



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

April 21, 2025 Meeting

Meeting Location

ZOOM/ phone

Board Member Attendance- Dawn Cooper, Jitesh Desai, Neil Fuenmayor, Bernd Henkelmann , Dave Okonski, Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Matt Parkinson (Tom Miller held proxy), Bob Petrach, Rob Philp, Tom Pickett, Laura Shereda, Keith Siopes, Chris Surbrook, Sassan Tarahomi, Richard Umemoto. **16/20 voting (included proxies)**

Emeritus Board Member Present – Norm Kakarala (non voting)

Not present – Mahmoodul Haq, Todd Hogan, Armando Sardanopoli,

Guests – Rohan Repale.

Meeting Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm by President Rob Philp.

Rob explained that last month's meeting was canceled as not enough people had RSVP'd to even come close to a quorum.

Rob said he was making some agenda changes as Dawn Copper had to leave early and we needed her to present her reports.

He then had Bob call the roll reflected in attendance listed above. Including proxies 16 of 19 votes were present.

Approval of the Minutes

Rob Philp

Minutes of 2025-02-17 Board Meeting were pending approval. Rob referenced copies Bob sent out for review. Bernd had one correction which Bob noted.

Sassan moved minutes be approved for 2025-02-17 Keith seconded. **Motion passed.**

Neil noted website minutes posting was not up to date.

President's Report

Rob Philp

Rob started out thanking the attendees.

EAV conference was excellent. Rob thanked Neil for setting up SPE Detroit booth and Sassan for providing space for the Detroit booth.

As everyone knows, we have multiple roles to fill. We still need to use the website as interned.

Committee roles need to be defined, meeting schedule posted and minutes/ notes from meetings posted so anyone can see how we operate and what we are doing.

Toy Program

Dawn Cooper

Dawn had conversation with John Gessert of APT. He is going to present Toy Program to the new board of directors next week to see if they wish to continue with the toy program. John will give answer to Dawn by May 1.

Golf Outing

Dawn Cooper

Dawn reported date is June 17th at Cherry Creek 52000 Cherry Creek Dr. Shelby charter township, MI 48316 as Pine Trace is being refurbished and is out of service until next year. Cheery Creek is affiliated with Pine Trace. Dawn has contract for review. They are reducing minimum (was 144) and giving a discounted rate so she expects cost to be roughly half of what it was last year. Pricing will be out as soon as contract is complete. Expect cost to be same as last year. Rob reminded everyone that it is less than 2 months away so if you can help with sponsors please do so.

Dawn expects flyer to be out by May 1.. Neil noted we need to update website (currently has 2024 date). Dawn said Karen is helping her, Tom Miller and Scott Maycon of Tecknor Apex. Could use more volunteers. Matt Parkinson had agreed to help and Bernd volunteered at the meeting. Golf outing committee will have a meeting either 4/30 or 5/1, Karen will send out notice.

Treasurer's Report

Dave presented report, and reviewed Performance to Budget for the time 7/1/2024 to 4/20/2025 and the Check Registry for the time 2/17/2025 to 4/20/2025.

The Detroit Section is presently financially solvent with a checking account balance of \$97,371.32 and an investment portfolio having a market value of about \$3.36M.

Financial Performance,	BUDGET (Entire Fiscal Year)	ACTUAL (7/1/2024 - 4/20/25)
INCOME	\$ 1,693,200.00	\$ 332,480.28
EXPENSES	\$ 1,306,040.00	\$ 471,732.14
Fiscal Year: July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025		

For the period 2/17/2025 to 4/20/2025, expenses exceeded income by \$10,117.76.

Financial Performance 2/17/2025 through 4/20/2025	BUDGET	ACTUAL
INCOME	\$ 282,200.02	\$ 74,583.00
EXPENSES	\$ 217,673.40	\$ 84,700.76

Items of Interest:

- 1) A Purchase Order (\$22,300) has been issued by ORNL for the DOE Workshop that was co-located with the 2024 Auto EPCON Conference – check not received yet.
- 2) All sponsorship monies for the Sustainability World Congress have been returned.
- 3) Since February 17th, our investment portfolio is down \$291,000.
Dave noted that all money from Sustainability Conference (now postponed to 2026) had been returned.

Bob moved Treasurer's Report be approved as presented. Neil seconded. **Motion passed.**

Sustainability Conference

Sassan Tarahomi

Sassan reported that Sustainability Conference was postponed to **June 9-11, 2026**.

it was decided to postpone the conference by one year to give us adequate time to sign-up sponsors. Three sponsors had been signed and paid. Sassan was working on a major sponsorship program with 4 divisions of Ravago, but details and total were taking too long. And other sponsorships were coming slowly.

