

# **Minutes**

## **FSAB Annual Meeting III (Virtual)**

### **March 6, 2022 2:00-5:00 PM EDT**

Present- James Adcock (Public Director), Peter Alexander, Karin Athanas (Public Director), Ann Bunch (Vice President), Stephanie Domitrovich (Public Director), Bethany Fax (Treasurer), Demi Garvin (Secretary), Mark Goff, Bruce Goldberger (Immediate Past President), David Khey (Public Director), Ken Melson (Public Director), Lawrence Quarino, Marina Stajic, Peter Valentin, Emily Will (President), Elizabeth Ziolkowski

Absent-None

Guests – Robin Ainsworth, Ted Burkes

Call to Order: 2:03 PM (EDT)-Will

Recognition of Directors: Donna Boyd (resigned) and Paula Brumit (deceased)

President Will asked for a moment of silence in honor and remembrance of Director Paula Brumit. The FSAB has made a donation to the family's charity of choice in honor of Director Brumit. President Will tasked the EC to discuss appropriate ways for the FSAB to recognize and honor Directors when they leave the Board.

**Action:** To discuss the EC to discuss ways for the FSAB to recognize and honor Directors when they leave the Board. (EC)

### **Approval of Agenda**

Discussion-None

**Motion:** To accept the agenda as presented. MSCU

### **Approval of Minutes**

Discussion-PD Melson inquired as to the purchase of cyber insurance. Per President Will, AM Williamson believes that the current level of security is sufficient for our purposes and the Board has not pursued this purchase to date. In addition, options for digital authentications to Adobe® have not yet been identified.

**Action:** To research the purchase of cyber insurance for the FSAB. (EC)

**Action:** To research options for digital authentication to Adobe®. (EC)

VP Bunch proposed two amendments to the 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes: add a) under ISO Committee paragraph B (page 2), the Legal Committee has completed its work; and b) the Risk Committee has revised the FSAB *Procedure 12* and introduced the concept of risk throughout the P&P. (Revised 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes attached)

**Motion:** To accept the minutes of February 7, 2021 as amended. MSCU

**President's Report** –President Will thanked the Board for its work. It has been a challenging year. In 2021, all meetings were held virtually. The P&P Committee and ARCs have worked diligently to accomplish their duties. Pandemic and operational challenges gave rise to the introduction of provisional reaccreditation. PD Khey has developed a survey instrument to obtain CAB feedback; more information will be presented during this meeting. New committees to be formed during this meeting.

**Vice President's Report** – VP Bunch summarized the 2022 Management Review. (provided in the meeting materials) The purpose of the Management Review is to evaluate what the FSAB is doing with regard to the Management System. **Report highlights:** Audits: Performance Audit Committee (PAC); (Members-Alexander, Bunch (Chair), Quarino, Ziolkowski) The PAC was established to assess how the FSAB is performing as an organization. The Committee developed evaluation criteria as well as mission and vision statements. A second party assessment is recommended. As an outreach effort, the PAC recommends development of an informational letter (e.g., possible pamphlet) to introduce the FSAB to interested national and international parties/stakeholders. This document could also be used when contacts are developed with overseas forensic organizations, the states Attorneys General and other CABs who may be interested in accreditation. It was noted that the FSAB power point presentation is quite dated for current use.

P&P Update Committee (Members-Bunch (Chair), Garvin, Melson) The Committee's work is in its final stages. The FSAB guiding documents should then be aligned with the latest ISO/IEC 17011: 2017 standards. Website Committee (Members-Bunch, Garvin (Chair), Melson; Jim Williamson, Sherri Williamson)-A website link has been sent out to all Directors. Please look review the proposed site and provide comments. Goals are to improve the website aesthetics as well as to ensure that content is accurate and current.

