

Panel on Public Affairs Meeting
February 3, 2017
APS Washington Office of Public Affairs
529 14th Street, NW, Suite 1050, Washington, DC

Members present:

F. Houle (Chair), M. Marder (Chair Elect), J. Wells (Vice Chair)
R. Bandyopadhyay, S. Bare, M. Barnett, W. Collins, D. Dahlberg, B. DeMarco, E. Gates, D. Ginley
(*virtual*), V. Grassian, B. Jones, M. D. McNeese, H. Neal (PPC Chair), M. Tamor, A. Taylor (*virtual*), P.
Taylor, J. Wells, E. Yablonovitch

Advisors/Staff present:

K. Cole, M. Elsesser, L. Greene, R. Falcone (*virtual*), D. Gross (*virtual*), A. Hu, K. Kirby, G. Mack, J.
Russo, F. Slakey

Guests:

William Barletta

Call to Order

F. Houle called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

Welcome, Approval of Minutes

A call for edits to the October 2016 minutes was made. Hearing none, a motion was introduced.

MOTION: *To accept the October 2016 minutes, as presented.*
 (Dahlberg/DeMarco)

ACTION: *The motion passed, unanimously.*

Statements up for Review in 2017

Active APS statements up for review in 2017 were distributed to the appropriate POPA Subcommittees. The Subcommittees will provide recommendations on whether each statement should remain current, undergo full review, or be archived for the future at the June 2017 meeting.

National Security Subcommittee

APS Statement 02.1 – DOD Funding for Basic Research
APS Statement 97.2 – The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Ethics

APS Statement 02.3 – Policies for Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct
APS Statement 02.2 – APS Guidelines for Professional Conducts

Physics & the Public Subcommittee

APS Statement 02.5 – Against the Call to Boycott Israeli Scientists
APS Statement 02.4 – Improving Education for Professional Ethics, Standards and Practices
APS Statement 97.4 – Open Flow of Scientific Information

It was noted that the Ethics Subcommittee might want to take a unified look at all APS ethics related statements this year in light of recent plagiarism issues. D. Ginley volunteered to sit on any committee reviewing these statements to provide a COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) viewpoint.

Energy & Environment Subcommittee

Proposed Statement on Addressing the Global Energy Challenge

An assessment of APS member comments on the proposed APS Statement on Addressing the Global Energy Challenge was provided to the Committee. Suggestions were discussed and a slate of proposed changes addressing member input was voted upon.

- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the phrase “and other greenhouse gases”.*
(Yablonovitch/Bare)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, unanimously.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the words “conservation” & “sustainability”.*
(Yablonovitch/P. Taylor)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, unanimously.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the word “detrimental”.*
(P. Taylor/Bare)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, with one abstention.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the word “energy”.*
(Yablonovitch/Grassian)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, unanimously.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the word “affordable”.*
(Yablonovitch/Collins)
- ACTION:** *The motion failed, with one abstention.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the words “as” & “as possible”.*
(Yablonovitch/Bare)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, with three abstentions.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the words “and storage”.*
(Yablonovitch/Collins)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, unanimously.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the words “minimize harm to”.*
(Grassian/Bare)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, unanimously.*
- MOTION:** *To accept the addition of the words “present and future workforce”.*
(Grassian/Bare)
- ACTION:** *The motion passed, with one abstention.*
- MOTION:** *To delete “other greenhouse gasses” and substitute with alternative wording, to be discussed.*
(Dahlberg/Yablonovitch)
- ACTION:** *The motion was tabled in favor of a vote on 3 options for wording*
- MOTION:** *To consider appropriate wording (see motion above), amongst 3 options, including:*
- A.** *“other greenhouse gasses”*
 - B.** *“heat-trapping emissions”*
 - C.** *“other greenhouse gasses and heat-trapping emissions”*
- (Yablonovitch/Collins)**
- ACTION:** *Option C carried, with a majority vote.*

MOTION: *To reorder points in paragraph 1 (moving #3 to #1) to indicate there are steps that can be taken immediately to address the global energy challenge.*
(Grassian/Collins)

ACTION: *The motion passed, with two abstentions.*

MOTION: *To change, “low-carbon energy consumption” to “low fossil carbon emission energy system.”*
(Collins/McNeese)

Friendly Amendment (Marder): Use “low-fossil carbon emissions” instead of “low-fossil carbon emission energy system”. **(Tamor accepted)**

ACTION: *The motion passed, with a majority vote and three abstentions.*

MOTION: *To change, “present and future workforce” to “the public.”*
(Collins/Bare)

Friendly Amendment (Ginley): Say “educate the public and train the present and future workforce”. **(Collins accepted)**

ACTION: *The motion passed, with a majority vote and one abstention.*

FINAL MOTION: To accept the following statement on *Addressing the Global Energy Challenge: Accelerating the Transition to Carbon-Neutral Energy Sources* for presentation to the APS Council for a final vote at its next meeting:

**Addressing the Global Energy Challenge:
Accelerating the Transition to Carbon-Neutral Energy Sources**

The Council of the American Physical Society strongly advocates that the United States: 1) implement policies that promote conservation, efficiency, sustainability, resilience and innovation throughout the global energy system; 2) make sustained and broad-based investments in research and development of long-lasting reduced-carbon and carbon-neutral energy cycles and technologies; and 3) support research into means of reducing the concentration of carbon dioxide, and other greenhouse gases and heat-trapping emissions in the atmosphere. Such policies and investments are essential to ensure our national security and to provide an adequate range of options that will protect the environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as called for in the APS Statement on Earth’s Changing Climate.

