

# Detroit Section of the Society of Plastics Engineers Board Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2024 Meeting

Meeting Location ZOOM/ phone

**Board Member Attendance**- Neil Fuenmayor, Bernd Henkelmann, Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Dave Okonski (Bob held proxy), Matt Parkinson, Bob Petrach, Rob Philp, Tom Pickett, Keith Siopes, Sassan Tarahomi, Richard Umemoto.

# 12/20 voting (included proxies)

# Emeritus Board Member Present – Norm Kakarala (non voting)

**Not present** – Dawn Cooper, Jitesh Desai, Mahmoodul Haq, Todd Hogan, Martin Popella, Armando Sardanopoli, Laura Shereda, Chris Surbrook.

Guests – none

### Meeting Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by President Rob Philp.

# President's Report

#### **Rob Philp**

Rob started out saying there was no agenda for the meeting, he'd start by reviewing some concerns.

Rob reminded us that we had 2 officers, President Elect and Second Vice President resign prior to the June meeting.

With the **two year term**, we need to reevaluate the commitment necessary to use the progression used in the past where someone would be 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, then 1<sup>st</sup> VP, President Elect, President and Past President as that now became a 10 year commitment.

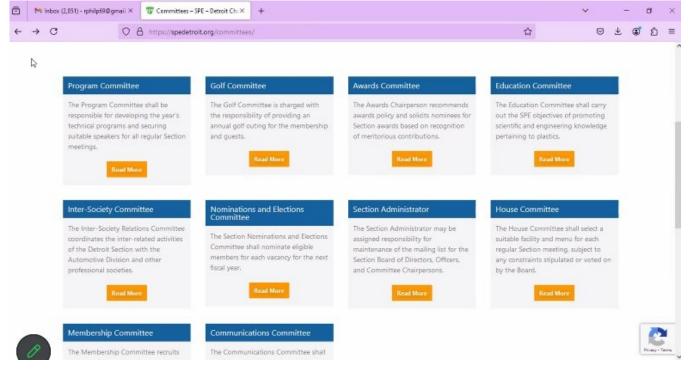
At this time there are no candidates to replace the two officers who resigned.

**Membership** roles have not been available as SPE "for security reasons" only allows Membership Chair access to membership roles, so President is not allowed to access membership. It was Rob's intention to address need for officers and board members and to review the state of the Section with all members through an email, But he could not do that. As of November 14, 2024, Laura has Kim Wakuluk at SPE has granted Laura access as Membership Chair since Dr. Haq has been incapacitated due to illness. Laura is not here tonight and has not informed Rob of her ability to access the membership roles nor has sent a file to Rob or Karen so email can be sent.

**Events (TDMs, Tours, etc.)** We need to start scheduling some events. We do not have a Programs Chair but anyone can initiate an event.

Length of meetings is still too long. At the start of his term Rob instructed all committees to describe what they did, post summaries of meetings, and post meeting schedule so anyone could join a meeting. We are rearranging the way we do things to try to people understand what we do. We must be inclusive and participate without being disruptive and must follow thorough with commitments.

Rob displayed page on website for committees to populate with their information.



Sustainability Conference Please get involved, we need all hands on deck.

**TPO Conference** TPO Conference was asked to no longer be located at Troy Marriott. When Neil and Rob went to the meeting with Michelle Street, General Manager at Detroit Marriott Troy, to discuss possible compensation by Marriott for costs incurred by the TPO Conference to shift the the dates due to the conflict with Monday Night Football, Michelle asked her staff to leave the room and stated she no longer wanted to deal with SPE. This was her response to Michelle and her husband being berated by Dr. Kakarala at the appreciation dinner.

Rob and Sassan were not in attendance at the appreciation dinner, Neil was not in close proximity when Dr. Kakarala and Michelle and her husband were talking.

Rob expressed his disappointment with Dr. Kakarala who many of us have considered a mentor and respect for his expertise as Technical Chair of TPO conference. He asked Dr. Kakarala to not reach out to Michelle. Rob has apologized to Michelle on behalf of Dr. Kakarala and the Detroit Section of SPE. Rob invited Dr. Kakarala to talk to Rob one on one about this unprofessional behavior.