**Action:** To review and comment on the proposed FSAB website. (Board)

VP Bunch conducted a peer evaluation survey. Feedback identified: a) strengths- the FSAB personnel, volunteerism, collegiality; b) weaknesses-volunteerism makes it difficult to get things done in a timely fashion; c) suggestions for improvement-delegate duties outside the EC, emphasizing training. There were no international activities during 2021. The following nonconformities were identified: a) Problems with accreditation applications-three different versions were submitted, b) External training-all Directors are required to complete: "Personnel Certification: Understanding the Requirements and Concepts of ISO/IEC 17024" (ANSI), c) In-house training will be implemented in 2022. In-house training is not currently being tracked. Complaints will be discussed in the CRC report. Contracts-there is one contract in place-that with Administrative Manager Jim Williamson. A review of the contract revealed that website services are not mentioned; the contract should be revised accordingly.

VP Bunch recommends three major focus efforts in the coming year: a) to ensure that our interface with the public is accurate, b) to ensure that all personnel are trained with associated documentation, and c) to review our records retention process.

**Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Fax worked with AM Williamson to prepare the report. (provided in the meeting materials) Total assets are approximately 25% higher when compared to January 2021 data. The lack of Board travel and related meeting expenses over the last two years are contributing factors. It is noted that administrative services expenses will be higher in the coming year. One Director completed ANSI training in 2021. Invoices were distributed for two on-site visits. There are no outstanding invoices to date. The Board is reminded that fee

collection is the source of the FSAB's revenue. The Board's projected financial outlook for 2022 is positive.

**Secretary's Report** –Secretary Garvin asked Directors to complete the annual mandatory documents and also submit current CVs as soon as possible. The EC has been meeting regularly to conduct business during the pandemic. Secretary Garvin stated that the Annual Report needs revision. The document is encrypted and cannot be revised in its current form. The Annual Report instructs the CABs to send the completed report to Kimberly Wrasse (AAFS) versus AM Williamson.

IPP Goldberger recommended that each CAB also annually submit copies of its management report and internal audit as attachments to the Annual Report. Dr. Goldberger recommended that the FSAB obtain information from the ABC as to the rationale for their restructure.

## **Committee Reports**

### **a. Accreditation Review Committee**

ABFT-The ARC requested additional documentation from the ABFT after the site visit. The ARC recommended provisional accreditation and a letter was issued to the ABFT. On January 30, 2022, the ABFT submitted revisions to its initial written responses; these were subsequently reviewed by the ARC. On February 25, 2022, ARC Chair Alexander had a virtual site visit with the ABFT. It was determined that all issues had been addressed satisfactorily. He recommends a revision to the FSAB *Procedure 10* to make such site visits optional. The ARC is unanimously recommending full ABFT accreditation.

Nominations-The Committee's report was provided in the meeting materials. Prior to report preparation, the Committee evaluated current terms of office for all Directors and proposed nominations. The Committee recommends addition of two highly qualified new Directors, Robin Ainsworth (Regular Director) and Tracy Walraven (Public Director). Their respective CV's were included in the meeting materials. Additional terms of office are recommended for Directors Domitrovich, Fax, Garvin, and Melson. The Committee recommends that PD Melson continues to serve on the EC. The 2022-2023 slate of officers is presented for Board consideration: Ann Bunch (President), Demi Garvin (Vice President), Larry Quarino (Secretary), Bethany Fax (Treasurer).

Board discussion ensued regarding the absence of an Immediate Past President candidate on the proposed slate. Should the IPP position be part of the slate as it is not an elected office. Current language in the FSAB *Bylaws* may be unclear. PD Melson referenced *Bylaws* (5.4.2.1) and the application of the language (5.2.2). The IPP is an officer position, not an elected officer position. The IPP position may remain vacant (6.3.1). The language in the general provision (6.2) is superseded by more specific language as found in (5.4.2.1). An exception can be made as long as the individual is elected. When not elected, the term ends. Otherwise, the procedure as described is in violation of the FSAB *Bylaws* and is not aligned with ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Standards. For clarity, a vote in the affirmative signifies that President Will will not move into the IPP position. Dr. Goldberger will vacate the position and the office will remain vacant until next the president fills the vacancy.

**Motion:** That the FSAB interpret the FSAB *Bylaws* (5.4.2.2) to mean that a President elected under that provision does not pass to the Immediate Past President position when not elected to another Officer position. For: 9. Against: 5. Abstaining: 2 MC

**Action:** To clarify and amend the language in the FSAB *Bylaws* (5.4.2.2) to require a full Board vote at a later date. (Melson, Board)

It is noted that a succession plan procedure is being developed for the FSAB leadership.

