



National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council

*Enhancing the education and training of students
in environmental health science and protection*

EHAC Board/Budget Meeting Minutes – May 20, 2021 – 1:00-3:00pm Pac. Time

Board Members Present: Jason Finley, Tania Busch Isaksen, David Gilkey, Tim Murphy, Laura Suppes, Don Williams

Board Members Absent: Dave Gilkey

Visitor:

EHAC Staff: Leslie Mitchell

Budget Meeting:

Murphy reported on the current balance sheet and income and expense sheet with no questions from the Board.

Murphy presented the proposed 2021-2022 budget prepared in consultation with Mitchell, Finley and Murphy.

Motion: Murphy moved to accept the fiscal year 2021-2022 proposed budget with caveats cited below.

Second: Williams

Discussion: recorded in caveats to motion cited below.

Vote: Proposed Budget for 2021-2022 unanimously approved with the following caveats:

- Mitchell will research the cost of accepting credit card payments.
- Mitchell will research moving the P.O. Box from Burien to a location near her current residence. This move would require Mitchell to personally contact accounting departments at each accredited program to ensure that the change of address is correctly and timely updated for invoicing purposes.
- Mitchell will approach AEHAP to see if they would like to share the cost of a booth at the 2022 NEHA AEC to be held in Spokane. If AEHAP is agreeable and EHAC shares a booth, Mitchell will use the AEC attendee list to personally invite any attending academic programs to the booth to learn about EHAC accreditation. If EHAC attends a booth, all interactions will be tracked – to measure usefulness of engagement at the AEC exhibiting session.
- Mitchell will reserve a Poster Session spot at the 2022 AEC in order to advertise the value of EHAC accreditation. A representative will attend the poster session and Mitchell will may ask an EHAC student to assist (both with poster session and with the booth).
- Mitchell will ask NEHA ED Dave Dyjack if he can discount the registration cost for the AEC for EHAC.

May 20, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

1.0 Meeting Called to order at: 1:00pm PAC. time by Chair Finley.

2.0 Standing Items

2.1 Approval of Agenda: Murphy moved to approve the May 20, 2021 agenda with a second from Williams, followed by unanimous approval.

2.2 Approval of March 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes: Suppes moved to approve the March 23, 2021 minutes. There was a second from Williams and the minutes were approved unanimously.

3.0 Reports

3.1 Treasurer's Report: Murphy reported on current financial documents during the budget meeting, with no questions from the Board.

3.2 Chairperson's/ED Report: Finley/Mitchell

- NEPHIP – possible sunset by CDC- update (Mitchell) - Mitchell reported Dyjack's advisement that CDC may be planning to sunset support of the NEPHIP program. Dyjack wrote a number of letters to Eric Svendsen (CDC) and other citing recent publications in the JEH showing the great success and value of the program. Mitchell contacted CDC's Justin Gerding. Gerding reported that funding looks o.k. for this budgeting cycle but may be in peril during the next cycle.
 - Board suggested a letter writing campaign from EHAC, accredited program directors and NEHA veterans. Board suggested focusing effort on obtaining letters from students who changed career path plans from private industry to public health – due to their NEPHIP experiences.
 - Busch Isaksen is pulling together letters from her students that are NEPHIP alums.

Action: Mitchell will prepare:

- 1. Letter of support from the EHAC Council addressed to Eric Svendsen and Pat Breyse**
 - 2. Template letter of support for Program Directors.**
 - 3. Template letter of support for NEPHIP veterans (students).**
- Preaccreditation questions (Mitchell) - Mitchell reported on questions around preaccreditation that arose during mentorship of Brigham Young University. Mitchell confirmed with the Board that "Preaccreditation" is a status that is conveyed by the EHAC Council as result of a full application for accreditation. In other words, a program cannot "apply" for preaccreditation status.
 - Discussion ensued related to the confusing nature of "preaccreditation" status and the lack of benefit to programs that receive this designation. Preaccreditation results in a costly and time consuming process as Preaccredited programs are required to reapply for accreditation by submitting a new Self-study and hosting a second site visit. Rather, Conditional status is much more useful, efficient, and economical for degree programs.
 - Board members expressed interest in removing Preaccreditation status from EHAC policy due to its confusing nature and lack of usefulness. No tangible benefit could be described for awarding Preaccreditation status.

