



Society of Plastics Engineers Detroit Section Board Meeting Minutes

April 11, 2024 Meeting

Meeting Location

ZOOM/ phone

Board Member Attendance- Neil Fuenmayor, Mary Gilliam, Mahmoodul Haq – Laura held proxy, Bernd Henkelmann, – Tom Miller held proxy, Adrian Merrington – Chris held proxy, Tom Miller, Dave Okonski – left early Bob held proxy, Bob Petrach, Rob Philp, Tom Pickett, Martin Popella – Bob held proxy, Laura Shereda, Chris Surbrook, Sassan Tarahomi, Richard Umemoto – Neil held proxy, Eve Vitale, Fang Wang.

14/22 voting (included proxies)

Not present – Dawn Cooper, Mahmoodul Haq, Todd Hogan, Sandra McClelland, Tom Pickett, Martin Popella, Armando Sardanopoli, Keith Siopes,

Emeritus – not invited as meeting was one purpose, to review and vote on proposal for Sustainability conference.

Guests – none invited

Meeting Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by President Rob Philp.

Roll Call

Rob Philp

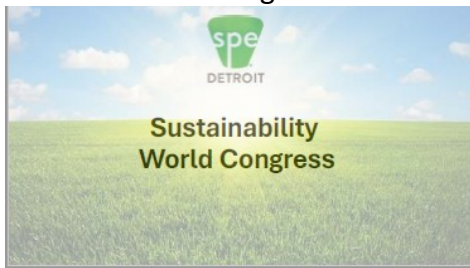
Rob asked Bob to call the roll. 14/22 were in attendance as noted above (included proxies), bylaws were checked regarding quorum, **quorum met.**

Introduction and background

Rob Philp

Rob explained that a small group, Sassan, Dave, Neil, Rob and Bob had met several times to discuss a possible SPE Detroit organized Sustainability conference.

Rob turned meeting over to Sassan to review slides describing proposal.



Exploratory Team

- Sassan Tarahomi
- Rob Philp
- Bob Petrach
- David Okonski
- Neil Fuenmayor



Prior Meetings

January 18, 2024 Detroit Section select group of board met from 2:00-3:00 PM on a zoom meeting to hear the plan on Sustainability World Congress. Attendees were: Bob Petrach, Dave Okonski, Neil Fuenmayor, Rob Philp and Sassan Tarahomi. Sassan presented the plan, budget and timeline to the group. Everyone asked questions and discussed their views about the event. Sassan provided everyone with a copy of his presentation and asked them to think about it further and comeback in a week or so to discuss the next steps with the executive board meeting.

March 14, 2024 Detroit Section executive board members met from 5:30 - 6:30 PM on a zoom meeting to hear the shorter presentation on Sustainability World Congress. Attendees were: Robert Philp, Neil Fuenmayor, David Okonski, Sassan Tarahomi, Bob Petrach and Mary Gilliam. Sassan presented the plan, budget and timeline to the group. Mary Gilliam asked few questions and expressed her views about the conference. Sassan asked for Y or N vote about this conference from the attendees. All attendees voted "Y". Next Sassan asked for full voting members of the board to get together in a few weeks as Sassan can present the conference to them and ask for the full board to vote on proceeding with the conference or not. Meeting dates were suggested were April 4 or April 11 from 5:30-6:30 PM.

A few weeks later, a zoom meeting was planned for April 4, 2024 from 5:30 - 6:30 PM.

