



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

May 19, 2025 Meeting

Meeting Location

ZOOM/ phone

Board Member Attendance- Dawn Cooper, Neil Fuenmayor, Bernd Henkelmann , Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Matt Parkinson , Bob Petrach, Rob Philp, Tom Pickett, Armando Sardanopoli, Laura Shereda, Keith Siopes, Chris Surbrook (Tom Miller held proxy), Sassan Tarahomi, **14/19 voting (included proxies)**

Emeritus Board Member Present – Norm Kakarala (non voting)

Not present – Jitesh Desai, Mahmoodul Haq, Todd Hogan, Dave Okonski, Richard Umemoto.

Guests – Murali Chandrasekhar, Rohan Repale.

Meeting Call to order

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

Rob briefly addressed elections, Golf Outing needing help and June meeting to be at ACC and virtual with a dinner following the meeting.

He then had after he had Rohan Repale and Murali Chandrasekhar introduce themselves.

Approval of the Minutes

Rob Philp

Minutes of 2025-04-21 Board Meeting were pending approval. Rob referenced copies Bob sent out for review. **Sassan moved** minutes be approved for 2025-04-21. **Keith seconded. Motion passed.**

President's Report

Rob Philp

Rob started out thanking the attendees.

We have a lot of events coming up and need all hands on deck.

Dawn is doing a great job on the Golf outing, Keith has posted on Linked In.

Dave is not here tonight so there will be no treasurer's report.

Sustainability Conference

Sassan Tarahomi

Sassan reviewed his report on Sustainability Conference for **June 9-11, 2026.**

Keith is doing a great job on sponsorship and has been elevated to Sponsorship chair. Sassan noted committee does need additional help, particularly in sponsorship at this time.

Huntington Place 2026 contract was signed on April 30, 2025. Huntington Place is giving us a 200,000 ft² space instead of the 140,000 ft² at no extra charge.

Target is 5000-6000 attendance. Full conference ticket will be \$1000, exhibition floor only will be \$25.

Technical sessions are largely filled, abstracts being updated for 2026. Seven Keynotes set.

2026 Keynote Speakers	
Keynote Speaker	Champion to Notify
- Adam Wozniak, Ravago Dir. of Sustainability	Sassan
- Mark Kinkelaar, Prism Worldwide CCO	Sassan
- Matt Vandyke, Sustainability Engineer, GM	Sue Kozora, IAC
- Prof. Mohini M Sain, University of Toronto	Dr. Faruk, Ford / U. of Toronto
- Kari Bliss, Principal Sustainability, Padnos	Keith S.
- Ralph Bland, Superintendent, Detroit Edison PSA	Keith Y. / Ecotek
- Robert Henley, Executive Director, Innovus	Keith Y. / Ecotek

Neil asked a question about budgets. Rob said we need to assure that budget numbers are in to Dave as soon as possible to allow time to prepare budget for June planning meeting. The June planning meeting will be at ACC and virtual on June 23, 2025. Plan is to do a dinner after the meeting to socialize due to the high cost and technical problems we had at MSU last year.

Nominations and Elections

Neil Fuenmayor */Open /* Bob Petrach

Board of Directors Election

Neil is running elections with Bob's help. We have had trouble getting people to run for board. We need to get request in to SPE HQ so elections can be completed before roster due date of June 15. Rob asked Dawn if she was running for a board seat and she said "yes".

Laura Shereda is running. Murali Chandrasekhar is also running.

Dr. Haq is not running this time due to his ongoing health problems. Sassan noted that was good as we need board members to attend meetings both for input and to assure a quorum. (Rob had cancelled March meeting as we did not have enough RSVP'd to meet quorum.)

Officers Election

Changes are coming to bylaws which will reduce and modify Officer positions. Even with that reduction we will not fill all officer positions.

Bylaws committee consisting of Bob, Rob, Neil, Dave, Sassan and Bernd meet twice since the last board meeting. Sandra noted we need to vote on bylaws revisions twice but that the second vote could be an e-vote.

Since we do not have candidates to fill all the current officer positions or even the proposed reduced officer positions, Sassan recommended we vote on current slate. Consensus was that made sense.