The Board thanked President Will for extensive contributions and service to the FSAB.

President Will may continue as an Affiliate. She is also eligible to rejoin the FSAB after twelve months.

### Election of Officers and Directors

There were no Officer nominations from the floor.

**Motion:** To accept the slate of Officers as presented. For:15. Against:0. Abstaining:1. MC

Dr. Goldberger introduced the nominated Directors: Robin Ainsworth (ABFO, Regular Director) and Tracy Walraven (IACIS, Public Director).

**Motion:** To accept Robin Ainsworth as a Regular Director. For:15. Against:0. Abstaining:1. MC

**Motion:** To accept Tracy Walraven as a Public Director. For:15. Against:0. Abstaining:1. MC

**Action:** To notify Director Ainsworth and Public Director Walraven of their respective elections to the FSAB. (Goldberger)

**Motion:** To approve extended terms of office for Stephanie Domitrovich, Bethany Fax, Demi Garvin, and Ken Melson. For:12. Against:0. Abstaining: 4. MC

**Motion:** To reappoint Public Director Melson to another term on the EC. For:15. Against:0. Abstaining:1. MC

### **Current/Unfinished Business**

President Will must reappoint the 2021 ARC Chairs for those CABs currently transitioning from provisional to full accreditation. The CABs should be made aware that they can remedy at any time during the year once there is agreement between the ARC and CAB that all requirements have been fulfilled. A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time to vote on a CAB's reaccreditation. Dr. Goldberger and Director Ziolkowski have agreed to complete their work on their respective ARC's. Director Khey will serve as the IBFES ARC Chair and Liz Ziolkowski remain on this ARC. Dr. Goldberger will be appointed as an Affiliate and will continue to serve on the IACIS ARC. Director Goff will serve as the IACIS ARC Chair-Affiliates may not serve in that capacity.

On February 16, 2022, Director Ziolkowski communicated to the IBFES that they would receive further information from President Will before March 1, 2022. A letter has been written by President Will but will need to be issued by President-elect Bunch.

**Action:** To contact the IBFES as soon as possible. (Bunch)

Break at 3:22 PM (EDT) Meeting resumes at 3:40 PM (EDT).

Website Committee Update-The site was shared with the Board in real time. The Committee advocates posting the accreditation certificates to the CAB logos on the public side of the website. While there is no specific target date launch at this time, time is of the essence. The Committee recommends the addition of FAQs. The Director Ziolkowski and Public Director Domitrovich have volunteered to assist with new content development. The Board requested clarification of the payment structure for the website design (i. e., invoice to AM Williamson or directly to Eric Willingham).

**Action:** To clarify payment structure for the web design. (Bunch)

CAB Survey- Public Director Khey began with a previously vetted survey used by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (accreditation body of colleges and universities in the southern states). This instrument parallels what we are trying to accomplish in terms of feedback. He intends to validate a survey instrument that we can use going forward. CAB feedback is generally favorable. There is a need for continuing education and training; CABs are requesting clarifications to processes. In the coming year, Dr. Khey will work through EC prior to launching the next survey.

Code of Ethics and Conduct (Garvin) This document has been revised by P&P Review Committee. Contractors and subject matter experts were incorporated with use of the term "FSAB personnel". Reference was also made to the *Annual Agreement and Disclosure Concerning Impartiality, Conflict of Interest, And Confidentiality for Persons Involved in FSAB Accreditation Activities*.

**Motion:** To adopt the proposed revisions to the *Code of Ethics and Conduct* as presented.  
MSCU

Annual Training (Melson)-The Board did not meet this year for in-person annual training. We have discussed the use of webinars and other virtual training. All training must be tracked. Self-training has been proposed. Once the *Policy Manual* and *Procedures* revisions are approved, each Board member should review and become familiar with these documents as well as the *Checklist for On-Site Visits*. ARC members should review this document to compare it with what transpired during their respective on-site visits.