One deposit of \$12,500 was paid to Huntington Place, the next will be due May 2026. They are increasing space to 200,000 sq ft (was 140,000)

Postponement letters went out March 24 to Sponsors, Keynote Speakers and Technical Speakers. Some of the student presentations given at EAV were a “dry run” for the Sustainability Conference. Sassan is working with Keith Young and students to come to Sustainability Conference next year. At this time have six keynotes locked in and may have as many as nine.

General admission tickets to be \$25. Presentation access tickets \$950. Working on a plan with Pat Farrey to do a discounted SPE membership program with presentation access tickets.

No hotel deals worked out yet, but hotels are normally used by sponsors so there is time for that.

Neil asked Sassan to send any possible sponsors that fit TPO program to TPO (since Sassan's TPO sponsorship chair, he'll be doing this automatically)

OPTEC meetings have been cut back to monthly, first Monday of every month. Sponsorship Meetings are twice per month - first and third Friday of the month. If you want to be included, let Karen know and she'll put you and the invitation list.

Rohan Repale asked for more details on sponsorships.


Education/ Scholarship Committee

Sandra McClelland / Tom Miller

Ahmad Hasan, MSU student chapter president was here to present. Sandra introduced Ahmad he gave a brief presentation.



Intro

- Official SPE chapter at MSU
- Aim: Provide students with opportunities to learn more about the plastics industry through:
 - Hands-on projects (Water wheel, bridge)
 - Industry engagement (facility tours, professionals)





Events

- Lab Tours
- Workshops
 - Prior to competition
- Competitions (1 fall, 1 spring)



SPE Automotive Innovation Awards


Fall '24 Highlights



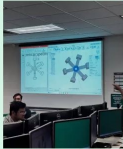

Bridge Competition

Lab tour and Tensile Test Workshop

Spring '25 Highlights p2



Lab Tour



CAD Workshop

What's Next?

- Sophisticated membership sign up
 - Re-elections
- Website
- MSU Student Team collaboration
- More facility tours
- Industry professionals
- Board expansion
 - Technical project team
- Identify long term project

Currently they have an executive board of 9 (5 undergrad, 4 grad) and roughly 30 members. This group of students is in the composites facility. Neil asked if we could do a meeting there. We will work on it. Rob had previously been working on holding a meeting at Kettering which probably also will be this fall. Tom and Sandra will coordinate. We last did a tour of Packaging are in May of 2013.

Membership/Next Gen

Laura Shereda

No formal report, Laura did check membership status of board and reported that everyone was up to date, Ditesh needed to renew this month, Neil and Matt in May. She noted “life” members show an expiration date of 2099.

Nominations and Elections

Open / Bob Petrach

Bob reported he had not done anything, we need to work on bylaws to determine what progression is needed.

We need to determine Sassan nominated Bernd for President Elect (to be President in July).

Withdrawn at Bernd's request as he is not ready for that at this time. Officers for the next two years and currently do not have a President Elect.

Rob will call a bylaws meeting next week, proposed May 1. Dawn is current first VP, Rob will reach out to see if she is ready to move to President Elect status and President next year.

Bylaws committee consists of Bob, Rob, Neil, Dave, Sassan and Bernd.

Awards

Open / Bob Petrach

Nothing has been done on awards, we need a chair and team.

Education/ Scholarship Committee

Sandra McClelland / Tom Miller

Tom Miller – PlastiVan® cost increase will take effect this next school year. If we do not increase budget that will result in 5 or 6 fewer visits next year.

Scholarships – needed website revisions sent to Rob. 2025 form and 8/11/25 date.

Essay contest There were no separate High school / middle school essay contests this year which means we will not use \$1900 of the money in the budget for essay contest.

Awards were given to the two teachers that secured the vast majority of entrants. In the North, \$200 to Tom Short from Clare Middle School and south \$200 to Joyce Oldenhouse from Warren Mott HS.