Competitive Considerations*

- PLASTICS RECYCLING CONFERENCE** <https://www.plasticsrecycling.com/overview>
MARCH 24-26, 2025 LOCATION: TBD in USA (Moves every year)
In Person: Expo + Conference > 2000 Attendees / 3 Days / > 40 Speakers / > 200 Exhibitors
Produced by: Resource Recycling, Inc
Collaboration from: The Association of Plastic Recyclers - Washington, D.C., plasticsrecycling.org
- Plastics Recycling Show Europe (PRSE)** <https://www.prseventurope.com/prse2024/en/page/home>
DATE: TBD (2024 = JUNE 19-20) LOCATION: AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS (Europe)
In Person: Expo + Conference > 8500 Attendees / 2 Days / 75 Speakers / > 320 Exhibitors
Produced by: Grain Communications and Plastics Recyclers Europe
- RACE (Recycling And Circular Economy) Conferences** www.raceconferences.com
Asia / Europe / North America Regional - Not always global. No events in NA since 2021, 2023 India only; 2022 EU only (virtual), Now Difunc? Produced by: Shalimar Infotech Pvt. Ltd (PolymersIndia)
- ITB - Critical Technologies for Sustainable Vehicle Production**
<https://www.itbgroup.com/critical-technologies-sustainable-production-2024>
Date: In-Person February 2025 (2024 = FEB. 28-29) Location: Novi, Michigan, USA
In Person: Expo + Conference @ Attendees ? / 2 Days / 35 Speakers / Exhibitors and Sponsors (Plastics Companies)
Focused on plastics, Developments shaping interior, exterior, and powertrain applications, materials, vehicle recycling (including advanced batteries), and manufacturing processes.

* Does not include sessions in other annual events (NPE, K-Show, etc.)

Challenges for SPE Detroit Section

- Planning/Execution Team Resources - Voluntary (People)**
 - Attract not only people (qty.), but the "right" people for effectiveness
- Planning/Execution Team Expertise and Relationships** (particularly in non-auto markets)
 - Opportunity to collaborate with other associations, governmental and/or academic institutions?
 - Regional vs. Global Reach and appropriate resources needed?
- How to Differentiate Amongst Well-Established, Regional and Global Conferences with Same Scope** - Value Prop for Attracting Support and Attendees?
 - Must Compete for Attendees, Speakers, Sponsors, Exhibitors
 - Opportunity to use Educational "Give-Back" as key differentiator?
- First Few Years - Financial Considerations - Must Establish Realistic Go/No Go Targets** (e.g. "Break Even" Scenarios?)

At this point Sassan asked Neil to briefly review challenges. Neil compared the work involved in the proposed Sustainability Conference to the TPO Conference and need for volunteers willing to work. He said there definitely would be a challenge, but he was confident that structured properly it had the possibility to draw new volunteers to SPE Detroit.

Sassan reviewed Target industries. He noted SPE Detroit is the group to do this type of conference as we represent all industries. Sassan noted that he, as SPE Automotive President, could have gone to that board and proposed, but that focus would then tend to be narrowed and he felt SPE Detroit was better suited to make this a success.

Target Industry			Planned Events
Industrial	Aerospace	Regulation	- Industry Exhibits
Packaging	Automotive	Safety Standard	- Demonstration Exhibits
Electronics	Heavy trucks	Transportation	- Technical Sessions
Food & Drug	Recycling	Sports & leisure	- Keynote Speeches
Medical	Compounders	Education	- 2-10 min. Ted Talk
Consumer	Material Processors	Law	- Sustainability 5 min. Success Stories
Marine	Agricultural	Innovation	- 1-12 Grade Sustainability Presentation
			- College Student Sustainability Presentation
			- Sustainability Award to Students and Industry
			- Open jobs in Sustainability

Rob pointed out that we, as the Plastics Industry and continually facing criticism for negative effects on the environment. The conference would be an opportunity to affect major change in both action and dialog. It would be a chance to get lawmakers involved and focus on major changes and would be the right thing to do.

Sassan further explained his vision of an “All hands on deck” gathering where we as an industry “gave back”. He noted the great essays from our student essay contest that could be presented by the children who wrote them. And the student presentations from TPO and need to push for a “Sustainability” degree.

Vision is for a 2 ½ Day Event with Simultaneous Web Broadcast

Sustainability Award

5,000 + attendees

Free to all with limited access to presentations, keynotes and special events

2 Phase Approach

Phase-I

Launch the conference in Novi in 2025.

- Grow the conference (attendees, technical & sponsorship)
- Learn the ropes
- Great first year training for volunteer staff
- Achieve all 1st year goals
- Low financial risk

Phase-II

Move the conference to the TCF center in 2026 or 2027.

Local Venues

Phase I Novi Suburban Collection 460,000 Sq. Ft.

Adequate space but have not implemented sustainability (maybe an opportunity to help them in that effort.)

Phase II Huntington Place (formerly known as Cobo Hall, Cobo Center, and briefly TCF Center)

2,400,000 Sq. Ft. (Exhibit Space 700,000 Sq. Ft.)

