the program should be reaccredited for another six-year term.

**Vote: Motion to reaccredit UW's Environmental health program for 6 years carried unanimously.**

**Reaccreditation Letter will include:**

- 1. Emphasis on EHAC requirement that any changes in curriculum must be reported to the EHAC Council for its approval.**
- 2. Any changes in faculty (number) must be submitted to EHAC council for approval.**
- 3. Emphasis that internships cannot be research projects in university labs. Internships must be hands on and practice based. This will allow for EH divisions of service on campus to serve as EH internship sites and be hands-on.**

## **5.2 University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire**

The Site Visit Report was presented by Tom Turco and supported by co-visitor Tania M. Bush Isaksen;

- Turco commented on the interesting placement of the environmental health program within the College of Arts and Sciences. The program is known as the Watershed Institute for Collaborative Environmental Studies. Turco reported that the Associate Dean and Dean spent a lot of time with the site visitors and showed tremendous support for the program. Turco observed that the program experienced a 43% budget cut three years ago and is now in the process of a strong rebuild.
- UW Eau Claire has an active SNEHA and is closely connected to state associations as well. The School is moving from a general to an outcome based education model. Students participate in summer long internships, most of which are paid. The local health department is very supportive as well and there are great partnerships among the university and other local entities. Site visitors observed very interactive and hands-on teaching/learning styles. Graduates gain CPO and ServSafe certifications (Manager certification). Students attended a meeting with site visitors and were excited to share their experiences with the UW Eau Claire program. Additionally, the program is experiencing growth, with Bush Isaksen citing student numbers increase from 50-89 in the last several years. Bush Isaksen pointed out that the program is at capacity for lab teaching space. This presents an opportunity for EHAC to recommend the investment of money into teaching and lab space in their letter.
- Harvey corrected "no" major findings inconsistent with the academic program on the first slide of the power point.
- Knight expressed that as a practitioner, he was impressed by the quality of the Environmental Health management course and air quality course.
- Welford Roberts asked, in general, if there is a desire from students to gravitate to research, as he has observed a major gap in research areas. Suppes explained that at beginning of year, research interests and goals are assessed for students. Roberts asked if they offer applied or field research. Suppes explained that research focuses on water quality and other field work. Murphy submitted that most if not all programs require research and LaFollette explained that EHAC encourages research but requires hands on field internships in order to provide students with practical experience they may not generally obtain as undergraduates.

**Motion:** Tom Turco moved to accredit University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire for 6 more years.

**Discussion:** no discussion

**Vote:** Unanimous approval with one abstention

**Letter Should Include:**

1. **Encouragement of succession planning.**
2. **Verbiage related to being mindful of existing lab space and how growth in student body is bumping up against this lack of space.**

**Side Bar: General requirements for every letter of notification for accreditation and reaccreditation:**

- EHAC encouragement of succession planning – (to address aging program director issues as well as size of programs)
- For growing programs – encourage programs to keep in mind that space is limiting factor for growth in most programs.

### 5.3 Western Carolina University

Site Visit Report presented by Sharron LaFollette with support from co-visitor Priscilla Oliver and trainee Laura Suppes:

- Curriculum meets or exceeds EHAC criteria and the program has 4 areas of advanced study but are heavy in occupational health and safety (professorial expertise in these areas).
- All faculty advise students – good relationships.
- WCU offers great field internship/experiences.
- Alumni love the program.
- Recommendations: prepare for senior faculty retirement, improve networking with EH professional organizations – expand coursework outside of occupational health, work toward increased diversity in students and faculty.
- Program Director Kim Wall explained the occupational health and safety emphasis is due to faculty focus. Wall is working to bring in more outside expertise to the program.

**Motion:** LaFollette moved for full six-year accreditation for Western Carolina.

**Discussion:** The Council went into closed session, discussed the program under consideration and agreed that the program should be reaccredited for another six-year term.

**Vote:** Unanimous Vote, 2 abstentions

**Letter Should Include:** standard letter.

### 5.4 North Carolina central University

Site Visit Report: Presented by Milton Morris with support from co-visitor Sandra Long.