After discussion with Rob and Sassan have convinced the Marriott to continue with the EAV conference (an Automotive Division event) in 2025 but that will probably be an end to the relationship.

Rob reminded us that as SPE members we all represent each other and SPE. We are all volunteers

and cannot control each other's actions but we have a responsibility to think about what we are saying, especially in mixed company. Each of us in a representative of SPE and what we say has repercussions for all of us.

Rob told us he has not yet shared this news with TPO Committee.

AutoEPCON Rob noted Sandra was here in person to provide more information. He reminded us that we'd been informed that Dave Okonski had stepped down as co-chair and no one has come forward to volunteer to replace him.

We would need to find a new venue for AutoEPCON as a result of the Marriott decision. Rob noted he has not seen any AutoEPCON committee meetings. HE asked the questions "do we plan to continue the Auto EPCON Conference and suggested that we not hold the conference this year. He asked Sandra for her perspective. Sandra said we need more people to work on the conference and people are not stepping up.

Rob suggested that maybe those who had been working on AutoEPCON could help on the Sustainability Conference.

Sassan stated that AutoEPCON was a very good one day topical conference and he would like to see it continue, but perhaps it did not have to be an annual event, perhaps every other year. He also is evaluating if Sustainability Conference should be annual or every two or even three years, and we should consider that for any conference we do. We must have targets and dates at least 5 to 6 months before the event. He noted he's already been asked about AutoEPCON by some BASF representatives. He reminded us of the move of TPO, then AutoEPCON "up" to the Marriott from Best Western – venues come an go depending upon need and preCOVID, TPO had almost outgrown the Marriott and TPO had had to restrict the number of booths.

Relative to the Sustainability Conference Sassan said we need a technical chair and he's been looking for an OEM technical chair but has been unable to find thus far. He would love to have more help on the team.

Rob said AutoEPCON likely will take a hiatus and that will be posted on the website.

# **Sustainability World Congress**

# Sassan Tarahomi

Sassan gave a detailed report of status. Theme for this year is "Sustainable Plastics for All" Work continues to find Keynote speakers. It was decided that booth and technical sessions would run from 9-5 giving exhibitors and presenters time to get ready each morning.

Chris Darrow already has five presentations set. Keith Young is coordinating students from Ecotek and MSU doing papers talks and posters.

Sassan showed committee meeting schedule inviting everyone too participate. All meetings are recorded.

So far there is one Diamond Sponsor – Radici Plastics, Sassan expects to have three Gold Sponsors signed by this Friday, 11-22-24.

Bill Schreiber and Al Chan have joined the sponsorship committee.

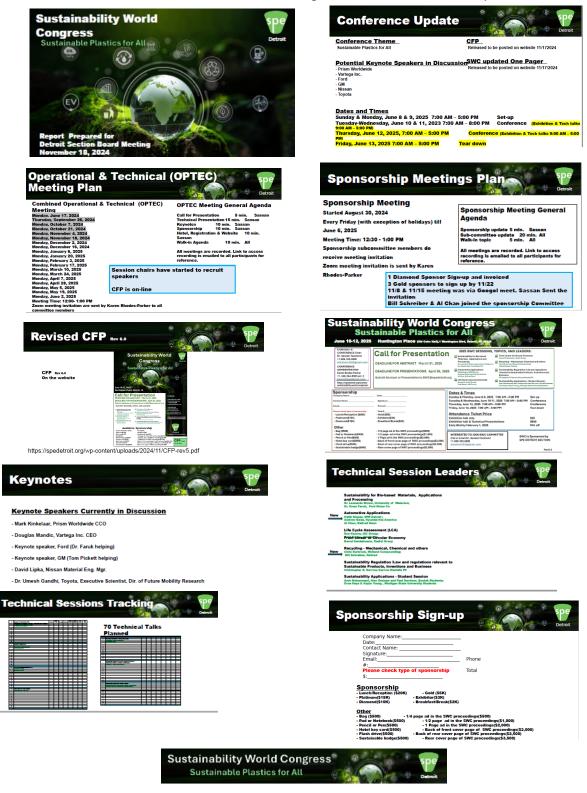
Keynote effort is targeted to be complete by mid February.

Really need some help on Technical session tracking keeping Excel sheet organized and up to date. **Sponsorship** sign up sheet also needs tracking. In general sponsorship needs help.