Winners from North were:

- #1 - Building the Future of Cars: One Polymer at a Time – Emma Huang – Herbert Henry Dow HS 9th gr 1st place - \$500
- #42 - Beyond Earth: The Impact Of Plastics In Space Exploration - Benjamin McCastin - Clare Middle 8th gr 2nd place - \$300
- #39 - How Can We Make Plastic Into Fuels – Jacob Jarosiewicz - -Clare Middle 8th gr 3rd place - \$200
- #30 - Plastics in the Medical Field – Brooklyn Weiferich - -Clare Middle 8th gr 4th place - \$100
- #17 - Building the future with plastics - Jaxen Woods - -Clare Middle 8th gr 5th place - \$50

There were 47 essays from Clare Middle School, 1 essay from Freeland High School

Tom thanked judges for North Elizabeth Egan, Todd Hogan, Janice James – Kettering, Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Bob Petrach, and Tom Short – Clare MS

Winners from the South were:

- #7 – How Plastics Benefit Humankind and Bring People Together – Sosi Sarker - 11th gr Warren Mott HS 1st place - \$500
- #14 – Among Human's Greatest Inventions – Humairah Islam - 11th gr Warren Mott HS 2nd place - \$300
- #11 – The Plastic That Raised Me: A Lifelong Relationship - Tashin Ahktar - 11th gr Warren Mott HS - 3rd place - \$200
- #10 – Live, Love, Plastics – Martina Mezy - - 11th gr Warren Mott HS - 4th place - \$100
- #2 – How Plastics Benefit Humankind - Rami Saba - 11th gr Warren Mott HS - 5th place - \$50

There were 17 essays from Warren Mott High School

Tom thanked judges for South Neil Fuenmayor, Todd Hogan, Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Bob Petrach, and Keith Siopes

Winners have not yet been notified. Keith will work Tom offline to coordinate publicizing with photos where available. Tom was not sure when and how Todd would present in North. Tom and Sandra will go to Warren Mott HS to present awards. Joyce already knows results but has not shared with students.

Neil asked about rules concerning use of AI. It did appear as if some may have been generated or had parts AI generated. We need to determine a policy. AI in research maybe a good thing, but in writing isn't.

Student Chapters. The \$2500 of ANTEC support money given to Kettering Chapter was fruitful.



Janice James described her experience to Eve Vitale as "life changing".

Photo of Travis Francis and Janice James at ANTEC

MSU Student Chapter Support (\$5,000) was given, see report earlier by Ahmad Hasan, MSU student chapter president.

Sandra reviewed performance to budget. Total to date spent \$117,978 or 67.1% of budget.

Education Budget	2020-21 Budget	2020-21 Spent	2021-22 Budget	2021-22 Spent	2022-23 Budget	2022-23 SPENT	2023-2024 Budget	2023 Spent	2024-2025 Budget	2024 Spent	2024 remainder
Scholarship	\$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	\$61,425	\$13,575
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	
Area Programs	\$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		\$500	\$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	\$2,500	\$27,500
Total	\$178,050	\$136,166	\$171,050	\$87,845	\$166,552	\$124,151	\$179,800	\$138,388	\$175,800	\$110,278 (63%)	\$65,520

*Does not include essay contest \$2,700
 **Does not include MSU funds \$5,000
 Total spent(%) \$117,978 (67.1%)

Neil asked if we had pledged an additional amount to PlastiVan® beyond visits. We had not.

TPO Automotive Conference – Status

Neil Fuenmayor / Rob Philp

Neil reviewed slides Overall Format: 2 Full Days - Full Live Event with Virtual On Demand Access (Post Event) Setup is 9/29/25, 9/30 and 10/1 will be full conference days. Marriott is venue.

Early bird registration will be at 2024 levels. Plan of working with SPE International to make a conference / membership package with discounted membership package. Dave suggested contacting them ASAP as building membership is an issue that was recognized at ANTEC and they may be willing to work with us on costs..

Communications

Keith Siopes

Call for papers for Sustainability Conference and Essay volunteers have gone out on social media..

Website

Rob Philp

January 2025 newsletter is posted, Rob did a quick scroll of it. Still in need of updates to calendar and Board of Directors listing. Rob and Tom Miller have handled updates for Scholarships on website.

Material Auction

Dawn Cooper

Rob mentioned we need to follow through on Sassan's suggestion to make Material Auction an on going, on line system. Rob will talk to Rob at BigWater (our website developer) on ways to implement.

Treasurer's Report

Dave Okonski

Dave was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Rob displayed Dave's the Treasurer report as well as 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 \$97,114.08 and an investment portfolio having a market value of about \$3.69M. For the period 1/1/2025 to 2/16/2025, expenses exceeded income by \$132,214.70.

Items of Interest:

- 1) A Purchase Order (\$22,300) has been issued by ORNL for the DOE Workshop that was co-located with the 2024 Auto EPCon Conference – check not received yet.
- 2) Only one sponsor – The Radici Group – has signed-up for the Sustainability World Congress.
 - a. The Radici Group – Diamond Sponsor – \$8,000

Sassan moved Treasurer's report be approved, Keith seconded, **motion was approved.**

Membership/Next Gen

Laura Shereda

Laura had no real data from last year for comparison. Snapshot of membership showed 3 Distinguished Members, 64 Emeritus, 13 Premium, 360 Professional, 72 student, and 116 Young Professional for a total of 628. Laura displayed new member numbers since January 2024, total for 2024 was 67, January 2025 was 13. Chris pointed out SPE has been purging expired members from roles sooner than they had in the past so numbers may not compare well to past years. June 2023 report showed 642 total members so little change.