- Strengths included:
  - Strong support for a very stable program.
  - Program underwent a re-set after losing accreditation due to program dormancy. Program is on a positive trajectory now and has strong support from faculty, admin. and students.
  - Program has Memorandums of Agreement (MOUs) with local agencies and military for student internships.
  - Continuing education is provided for faculty.
  - All primary reviewer comments were adequately addressed.
- Concerns: Morris reported that many concerns were rectified following the site visit.

- College needed an active advisory committee. There was an advisory committee meeting following the site visit (one had not occurred prior to the visit).
- Internships are research based but are moving toward more field experiences.
- Low student enrollment.
- Dr. Bang is the only faculty with practitioner and academic experience.
- Need succession plan.
- Recommended starting a student environmental health club.
- Currently, there are only 6 majors but program is growing.
- Comments from Dr. John Bang – WCU’s program director:
  - History of accreditation loss: the Environmental Health Department was created by merging of Environmental Science with Geography Departments. This department was expected to produce as many graduates as the two individual departments had in the past. They were not able to enroll enough students to achieve this goal and so had to withdraw from EHAC accreditation.
  - The EH program experienced a turn around and hired another faculty practitioner. Great focus on acquiring practical internship opportunities, although research is also a high priority. Opportunities are prevalent with the NIHS and City of Durham.
  - Also, Dr. Bang is working on creating a student environmental health club with focus on conducting public events and interaction with local community to gain more exposure for the program.
- Questions: Roberts asked if Dr. Bang and students are working with Ft. Bragg? Bang reported an MOU with the army for 2 student interns per summer. Students focus on water, air, food and vector research. Great addition for program (food) because they didn’t have food related experiences other than in class. Welford pointed out that internships with the military are exceptional experiences.

**Motion:** Sandra Long moved for full six-year accreditation for North Carolina Central University.

**Discussion:** The Council went into closed session, discussed the program under consideration and agreed that the program should be reaccredited for another six-year term.

**Vote:** Unanimously passed

**Letter Should Include:**

1. **Encouragement to work toward additional practitioner experience in existing faculty members and future hires.**
2. **Encourage more practitioner based internships.**

**Side Bar discussion – Consistency discussion:**

- Table 2: ensure that everyone is doing Table and that Table 2 is part of the required documentation.
- Limit CV page number. Change label to “bio sketch,” which includes faculty degrees achieved, experience as faculty and practical experience - 1 page max. A letter outlining requirements will accompany communication with PDs regarding accreditation and reaccreditation.
- Site Visit reports – comments/questions outlined by primary reviewers should be specifically addressed.
- Will now require that minutes of advisory board meetings at programs be sent to the EHAC office. Include with Annual Report as this is easy to upload along with the annual report.

## 8.0 Policies and Procedures Discussion – Sharron LaFollette

### 8.1 Preface to Sunday discussion:

- Historically EHAC did not have a policy manual, so a manual was created. However, the document and updates to the document have been poorly maintained during the last 10-15 years. LaFollette has therefor cross-checked documents with minutes to update and present a complete and up to date document.
- LaFollette suggested that instead of relying on an overarching document that contains all subjects, a document be created for each category, so they can be easily accessed, updated and uploaded to the website. Murphy supported this effort, as it creates one location and one policy so there is no contradiction or duplication.
- Suggestion to design website interaction so that pdf is hyperlinked.
- If there is a change – all of those changes will be documented with date and who made/approved the changes.

Proposal from LaFollette:

- Board recommends that Council adopt the document in total – and begin from there with a new origin date.
- LaFollette asked Council to look at the document in the evening and provide any comments at the Sunday morning meeting.

### 8.2 Dues Timing discussion: currently EHAC's fiscal year runs October 1 – September 31 but dues are invoiced in January.

- Board recommends changing accreditation/reaccreditation invoicing to fiscal year so that dues will be invoiced on October 1.
- LaFollette proposed a vote on Sunday – Carla Brown will write a letter explaining the old billing cycle and why we are changing to Oct. 1, 2017 if that is the desire. **Letter will focus on why it seems like they are paying two payments in one year.**

### 8.3 Leadership: Chuck Treser has been elected to the EHAC Council and cannot serve as Executive Director at the same time. Question posed to Council about what course to take. Suggestion was made to promote Leslie Mitchell to Interim Executive Director. Treser will serve as Advisor to the Interim Executive Director.