**Action:** To prepare a virtual in-house training activity using the *Policy Manual* and *Procedures*. (Melson)

Virtual in-house training will occur sometime during 2022. A possible webinar opportunity may also be available for the CABs.

Vice President Bunch noted that the SWOT form is to be completed by each ARC Chair at the completion of the accreditation process.

**Action:** To complete the SWOT form after the accreditation process is complete. (ARCs)

Test Surveillance Update (Melson, Stajic)-Surveillance was conducted during the 2022 AAFS Meeting (Seattle, WA). Director Stajic surveilled the ABC (Written) Examination; there were two proctors and two examinees present. All aspects of the examination process were deemed acceptable. Public Director Melson surveilled the ABFT (Written) Examination; there were two proctors and one examinee present. All aspects of the examination process were deemed acceptable.

**Action:** To address surveillance activities for those CABs employing testing centers. (Board)

## **New Business and Committee Appointments**

VP Bunch lost meeting connection due to weather conditions. (4:04 PM EDT)

While President Will has prepared a grid of new committee assignments, it may be best for President-elect Bunch to make these appointments. The FSAB should develop a CAB surveillance process for the off-cycle years so that we are annually reviewing some aspect of each CAB's program. An ad hoc Surveillance Committee should be formed and composed of individuals who are not serving on the EC. Initial work should include defining its role and specific tasks (e. g., CAB website review, examination surveillance, survey). Committee Members will be: David Khey, Karen Athanas, and one of the newly appointed Directors.

Dr. Goldberger proposed that in lieu of the Secretary, this Committee be tasked with review of each CAB's Internal Audit and Annual Reports. An *ad hoc* Application Improvement Committee will be chaired by Peter Alexander with members Stephanie Domitrovich, Larry Quarino, and Peter Valentin. The Committee may create a new application or revise the existing one. It is understood that this document must follow the FSAB Standards which are responsive to the ISO/IEC 17024:2012 requirements. The Committee seeks input from the Board. Chair Alexander has solicited comments from CABs that have recently been reaccredited. It is clear that the application is a challenge to complete. In addition to content, the Committee should consider the "user-friendliness" of the document.

PD Athanas has volunteered to assist with this project. The Committee will submit the revised application for Board and CAB comments prior to final approval.

**Action:** To appointment the 2022 Nominating Committee. (President-elect Bunch)

Mission/Vision Statements (presented by Public Director Athanas for VP Bunch)-The Committee presented abbreviated versions adopted from the FSAB *Articles of Incorporation*.

VP Bunch rejoined the meeting by telephone. (4:21 PM EDT)

VP Bunch thanked Committee members (Athanas, Valentin, Quarino, and Ziolkowski) for their contributions. Directors are requested to choose between the two currently proposed Vision statements and provide feedback as soon as possible. It will be important to have both the Mission and Vision statements approved by the Board prior to website launch.

**Action:** To delineate the ABFO ARC and Internal Audit Committee activities. (President-elect Bunch)

Request for Mentoring-President Will received email communications from Mr. Bill Hicks of the National Association of Fire Investigators (NAFI). The NAFI plans to apply for FSAB accreditation. There is a request for mentoring from the organization. Director Alexander stated that the NAFI had previously attempted application without completion. He was ARC Chair at that time. Per ISO/IEC 17011:2017 guidelines, the FSAB may not "consult" with potential applicants. We may offer education which should that offered to any interested party. Such education cannot address how to meet specific requirements as this constitutes consultation. It is permissible to provide examples of what we have observed when performing assessments,

but no specific information may be provided as to how to meet the FSAB requirements. We may also offer interpretation of an application requirement. Of note, ILAC offers an extrapolation document (i. e., guide) on this issue.

**Action:** To distribute a copy of the ILAC extrapolation document to the Board. (Athanas)

The applicant CAB may reach out to successfully accredited CABs for insight. Perhaps the FSAB could form a voluntary force of peer CABs to assist those seeking accreditation. The presence of website FAQs may also be helpful. Is it feasible to offer a drop box on the website for CABs to submit questions which can be vetted? This format would also provide a written audit trail. ANSI has a series of guidance documents. The FSAB should be approachable on this issue with proactive communication and some body of knowledge (however defined) that can be shared with prospective applicants. Our site visits will be enhanced when the applicants are better prepared.