- **ACTION: Mitchell will place a discussion of removing Preaccreditation status from EHAC policy on the June Board meeting agenda.**
- **ACTION: Mitchell will communicate this information to BYU, emphasizing that BYU must graduate students from their proposed degree program before applying for accreditation, OR they can apply just prior to when they will have their first graduate from the proposed program. Students must graduate BEFORE the EHAC Annual Meeting when their accreditation will be considered. For example, BYU will achieve program approval in Fall 2021 and can then apply for accreditation in October 2022, if there will be graduates in either the Fall of 2022, or the Spring of 2023, which would be prior to the July 2023 annual meeting.**
- NEHA EH Workforce Act letter – NEHA is soliciting organizational signatures on a support letter for the EH Workforce Act – HR 2262.
 - **Motion:** Murphy motioned to approve EHAC’s signing on to the NEHA letter of support for the Environmental Health Workforce Act – HR 2262.
 - **Second:** Williams
 - **Discussion:** Board felt this legislation is a win/win for everyone involved.
 - **Vote:** Unanimously approved.
 - **ACTION: Mitchell will send a copy of the letter to Program Directors alerting them to the opportunity to sign on in support of this legislation.**
- EHAC Annual Mtg. agenda (Mitchell) – review agenda and Committee/SWOT analysis idea.
 - Mitchell presented draft agenda to the Board and asked for advisement from Busch Isaksen regarding time needed for Graduate Guidelines revision and discussion of the inclusion of interpretations within the Undergraduate Requirements. Mitchell made changes to the agenda per Board discussion.
 - **ACTION: Mitchell will finalize a draft once the Guidelines Review Committee meets on June 4, 2021 and Busch Isaksen has a better feel for the time needed for discussion and revision.**
- ABIH/Board for Global EHS Credentialing (BGC) (Finley/Mitchell):
 - MOU and Badge proposal – Finley explained that BGC adjusted their past proposal for partnership with EHAC by proposing a nonbinding MOU agreement rather than a non-disclosure agreement, which is a binding legal document. Finley also explained that while BGC is a new organization, it developed out of the American Board of Industrial Hygiene. They are, of course, trying to increase their reach in order to increase the number of members and build/reestablish credibility as a certification organization.
 - Busch Isaksen requested more information regarding BGC, as she was not sure that it is an appropriate set of credentials for EHAC graduates. She asked if the four major certifications are appropriate (aligned with criteria) for EHAC students/graduates. Murphy submitted that whether EHAC students could pass the exams is program dependent. Programs heavier on science - chemistry especially - would likely do fine. Busch Isaksen was also concerned with damaging our partnership with NEHA. Finley felt that this relationship is solid and would not be impacted negatively by a partnership with BGC that is focused on increasing benefits for EHAC students.

- Suppes reiterated her support for this partnership, as she felt it would be a benefit to EHAC students and that this should be the Board and Council's primary concern.
 - **ACTION: Mitchell will request more information related to exam content, study materials and complete additional background research to ensure this is a positive and beneficial partnership for EHAC to enter.**
- IFEH (Mitchell)
 - Andrew Mathieson, Editor in Chief of the International Federation of Health's online magazine Environment and Health International, has offered a number of options for publication to EH academic programs, students, and practitioners. He is also offering space for a half page advertisement for EH academic programs at no cost.
 - Finley submitted that this is a wonderful and generous opportunity and that EHAC should work to foster this relationship.

3.3 AEHAP Update (Kim Hall was absent)

3.4 Undergraduate Program Report – tabled until June meeting

3.5 Graduate Program Report – Vice Chair Busch Isaksen

3.6 Committee Reports

- Nominations Committee
 - Newly elected Council Members – Williams presented list of new Council Members and commented on the larger number than usual of nominees this year – particularly practitioners. He also commented that the caliber of nominees was very high, which is a testament to the respect for and credibility of EHAC accreditation.

3.7 Office Report (Mitchell):

- EH Coalition Workforce Committee publications – tabled for June meeting.

4.0 Old Business:

5.0 New Business – postponed until June Board meeting.

- IUPUI update (Mitchell)
 - Restructure of EH program is leading to impending accreditation loss. What does the future of EH education look like? How should EHAC respond? What data do we need?
 - Potential workforce study – building upon UNCOVER EH effort = EH Workforce Skills Survey (this type of things is included in the EH Workforce Act (MI))
 - Env. Health and Equity Collaborative (formerly "EH Coalition) Reports
 - Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation: https://www.aphea.be/Pages/A3.PROGRAMMES/Accredited_Programmes.html
- Need for Online specific accreditation criteria or evaluation criteria – laboratory classes especially?

- Indiana University Bloomington – BSPH curriculum aligns closely with EHAC criteria – pursue accreditation interest? How best to do this?

6.0 Next Board Meeting: ??

7.0 Adjournment Mtg. adjourned at 3:00pm Pacific.