- **Motion:** LaFollette moved to change Mitchell's title to Interim Executive Director
- **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.
- **Motion:** Sharron moved that the Council directs the EHAC Board to adjust Mitchell's compensation package and duties of the new Interim ED in order to make recommendation to Council for approval of a pay increase in less than 30 days. Treser seconded the motion. Treser steps down and ED Mitchell assumes responsibilities immediately with affirmative vote.
- **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

## 9.0 Recess:

- Dingman moved that the meeting be recessed until tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m.

### **Sunday July 9, 2017**

**7.0 Call to Order:** Murphy called meeting to order at 8am.

**3.0 Elections Chair:** Sandra Long called for volunteers for an Elections Chair.

- Don Williams volunteered and accepted the nomination of the Council.
- Murphy thanked Long for her work.

### **8.0 Policies and Procedures**

**8.1 EHAC Dues Increase discussion (continued from Saturday's introduction):**

- Murphy began the discussion by outlining the current EHAC fee structure for accreditation – Initial Accreditation fee - \$500, Reaccreditation fee - \$250, Annual Accreditation fee - \$1,150 (1 program) and \$1380 (two programs) – and the need for a significant increase in all fees. EHAC has not in the past and is not currently covering the costs of administering the accreditation process.
  - Dingman suggested that Board needs to define the return on investment that EHAC provides in order to justify a fee increase.
  - Knight asked if there is a way to save money internally. Murphy answered that EHAC is currently running on an extremely tight budget. There was discussion around the potential to share space at NEHA's office in Colorado. Treser was unsure if this offer from Dr. Dyjack was still "on the table" and offered to check on its status and agreed that the offer should be considered. Treser also emphasized the importance of keeping EHAC and AEHAP leadership separate for the health of the organizations as well as for outside perception.
  - LaFollette suggested writing a letter to universities explaining the importance and need for divesting EHAC from AEHAP and how that divestment will require a fee increase to support as current fee structures is not covering the costs of administering the accreditation process. A letter to program directors would include a one page summary and then detailed explanation of: an initial fee increase (initial accreditation and reaccreditation) (necessary to support real cost of accreditation. and reaccreditation), explanation of likely increase in dues and invoice date change (to move to EHAC's fiscal year). LaFollette also suggested attaching a survey or feedback form for program directors to state their opinions on the above changes. Emphasis on equating fee/dues increases to administrative costs. David Gilkey added that the value of EHAC needs to be emphasized. Mitchell will conduct a comparison survey of fees at other similar accreditation organizations (research on this topic should be in the office).
  - Murphy explained the value of EHAC from his perspective as a student recruiter and fundraiser. Example: Rolls Royce came to Murphy with knowledge that Findlay is accredited by EHAC and ABET. RR wanted to know that a third party had already evaluated the rigor of programs. They are focused on accredited programs only. EHAC accreditation saves corporations time and effort and that is a major value.

Value for academic program is high job placement, access to USPS internships and NEHA internships, COSTEP, etc – incredible value to students. Board needs to equate that value to an increase in dues. Increases would take effect next year.

- Fee structure levels: How can EHAC strategically increase its fee structure? Suggestions for different levels of fees based upon size, program longevity, etc. and raising fees without harming the potential for program growth, maintenance or future acquisition.  
**Note:** the cost of administering the accreditation process is the same regardless of program size or if one school has both an undergraduate and graduate program.
  - Morris suggested that any letter regarding fee increase should be sent to the program director and to the contact that the PD provides – be it the President of the College, Department Dean, etc.
  - Support for an across the board increase with no discounts for having an undergraduate and graduate program. Board suggested soliciting quotes about the value of EHAC and emphasizing student benefits in letter of explanation, which LaFollette and Busch Isaksen will co-write.
- **Action:** Mitchell will work with Brown and Board to develop a proposed fee structure based upon real numbers that will be provided to the Council and sent to PD's for their review and comment. Fee structure will be adjusted based on Board, Council and Program Director comments and any increase will go before the Council for an early 2018 decision. Decision will be implemented in fall of 2018.
  - Sandra Long suggested providing a video webinar explaining the need for a fee increase in addition to writing a letter and providing time for discussion.  
Note – this effort needs to happen expeditiously – if any Council members are unavailable, please let Mitchell know how to contact you electronically. Council needs to approve the proposed dollars before the letter goes out.
  - Bohan – point of order – guests here and agenda calls.
  - Murphy will work with Mitchell to identify work load and timing and have Mitchell send a letter to Council for approval. Final dues increase will be based on above process. Bohan suggested that the letter will provide program directors and department chairs a heads-up that this will be coming – fee increases will go into effect fall of 2018. Reaccreditation and Initial fee increases will go up in fall of 2017.
- **Motion:** LaFollette moved to increase **reaccreditation fee** to \$500 (from \$250) – effective immediately. Gilkey seconded. The letter to Program Directors will describe that operating costs are increasing and need fees need to increase to \$500 and may increase again later. Dingman suggest having a break out of actual costs to put in the letter. This letter will only go to the programs re-accrediting in 2018.  
**Vote:** 19 yeas with 1 abstention (Welford Roberts)
- **Motion:** LaFollette moved to raise the **initial application fee** for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs from \$500 to \$750 - effective immediately. Busch Isaksen 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion,  
**Vote:** 19 yeas with one abstention (Welford Roberts)