Due to the economy many who had said they were potential sponsors are backing off.

Definitely need help securing sponsors – if you can sign someone up, Please do so.

Matt Parkinson asked to be added to meeting list. Sassan will do so. Snips of slides follow.



# Thank

### Education/ Scholarship Committee Sandra reported PlastiVan®

**\$15,750 has been spent on** PlastiVan<sup>®</sup> to date. She said she'd offered a list of schools and had only one taker, Rob went to Lawrence. Neil asked if we had a list from the Foundation, we need to have better scheduling and notification. Tom Miller said we used to get better notice and that he has to approve invoices. He will contact Mark Richardson no schedule has been shared to date. Tom will discuss with Mark Richardson as we need time to schedule section volunteers to go to visits, especially as some schools have background checks adding to time. Education Committee is to approve visits in advance. Tom did talk to Mark at the Automotive Innovation Awards Gala. He noted we do not pay for more than two PlastiVan<sup>®</sup> visits at a school in any one year. SME PRIME school, William D. Ford Career-Technical Center in Westland has had a PlastiVan<sup>®</sup> visit and are very interested in working on a plastics program with SPE. They had a student at the AIAG that had applied to the FSU Plastics program. They have 3D printers that do both plastics and metals and intend to start up a Thermoforming module. William D. Ford was also at ACCE. Bernd asked when PlastiVan<sup>®</sup> visit would be a Wayne Westland. He would like to go to that. Sandra said it would probably be a January date.

Student Chapters. We have 4 student chapters, liaison's in ()

Kettering (Tom Miller), University of Michigan (Daniel Pisarski, Laura Shereda), Michigan State (Sandra McClelland), Ferris (Tom Miller)

Innovative Awards had attendees from Michigan State and Ferris State

Sandra again reminded us that they are Still looking for Mentors for the student chapters. Looking for Young Professionals to interact with students. She said even though Daniel Pisarski is primarily stationed in Kentucky (with Ford) he still is infrequent contact with students at U of M.

Neil reminded us that Dr. Haq had proposed the idea of having a board meeting at one of the schools.. Sandra said we should pick some dates and times, no earlier than January. Bernd said February would be better. Rob agreed, Sandra will see if she can get some February dates.

Scholarships were presented.

Essay contest Deadline for students is February 28. **Everyone on the board should judge essays.** Sassan suggested we read or have students read winning essays. Sandra said we could talk about that, it should be something that can be done. Tom as asked about the negative tone of essays related to plastics. He said it has only been the past five years or so that there have been negative essays and there continue to be very positive essays as well as balanced. It coincides with the news cycle being negative about lack of recycling and plastics poisoning us. He said he even remembered one whole class of negative essays, obviously influenced by the teacher. After the February 28 deadline, Tom and Todd will take a few days to organize. Then judges will have a couple weeks to read and judge. Tom did say judges tend to not do right away and then forget deadline so they may consider less time. Keith asked if there would be a volunteer list. Sandra – there is not list, please let Tom know, but everyone should participate and non SPE Detroit judges are also welcome (if qualified). If you have a preference, North or South Division let Todd/Tom/ Sandra know or if you are willing to do both let them know. PlastChicks Podcasts PlastChicks Podcast – Episode 68 is an interview of scholarship winner Tanisha Francis - Kettering University – Computer Science Engineering 2025. Tanisha won the SPE Detroit "Women to Watch" Scholarship in 2022-2023 and 2024-2025 and had received a total of \$15,500 in scholarships. Hosts Lynzie Nebel and Mercedes Landazuri talk with Tanisha Francis discuss the development of her interest in the plastics industry, her desire to use hardware and software solutions to reduce waste and streamline plastics production, mentoring and coaching high school students, service projects, work with her SPE Student Chapter, and advice for students interested in the plastics industry. Tanisha was highlighted as she won the 2024 PlastChicks Scholarship Winner.

If you have not watched PlastChicks podcasts before, check them out on YouTube. This episode is at <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHWzCAt1K4Y&list=PLRgRmKyqZR-IYMeztti2icSepYoYfTnt6">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHWzCAt1K4Y&list=PLRgRmKyqZR-IYMeztti2icSepYoYfTnt6</a>

Bob stated that there are some very good and very interesting PlastChicks podcasts; he had watched dozens on YouTube.