Sassan moved that

Rob Philp be elected to another two year term as President.

Bernd Henkleman be elected to a two year term as Second Vice President.

Dave Okonski elected to another two year term as Treasurer.

Bob Petrach be elected to another two year term as Secretary

Keith seconded the motion. Slate was elected by voice vote.

Rob reviewed changes to bylaws, which would change officer alignment to
President
First Vice President
Second Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

continuing on the two year terms previously approved.

Councilor stays a three year term per SPE bylaws and Sandra noted Tom Miller is in second year of his term which runs to ANTEC 2027 and he'll be eligible to run for a second term.

Past President remains unchanged.

Neil seconded bylaws proposal. **First reading of bylaws revision to officers realignment was approved by voice vote.**

Awards

Open / Bob Petrach

Bob reported. Nothing has been done on awards, we need a chair and team. He also stated he thought we should do some awards this year and that some revisions of Awards page on website was needed. Bob will put something together. Rob offered to help.

Intersociety

Bob Petrach

Bob had sent out his report with minutes for review., no need for discussion.

Education/ Scholarship Committee

Sandra McClelland / Tom Miller

Education committee is meeting tomorrow, Rob is able to meeting with them.

Sandra did not do a normal review. She asked that board members send in ideas of what they would like to see done and comment on current activities. She did show budget slide from last meeting to give an idea of where money has been spent. The Education Committee budget sheet shows budgeted versus spent for the last five years.

Sandra stressed that they need board members to participate.

PlastiVan® Education committee needs more board members to go to PlastiVan® visits. It was noted that we have not been getting advance notice of many of the visits. Armando was able to make two visits in Taylor and said the background check process was not difficult. Rob asked how to attend. Sandra said we should work through the PlastiVan® instructor and typically a few days before will need to scan driver's license for Police to review for outstanding warrants, etc..

Essay contest – need more judges. If we had more judges the load reading and evaluating essays would be lightened as essays could be divided up. It can be a lot of work to read 70 essays.

Sassan said we really needed Ecotek support as a separate line item in Education budget.

Dr. Keith Young recounted how since the begin of the voyage with SPE in 2010, middle school students we met have graduated and are in industry, they have actively participated in TPO, EAV and Sustainability Conferences. Where initially intent was to expose students to the opportunities at conferences, the role has expanded to empower them where they are now presenting.

Meeting at a student chapter: Neil asked about holding one of the board meetings at a student chapter. Rob has been working on setting something up and will work with Education Committee's help possibly doing two or more schools and tying in to scholarship program.

Neil also mentioned TPO benefited by scholarships and asked if scholarships were part of Education budgeting or TPO budget. Rob will review with Education Committee.

Sassan asked about seeing SPE Detroit year to year contributions to Education and the Foundation. Sandra noted budget does show the last five years, budgeted and spent and Foundation Impact report shows Detroit as a leading contributor. Sassan we need to use this information in our marketing.

Communications

Keith Siopes

Golf outing information is posted on Linked In. This needs update with registration and cost information. Rob noted flyer went out to membership with that information. Keith missed. Neil said it would help if specific requests for social media postings needs were sent to Keith.

TPO Conference

Neil Fuenmayor

Note – at this point, roughly 6:45 Keith and Norm left meeting and Laura joined.

Neil reviewed his slides. He highlighted

Technical programs progress is very good. Target was 50 presentations. Have 56 committed and have received 40 Abstracts to date.

Sponsorship Revenue target is \$300,000, to date we have 39 Total Sponsors & Exhibitors @ \$231,550 Invoiced / \$101,050 Received

2 Platinum (Formosa, Advanced Composites) – 2 Receptions Sponsored (target 4, 2 receptions + 2 lunches))

21 Gold (target 24)

17 Exhibitors (target 45)

1 Break Sponsored (Sirmax) Target 6 Break & 2 Breakfast Sponsors

Team activities

2025 Scholarship Program – Active (Aug. 11, Deadline)

Preliminary Budget (2025 Event Cost) – In Progress – To be completed by June 2025

2025 costs expected to be slightly higher than 2024 – 2025 Contract with Hotel (Lower Discount), Increased Communications costs..