**Action:** To discuss a “drop box-style” path to receive/reply to CAB inquiries on the FSAB website. (Website Committee)

**Action:** To consider ways to provide information to interested parties without offering consultation. (EC)

**Action:** To contact Mr. Hicks with the NAFI. (Bunch)

Director Adcock suggested that within the FAQs, we recommend that the CABs contact us with any questions that remain unanswered. The current website directs administrative questions to the Administrative Manager, while all other questions are to be directed to the Secretary.

### Future Meetings

2022 EC Summer Meeting-to be addressed by President-elect Bunch at a later date.

2023 Annual Meeting-to be held in Orlando, Florida.

Emails (Fax)-The Board was advised that there is a new law (Delaware) in regards to board governance for certification bodies. Synopsis: Members of a not-for profit organization were using their respective agency email addresses for board communications. This resulted in all of the respective agency emails being discoverable during ensuing litigation. Some form of the law has extended to several other states. The creation of individual emails for Board communications may be needed (e. g., gmail). It is important to clarify whether each Board member is operating in their personal capacity or as a representative of their agency when conducting Board activities.

**Action:** To research the issue of the Board’s email communications. (Melson, Domitrovich)

Visiting guest Mr. Ted Burkes (ABFDE) suggested the possibility of establishing FSAB-specific emails via the website (e. g., fsab.org).

Procedures Review (Garvin)-The entire merged *Procedures* spreadsheet includes the revised *Procedure 16*. The P& P Committee would prefer that both the spreadsheet and *Procedure 16* be addressed simultaneously by the Board at a later date. Inclusive review is not feasible during this meeting.

Visiting guest Mr. Ted Burkes expressed his appreciation to the FSAB for allowing him to attend our meetings and for its work.

Executive Session begins at 4:50 PM (EDT).

**Motion:** To grant full accreditation to the ABFT for a term of five years, effective March 6, 2022 through February 28, 2027. For: 9. Against: 0. Abstaining: 7. MC

**Action:** To provide a letter awarding full accreditation to the ABFT to include that there has been no lapse in accreditation during the provisional accreditation period of March 1, 2022 through March 6, 2022. (Will)

CRC (Bunch)-A complaint was received in January 2022. The complaint was reviewed by President Will and deemed valid. A CRC was formed (Members-Adcock, Bunch-Chair, Goff). The CRC determined that the complainant had not exhausted all remedies within their CAB. The complainant was referred back to the CAB (IACIS). A second (revised) complaint was received from the complainant and deemed valid by both President Will and the CRC. The CRC met virtually with four CAB representatives on March 1, 2022. A further update will be provided when the Committee's work is complete. CRC Chair Bunch is currently finalizing a draft report.

As the IACIS ARC Chair, Dr. Goldberger asked if the ARC should be made aware of anything regarding the complaint or the process. The Committee determined that the FSAB *Standards* (4.2.12.1) and (4.2.12.10) are the relevant standards for this complaint. The Committee has determined that the IACIS is following their policies and procedures as well as the FSAB Standards. CRC Chair Bunch thanked Committee members Adcock and Goff for their assistance.

It is noted that while investigating the complaint, a second issue was identified during the Committee's review. CRC Chair Bunch will reach out to the CAB to make them aware of this issue.

On behalf of the Board, PD Melson expressed appreciation to Dr. Goldberger for his years of service. It is hoped that he will continue to be available to the FSAB as subject matter expert or Affiliate. Dr. Goldberger thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve.

PD Athanas inquired about the status of the FSAB calendar and proposed budget for the upcoming year. Both items are currently in development.

Secretary Garvin stated that the Board will need another virtual meeting to complete the *Procedures* review and approval. This activity is projected to take up to three hours to accomplish. She will issue a Doodle Poll. The meeting will follow the same review and approval process as the prior meetings held on February 13, 2022 (I) and February 16, 2022 (II).

**Motion:** Motion to adjourn at 5:11 PM. MSCU