Adequate space and have implemented sustainability

At this point Sassan was ready to review the financials. **He stressed that at this time this presentation must remain confidential to the members of this board.**

First, we may use The suburban Collection venue as only a stepping stone for year one, but he was still talking to both venues and it may be the right choice to start at Huntington Place though that presents a higher financial risk. Neil spoke a bit more about the projected costs and revenues. Sassan said we were developing a structured fee system. At the bottom would be a free or almost free admission to exhibit area, with a variety of steps involving more content for presentations and workshops.

Step One in the planning process is the review with SPE HQ for their approval and date selection.

Financials:

Income : \$1,220,000

Expense: \$543,000

Profit: \$677,000

Discussion turned to the enormity of the project and tremendous amount of effort to do this.

Eve pointed out that as a board we have unfilled positions and are struggling to get things done. She related to us her activity on the NPE Planning Committee and the huge (paid) staff along with volunteers that it took to plan and deliver that event.

She asked if we still planned on presenting the TPO Conference, AutoEPCON Conference and participating in/ supporting the Automotive Division's EAV conference.

Sassan said that all the established conferences would stay and be supported. We had safety mechanisms in place for loss mitigation and to "pull the plug" if necessary.

Chris Surbrook told of the struggles with with Recycling conferences over the years that he and Adrian Merrington had worked on and told of the efforts of the Plastics Industry Association to revive past programs through REFOCUS Sustainability and Recycling Conference in 2023. Chris strongly recommended that we talk to Conor Carlin (Current SPE President) about his experiences in these efforts through RACE (Recycling And Circular Economy).

Sassan moved that we vote to move forward for a June 2025 Sustainability Conference. Mary seconded but questioned if this was one vote and if we were approving budget. Neil stressed next step was SPE HQ approval. Chris suggested that we use a gate process for execution. Sassan showed timeline and mentioned the great sustainability work already done at Huntington Place.

Timeline

Conference approval stage April 16, 2024
- Establish a date for the conference
- Establish location
- Create budget
- Submit to SPE HQ for approval
Conference committee kick-off April 22, 2024
- Develop conference theme and format
- Sign contract with Novi Suburban and A/V
- Recruit volunteer staff
- Establish monthly meetings
- Develop Call for Presentation (CFP), Keynotes, Ted Talks
- Develop sponsorship package
- Develop ads, media release and video teasers
Announce Conference to the public May 15, 2024
Conference June/July 2025

Chris pointed out meeting was running well past the allotted time

and we needed to make a decision. Sassan stressed need to come to a decision at this meeting if SPE Detroit was going to do the conference. He pointed out that his boss had said they'd do the conference, but Sassan insisted that SPE Detroit was the proper entity to do this conference.

Discussion lead to proper approvals and multiple votes necessary for a large budget expenditure and confusion on what we'd actually be voting on. Bob had difficulty capturing the motion. Eve offered to act as a scribe to put motion into the "chat" as Sassan formalized the motion.

Motion below is copied directly from the chat.

Motion by Sassan

I make a motion to have the Sustainability World Congress with understanding that the event scalability and the gateways for feasibility of the size of the event will be in place by July 31, 2024; that includes the location, attendance, budget, and volunteers.

Motion was seconded by Chris Surbrook.

Laura clarified that we will vote for the budget during the budget process. Sassan agreed that he understood that and gate process were separate issues. The initial action would be Sassan reviewing with SPE HQ.

Due to the difficulty doing a voice vote on Zoom, Bob called for polling the individual votes by member attending .

Polled board members for voice vote. Vote 13 aye, 1 nay.

Motion passed.

As due to discussion and time constraints, full presentation was not reviewed, Sassan will send out the entire presentation to the board in the next day and again stressed the confidentiality.

Rob thanked everyone for their attention, participation and patience.

Bob moved to adjourn, Eve seconded. Meeting closed at 7:12 pm.

Note – post meeting discussion, Sassan , Rob, Neil, Bob.

Sassan pointed out that we could have and probably should have recorded the meeting to assure we captured and address all concerns.

Minutes respectfully submitted Robert V. Petrach, Jr. Secretary SPE Detroit.