Background

The global demand for energy continues to grow as the world population increases and as nations expand or address concerns of development, equity and security. Because of the detrimental climate impacts of greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel-generated energy there must be a global move toward carbon-neutral or carbon-free sources of energy that are as environmentally benign as possible throughout their life cycle. The transition to low-fossil carbon emissions will require changes in how energy is generated, used and stored worldwide. Energy distribution and storage systems of all scales will also need to have a high degree of stability, adaptability and resilience.

Physics research plays a vital role in addressing the technological challenges associated with creating a global economy that is based on long-lasting, and ultimately, carbon-neutral or carbon-free sources of energy and systems that minimize harm to the global environment. Additionally, the physics community must continue to do its part to educate the public and train the present and future workforce in energy research, development, and technology.

ACTION: *The motion passed, unanimously.*

Update: APS GHG Inventory

W. McCurdy and APS Staff provided an overview of the project. A summary of the results from Scopes 1 & 2 of the inventory was provided. These sets of data have been submitted for third party verification. Progress on Scope 3 calculations continues. Scope 3 focuses on business travel, employee commuting, and APS investments. An inventory of GHG emissions resulting from travel associated with APS's six national meetings is being conducted. Results of the Scope 3 inventory, as well as a discussion of potential actions, will be provided at the June meeting.

Proposed Bio-Sequestration Project

Members were presented with an idea for a possible study on whether agro-sequestration can remove enough carbon from the atmosphere to solve the climate change crisis. POPA agreed that they are interested in hearing more about the topic.

ACTION: *The Energy & Environment Subcommittee will work with E. Yablonovitch to prepare a full study proposal for consideration and review at the June POPA meeting.*

Office of Public Affairs Update – Climate Change Lobbying Activities

APS Staff provided an overview of current projects underway in the office, including those related to climate change advocacy, the immigration ban, and the March for Science. PPC and the BEC review all of the advocacy efforts of APS. They are designed to rapidly respond to issues as they arise. POPA makes sure that APS maintains the long-view. The committee develops long-term statements that help preserve the enduring posture of APS.

National Security Subcommittee

Update on Fundamental Science Capabilities of NNSA Facilities

F. Houle provided an update. Conversations were held with the leadership of Sandia, Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Labs about their interest. Sandia was positive about the opportunity and offered suggestions on scope. Los Alamos might potentially support such a study. Lawrence Livermore sought additional information on the proposal.

Update on HEU Study Workshop

Study Chair, J. Wells provided an update. A workshop to convene study members and guest experts is planned for April 3rd, 2017 in Washington, DC. The workshop will be webcast so that interested members of the community can listen in on the discussion.

Physics & the Public Subcommittee

Board Statement on Racial Violence

K. Kirby provided background on how the Board Statement on Racial Violence came about. It originated from the Committee on Minorities as a response to violence against people of color by the police. A statement drafted by the Committee on Minorities and AAPT's complementary committee, was pushed out with APS' name on it, although it had not gone through the statement approval process. The protocol for producing statements on time-sensitive issues is to produce a Board Statement. Board Statements are meant to be nimble and they sunset in one year. The Council Steering Committee provided a revised statement for the POPA Steering Committee to consider and provide feedback on. POPA members realized that involving the Society in issues, as such, is important to protecting our members. The term "positions of power" in the revised statement was questioned, as was the veiled reference to specific events.

Proposed Statement on Guns in the Classroom

S. Bare provided background. A discussion ensued on the proposed statement's dual aims: campus carry laws & safety vs. federal funding of gun violence research. These are two different issues. It was suggested that the Subcommittee consider focusing on what APS can advocate for and return in June with a statement focused on support for gun violence research.

Education Study Survey – Final Report & Update

The study chair, M. Marder, provided an overview of the findings and recommendations of the final report. These results, as well as the full report, can be found at <http://www.aps.org/policy/reports/popa-reports/stemteachers.cfm>.

APS Assessment of the Open Data Policy

APS Staff provided an overview of a survey conducted of APS Unit Leadership and Authors regarding their assessment of the OSTP directive for open data implementation. Based on survey data, APS urges that before implementing a broad Open Data policy, the federal government should carry out a thorough examination of costs and impact. This should include evaluation of the effects not only on individual researchers, but also on national labs, user facilities, and industry. APS supports the proposal in the NSF workshop report to implement pilot projects to evaluate and develop the infrastructure required for an open data system. APS will formulate a particular recommendation for an open data policy after further discussion with Unit leadership, the Physics Policy Committee, and APS senior management.

General Business

Suggestions of candidates for 2018 POPA membership were collected.
Volunteers for 2017 POPA Subcommittees were recorded.

H. Neal addressed the committee to discuss support for international research opportunities for physics undergraduates and his continued work on the project.

Intersessional Minutes

- All POPA Subcommittees held ongoing business teleconferences between February 3rd & June 1st on projects underway.
- The APS Council voted to approve APS Statement 17.1 - Addressing the Global Energy Challenge: Accelerating the Transition to Carbon-Neutral Energy Sources
- The HEU Study Committee held its workshop on April 3rd and writing assignments are in progress.

Next Meeting

The date for the next POPA meeting will be June 2nd, 2017.

Adjournment

ACTION: *F. Houle adjourned the meeting 2:44 PM.*