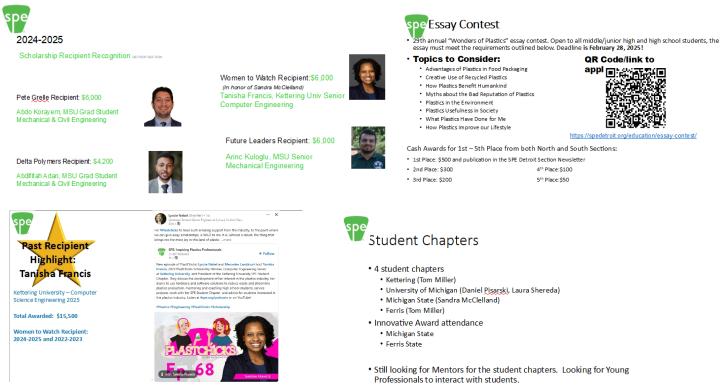
Neil asked to post on Detroit SPEaker.

Sandra pointed out again that we need more mentors for students. Neil suggested having a board meeting at schools. Sandra said we had had meetings in the past at Kettering (TDM March 3, 2014 and Kickoff on September 14, 2015)

Rob said he'd work with Tanisha Francis on some ideas as he had just talked to her.

As usual, Sandra ended up with the Education Committee budget slide. About 35% of the Education budget has been spent and it is on track.

#### Content slides follow:





Education Budget	2020-21 Budget	2020-21 Spent	2021-22 Budget	2021- 2022 Spent	2022- 2023 Budget	2022-23 SPENT	2023- 2024 Budget	2023 Spent	2024- 2025 Budget	2024 Spent	2024 remainder
5ch ol arsh ip	\$42,900	\$41,600	\$60,000	\$29,837	\$60,000	\$47,450	\$62,000	\$53,050	\$60,000	\$46,233.20	\$13,766.80
Plastivan	\$57,250	\$27,000	\$57,250	\$44,275	\$57,252	\$57,250	\$75,000	\$74,900	\$75,000	\$15,750	\$59,250
Plastivan modules	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	0	0	\$0	\$0	0	
National Support			\$4,000	\$4,080	\$4,000			\$0	\$0	0	
Are a Program s	\$9,000	\$4,455	\$9,000	\$4,550	\$9,000	\$4,094	\$5,500	\$4,585	\$5,500	\$120	\$5,380
Administration	\$400	\$711	\$800	\$103	\$800		\$800	\$153	\$800	0	800
Special Programs	\$0	\$2,400			\$0			\$0	\$0	0	
Future Student Chapters	\$500.00	\$0			\$500		\$5.00	\$0	\$500	0	500
SAE Foundation					\$0		\$4,000		\$4,000	0	\$4000
Student Sections	\$8,000	\$0	\$35,000		\$35,000	\$15,358	\$32,000	\$5,600	\$30,000	0	\$30000
Total	\$178,050	\$136,166	\$171,050	\$87,845	\$166,552	\$124,151	\$179,800	\$138,388	\$175,800	\$62,130 (35%)	\$113,67670

Intersociety

**Bob Petrach** 

Bob mentioned Wednesday's ESD Affiliate Council meeting's presentation "Crisis to Catalyst – The Upside to Sustainability" with Muthu Sivanantham, ASEI (American Society of Engineers of Indian Origin) was coming up Wednesday evening 11/20 at 6 pm. If in person at ESD in Southfield please RSVP. Otherwise you can join on Zoom.

Michigan Regional Future City Competition will take place at the Suburban Collection Showplace - 46100 Grand River Ave. Novi, MI on Tuesday, January 21, 2024. We need volunteers to judge SPE special award "Incorporation of Plastics Materials". I'd really like to have at least 6 volunteers, currently have 4, but more are welcome.

# **Approval of the Minutes**

Minutes of 2024-10-21 Board Meeting were pending approval. Rob referenced copies Bob sent out for review on 2024-11-04.