2025 Attendee Rates Info – Completed and Opened Info Website): 05-02-25

2025 Registration Module (SPE HQ): Opened on Website 05-16-25 (“Early Bird” Pricing)

Social media and eblasts - Call for Presentations Last Call Reminders; Scholarship Program

(2) New “Sponsorship Testimonial Videos (Why Sponsor?)” – Added to Website 05-15-25

Membership/Next Gen

Laura Shereda

No report.

Golf Outing

Dawn Cooper

Dawn reported date is June 17th at Cherry Creek 52000 Cherry Creek Dr.

Shelby Charter Township is a nicer course than Pine Trace and contract is more favorable.

So far we have 10 ½ foursomes and 3 sponsors and doing well with auction donations and prizes.

So far \$7000 invoiced and received \$4500.

NEED MORE FOURSOMES. Have enough volunteers to cover registration and putting. Course is handling signs, scoring and skins.

Neil asked about promotion ideas, Sassan suggested Facebook.

Dawn stressed we need more foursomes, call your contacts.

Toy Program

Dawn Cooper

Dawn reported that John Gessert needed ideas to help sell program. New ownership is hesitant and seems not to see the value in social efforts and wanted to reduce their costs. Historically APT has provided boxes and concentrate. Dawn offered to take on the boxes and concentrate as well as things we have done in the past such as material and transportation. Dawn did not she was not sure about labels / SPE Detroit stickers. There is some concern about labels coming off and being a choking hazard.

Sassan asked that all components be put into a spread sheet. Dawn said nothing has changed. Typically they use a 20 melt HDPE (FDA approved), concentrates, boxes, labels, and transportation. And APT, for safety and liability reasons, will not allow outside labor or parts.

All tooling used is APT tooling.

Neil asked if they would accept some compensation for labor, Dawn said that did not come up in her conversation with John Gessert and did not know if they'd accept a PO. At this time it appears that community service is not high on their list and we just needed to wait for their response. John Gessert stayed on as president of APT through the ownership transition at their request but has only one more year there.

Neil mentioned our alternative program last year purchasing toys, made in US with recycled content worked out well and always was an alternative.

Sassan noted we should consider our own tools in the future. He can help in that with his recent acquisition of Mid Michigan Plastics.

Bylaws

Rob Philp

Rob displayed bylaws revisions on screen.

First Revision, Rev 3 brought bylaws current with change to two year terms.

Revision 4 reducing number of officers as described earlier (repeated here)

Officer alignment is changed to:

President

First Vice President

Second Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Councilor

Past President

(President Elect eliminated)

Sassan moved the revision to officers be approved as Rob described. **Neil seconded.**

After brief discussion about reasoning for change which was shortening the officer progression/commitment (which was lengthened by 2 year terms) and improving flexibility (both 1st and 2nd VP equally in line to be elected to presidency) voice vote was held. **Motion passed first reading by voice vote.**

Sandra noted we could do a email vote for second reading so that this issue was resolved before the planning meeting.

Rob will send revised bylaws the Rev 3 approved and Rev 4 pending second reading document to board members. It was suggested that tracking be turned on to help highlight the changes.

Old Business/ New Business

Rob reminded us that planning meeting was to be at ACC on June 23, 2025. Dinner would follow meeting. Meeting also will be on Zoom.

Neil reminded everyone that June meeting was for budget review and approval so everyone should get their budget information in to Dave as soon as possible.

He also said elections were to be May 26 to June 9 and asked those running to send him bio and photo asap.

Bob noted that Chris Surbrook had given his proxy to Tom Miller. Todd Hogan had asked Chris to hold his proxy however since Chris was not attending, Todd did not have a proxy. We need to arrange proxies earlier. Bob noted proxy was received at 5:27 this evening.

Rob reminded us we need foursomes for the Golf outing, please do whatever you can to help.

Sassan moved meeting be adjourned, Neil seconded, Motion passed, adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Next BOD Meeting: June 23 , 2025 Location ACC + Zoom 5pm to 7 pm

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

Agenda of today's meeting is not available