**8.2 Updated and Revised Procedures and Policy Report** (discussion postponed).

**5.0 Accreditation Actions (Continued)**

**5.5 State University of New York – Syracuse**

**5.5.1 Site Visit Report:** Roy Kroeger (let everyone know that Lynn Burgess has retired and will have email for a short period of time).

**Action Item:** Send letter of support for Dickinson State program

- a. Program strengths – great deal of administrative support, adequate (if unused) labs, library, faculty.
- b. Challenges – needing to be addressed:
  - Issues with syllabuses in specialty areas – the program used more than 100% for several different classes. Suggestion – classes need to be reworked – students are getting sufficient information but syllabi need to be adjusted to reflect that and also meet EHAC requirements.
  - Program strong in Environmental Science but a bit of an issue moving into Environmental Health – need more practitioner involvement.
  - Internships need to be more Environmental Health oriented.
  - Internship did not include clock time hours – this needs to be addressed. Newman made recent change to require 180 documented hours.
  - There is no public speaking course except in capstone program – but there is not a class and this needs to be addressed.

**Program Response:** Lee Newman thanked Burgess and Kroeger for their site visit – very appreciative.

- SUNY is an Env. Science program. Newman has found it a challenge getting faculty to understand the difference between Environmental Health vs. Environmental. Science.
- Newman has hired two faculty replacements that cover course work in epidemiology and risk assessment and there have been three additional hires that can assist with teaching in the environmental health program.
- Faculty numbers are adequate as faculty can be used from throughout the college – as the environmental health program is an interdisciplinary program.
- New faculty understand that they are responsible for talking about human aspect of Environmental Health.
- There were three graduates of the program this year with two students participating in environmental health internships and one student conducting an environmental science internship.
- Policy changes created during site visit included requiring 180 internship hours to meet EHAC requirements.
- Public speaking – many courses require oral presentations and faculty can incorporate more into existing courses – developing this right now.
- Course comparison grid – Newman found completing the Table 2 grid very challenging and suggested developing a new way to report this information and/or creating better guidelines for completing the form.

- Newman's goal for the program was to provide concentrations in 7 different areas – to address varied student interests. These areas include: food, remediation, built environment. Trying to use EHAC requirements to make SUNY's program stronger.

**Questions:**

- Concern was expressed about the ability of faculty with environmental science emphasis to advise students with environmental health interest. Newman currently conducts all advising for environmental health students since the program is in such a state of flux. LaFollette suggested creating an advising sheet that students can be given which emphasizes the marketability of an environmental health degree and the classes that are necessary to acquire the degree.
- Lewis noted the lack of practical environmental health in the full-time faculty in the environmental health program. Newman is covering this with adjunct faculty who have a great deal of practical experience.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the environmental health related soils class and the lack of a food safety class. Newman explained that the food safety and other courses are taught by Syracuse University faculty via an MOU that allows SUNY Syracuse students to take up to 16 credits at Syracuse University.
- Newman commented that SUNY Syracuse is well known as Environmental Science school but they want to achieve EHAC accreditation so that they can strongly advertise their Environmental Health program. Students seem to be interested in EH opportunity.