Sassan moved minutes be approved for 2024-10-21 be approved, Neil seconded. Motion passed.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Dave was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Rob reviewed Dave the Treasurer report as well as c Check Register for 9-15-24 to 11-15-24 and Performance to Budget 7-1-24 to 11-15-2024. Neil said he will followup on remaining TPO receivables.

The Detroit Section is presently financially solvent with a checking account balance of \$240,909.73 and an investment portfolio having a market value of about \$3.61M. For the twomonth period 9/15/2024 to 11/15/2024, expenses exceeded income by \$22,218.60.

Items of Interest:

1) Taxes (IRS Form 990) were completed, submitted, and accepted by the IRS.

#### Rob Philp

Dave Okonski

- 2) Still working the SAM.gov process to get reimbursed (\$22,300) from the DOE for the Auto EP-CON DOE Workshop,
  - a. Payment coming through ORNL.
  - b. Reapplied for a Unique Entity Number (UEI).
  - c. Reapplied for a CAGE Number.
- 3) No revenue from the Sustainability World Congress.

Bob moved Treasurer's report be approved, Bernd seconded, motion was approved.

### Membership/Next Gen

### Dr. Mahmoodul Haq/Laura Shereda

Rob is working with Laura to get access to SPE membership roles for Detroit Section. As of November 14 Kim Wakuluk informed Laura that Laura should be able to sign on with access. Laura has not forwarded file to Rob or Karen yet. When that happens Rob will do a "state of the Section" update to all Section members.

Holiday Party Rob told us to expect an email from Karen with information of the Holiday party.

# **Nominations/Elections**

### OPEN

Sassan highlighted the need to complete the bylaw changes related to two year officer terms and that we needed more detailed succession planning as new officers would be taking over in June. He suggested a more expanded role for Richard Umemoto who had proved himself in TPO roles. Rob agreed Sassan had a good point and that was part of the letter going out to all members. We have two officer openings with loss of Fang and Mary as well as expected resignation of Martin Popella who has had to move back to Germany..

We have to review all activities as well as improve communications and address "less than stellar" attendance tonight as we just barely made a forum.

# Annual Toy Program (Nov./Dec. 2024)

Rob said he did not have a Toy Drive update from Dawn.

Neil said we had three charitable organizations that we worked with last time we did Toy Program and suggested we still do something in the way of a donation. Rob and Bob suggested that maybe we work with / through ESD. Executive board to look at the possibility.

# **Materials Auction**

No update Sassan had previously suggested thought we could track materials on an Excel file and run an online auction. Sassan noted at this meeting, the system would have had material as Alterra Holdings recently had to get rid of roughly 1 million pounds of resin. .Rob suggested maybe he and Richard can set something up.

# Newsletter

Sassan suggested that we talk to Jill Houser about handling for us. Rob will talk to her. He'd like to plan for an issue near the end of January. If that is to happen article should be ready at the end of December. Rob set a deadline of January 6. In the past we paid Jill a per page fee. Bob reinforced the need for regular newsletters. In the past we put out a newsletter regularly, if content was missing, it was missing. Over the last 15 years (well maybe 20) there are issues that only consisted of 4 pages. Not desirable, but at least we maintain contact.

Sassan volunteered to provide a newsletter organization template/ matrix. Neil said he had

interview content of new board members that had never been published and just needed a bit of updating to be relevant.

Neil pointed out website needs to be updated with board members and meeting dates.

Tom Pickett tried to raise the issue at the Marriott and disputed account of Dr. Kakarala being "out of line" and anything said was "overreacted to"

Rob restated that this was not the forum to discuss and result has been decided. Sassan supported Rob in that we need to put this behind us. Dr. Kakarala said no one had talked to him. Rob said he was not going to discuss here. Sassan said he had talked to Michelle and what happened, happened, it was time to move on.

# **Old Business/ New Business**

Rob asked is there was any more old or new business to discuss today. There was none.

Bob moved meeting be adjourned, Sassan seconded, Motion passed, adjourned at 7:36 pm.

### Next BOD Meeting: Date TBD ACC Office / Zoom

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

### Agenda for this meeting follows.

Rob did not publish a meeting for this meeting. Reports were late and Marriott incident was a late added issue.

All important and timely business was covered.

Reminder Reports should be in to Rob about 10 days before meeting date so he can get agenda out.