Sassan asked “where Lifetime members were?” Laura said SPE did not have a Lifetime category. Norm and Chris said Lifetime was not an SPE category, HSM and Fellows had dues waived. Laura is planning on checking to assure all board members are up to date for insurance purposes.

Intersociety

Bob Petrach

Bob had sent out his report with minutes for review. He highlighted Michigan Future Cities Competition January 21, 2025 and thanked volunteer judges Neil Fuenmayor, Tom Miller, Rachel Petrach, and Armando Sardanopoli who determined the winner of Incorporation of Plastics Materials Award - Joseph K. Lumsden Bahwetig Anishnabe Academy, Sault Ste. Marie – Fukuoka Team who chose to float their island city using hollow plastic spheres.

As in year’s past there was little knowledge of plastic materials and general feelings were negative. **But did notice an opportunity.** Teams are only allowed 3 presenters, however, most teams are much larger. Those students are in another room with a variety of learning activities. This would be a great opportunity to have a running PlastiVan® class open to all. Bob will follow up with ESD, then Tom Miller and Mark Richardson as needed.

Old Business/ New Business

Rob asked is there was any more old or new business to discuss today.

Old Neil asked if AutoEPCON was dropped for 2025. Rob confirmed it was.

New ANTEC Neil plans on attending, so does Dave. Neil Rob, Tom Miller and Dave will get together to plan coverage of Leadership, and Councilor’s meeting and also give time for ANTEC presentations. Both Rob and Tom are unable to attend. Tom may be able to assign Councilor proxy to Dave or Neil.

Rob is planning on taking on the newsletter responsibility, Jitesh volunteered to help Rob on newsletter.

Sassan noted need to get bylaws updated and asked who was on committee. Committee is set as Rob, Neil, Dave, Bob and Sassan.

Neil asked about a possible reschedule of EvosNA Tech meeting/ tour. Rob will ask Bernd about it. Question highlights the need for a Programs Chair.

Rob thanked everyone for attending and noted jobs needing to be filled and open board positions and asked that if you know of anyone interested in serving put them in touch with Rob.

Sassan moved meeting be adjourned, Neil seconded, Motion passed, adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Next BOD Meeting: March 17, 2025 Location TBD + Zoom

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

Agenda of today's meeting follows:



SPE Detroit Section – February 2024 BOD Meeting Proposed Agenda for February 17, 2025

Virtual Next BOD Meeting: March 17, 2024 ACC Office & Virtual

5:30 PM Meeting Start	President	Rob Philip
	Meeting Call to Order	Rob Philip
	Roll Call, Welcome, and Introductions	Rob Philip
5:45 PM	Approval of Minutes (November 18, 2024)	Bob Petrach
5:50 PM	President's Message	Rob Philip
6:00 PM	Treasurer's Report	Dave Okonaki
6:10 PM	Sustainability World Congress – Status / Updates	Susan
6:20 PM	Membership/Next Gen – Status/Updates/Plans	Dr. Mahmood ul Haq/Laura Shereda
6:25 PM	Nominations/Elections - Election Discussion / Actions	Open / Bob Petrach
6:30 PM	Awards	Open / Bob Petrach
6:40 PM	Education/ Scholarship Committee	Sandra McClelland / Tom Miller
6:45 PM	TPO Automotive Conference – Status	Nell Fernandez/Rob Philip
6:50 PM	Communications / e-Communications	Open / Keith Slopes
6:55 PM	Newsletter	Open / Rob Philip
7:00 PM	Website	Rob Philip
7:05 PM	First Vice-President	Dawn Cooper
7:10 PM	Advertising	OPEN
7:10 PM	Sponsorship	OPEN
7:10 PM	Historian	Open / Bob Petrach (Acting)
7:10 PM	Annual Golf Outing (June 27, 2024)	Dawn Cooper
7:15 PM	Annual Toy Program (Dec. 2025)	Rob Philip
7:20 PM	Annual Materials Auction (Feb. 2025) - Prelim. Plans, Needs & Timeline	Dawn Cooper
7:25 PM	Interactivity	Bob Petrach
7:30 PM	Old/New Business	All
7:35 AM	Meeting Adjourned	Rob Philip

Next BOD Meeting: March 17, 2024 ACC Office & Virtual