**Motion:** Kroeger made a motion to give conditional approval for 2 years with a new self-study and new site visit conducted at the close of the 2-year period.

**Discussion:** The Council went into closed session, discussed the program under consideration and agreed that the program would be given a 2 year conditional accreditation.

LaFollette called the question on the motion to give conditional approval for 2 years with a new self-study and new site visit conducted at the close of the two-year period.

**Vote: 5 yeas, 11 neas – Motion failed**

**Motion:** LaFollette proposed a two-year conditional accreditation with two years of full accreditation after meeting requirements electronically (no site visit). A time line will be established for meeting conditions over two-year conditional period.

**Vote: Passed unanimously**

**Letter to Include the following conditions:**

1. Syllabi that demonstrate labs taught and that describe lab activities.
2. Clarification of three credits of specialty areas – so that they add up to 100%.
3. Assign an EHAC mentor to help Newman with meeting conditions in two years. Welford Roberts will mentor SUNY Syracuse and will work with Undergraduate Program coordinator Steve Johnson as well.
4. Request food class syllabi to determine if food safety and assurance should be required instead of food fights class.
5. Revise Table 2.
6. Clarify all syllabi – especially need to include learning objectives.
7. Clearly define on advising sheet what environmental health is so students understand the

difference between environmental science and environmental health.

8. Increase partnerships with the local environmental health community.
9. Recommend department chair demonstrate environmental health practitioner experience and if not able to, the department chair needs to obtain experience via an internship or the like.
10. Add a local person to advisory committee.

## **5.0 Protocol Visits Continued.**

### **5.1 AEHAP President Jason Marion**

- Marion stressed getting the environmental health lexicon into elementary and middle schools – USA people do not know what EH is and that is AEHAP's objective – to make EH a household word. Carla Brown has assessed and aligned AEHAP's finances, Treser stepped up to lead AEHAP and Mitchell has as worked to communicate with current and potential programs. NEHA journal articles have been data driven and the next one is focused on growth of programs – why and how are they growing. Programs connected to private corporations are growing. Public sector pay is not keeping up with private sector. EHAC programs are producing students that are being plucked up by private industry, rather than public agencies.
- CEPH graduates are not meeting statutory requirements for state and local agencies so there is real opportunity to get CEPH schools EHAC accredited. There is no desire to water down EHAC standards at all.

## **8.2 Updated and Revised Procedures and Policy Report (discussion resumed).**

### **8.2.2 Review and Approval of Revised P&P Manual**

- Sharron received one comment from Turco. Some formatting issues need to be taken care of and once this is complete, the policy document will be sent to the Council for review. Deadline for policy and procedure comments – 30 days from now (August 9). Please include suggestions for policies that might be missing and needed. Treser and LaFollette will work to make sure documents are complete. Approval provided for making stand-alone documents - June 27, 2017 document.

## **9.0 Miscellaneous Business:**

- Pat Bohan suggested creating a library or repository of environmental health materials and history to capture the breath of work and experience being lost as career environmental health employees retire. Alan Delapenna's book was cited as an example of what could be done. Murphy offered to have a graduate student do work on this effort. Example of how material could be used: nationwide campaign on EH as a profession. NEHA is archiving Mangold's information so they may be interested helping with other practitioner's information as well.

### **9.1 EHAC meeting 2018 Proposed Date: June 23 – 24, 2018**

- Policy reminder – programs with no problems can be voted upon electronically. If all 12 programs up for reaccreditation in 2018 have to be present – the meeting will have to be extended.

### **9.2 Recognition and Awards – Sandra Long and Tim Murphy were presented with certificates.**

**9.3 Installation of New Officers:**

- Murphy thanked the Council for allowing him to serve as Chair for the last several years citing it as quite an honor.

**9.4 Closed session to discuss MVSU:**

- LaFollette requested Council members contact MSSU's graduate program to encourage them to start communicating with her around re-accreditation. As yet, they have met none of the conditions assigned in 2016 and will not be ready for self-study submission in for fall 2017. **Mitchell will send out contact information to Council.**

**10.0 Adjournment** – Murphy adjourned the meeting at 10:42am

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Suppes, Secretary

Attested to by:



Charles D. Treser, Interim Executive Director