



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

January 12, 2026 Meeting

Meeting Location

ACC Troy / ZOOM/ phone

Board Member Attendance- Murali Chandrasekhar, Jitesh Desai, Neil Fuenmayor, Bernd Henkelmann, Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Dave Okonski, Bob Petrach, Rob Philp, Armando Sardanopoli. **10/18 voting**

Not present – Todd Hogan, Matt Parkinson, Tom Pickett, Laura Shereda, Keith Siopes, Chris Surbrook, Sassan Tarahomi, Richard Umemoto.

Guests – Stacey Barnard -William D Ford Career-Technical Center, Mark Llasera -ZANINI USA, Bernd's guest and Mark Richardson – SPE Foundation Director of Education

Meeting Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm by President Rob Philp. Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Role was called with 10 out of 18 members present, establishing a quorum.

Approval of the Minutes

Rob Philp

Minutes of 2025-11-17 Board Meeting were pending approval. Rob referenced copies Bob sent out for review December 29. **Sandra moved** minutes be approved as presented for 2025-11-17. Neil **seconded. Motion passed.**

President's Message

Rob Philp

Rob welcomed people back hoping they had safe holidays and introduced two guests Stacey Barnard -William D Ford Career-Technical Center, Wayne-Westland and Mark Richardson – SPE Foundation Director of Education who would present an update on the **SPE Jr. Researcher Program** the section is supporting. Rob noted that they had connected with Ford, specifically Ellen Lee at Ford Additive Center. A meeting with Ford, at Ford is in the works. Rob noted he is no longer with Sirmax and has something in the works and will let us know when it is finalized.

Treasurer's report

Dave Okonski

Dave presented report. The Detroit Section is presently financially solvent with a checking account balance of \$106,552.95 and an investment portfolio having a market value of about \$4.06M.

For the period 7/1/2025 to 1/12/2026, expenses exceeded income by \$51,396.61

Financial Performance,	BUDGET (Entire Fiscal Year)	ACTUAL (7/1/25 - 1/12/26)
INCOME	\$ 1,138,000.00	\$ 358,360.85
EXPENSES	\$ 1,113,165.00	\$ 409,757.46
<i>Fiscal Year: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026</i>		

For the period 11/14/2025 to 1/12/2026, expenses exceeded income by \$117,732.21

Financial Performance 11/14/2025 through 1/12/2026	BUDGET	ACTUAL
INCOME	\$ 189,733.34	\$ 160,500.00
EXPENSES	\$ 184,612.68	\$ 278,232.21

Dave also reviewed Performance to Budget for the time 7/1/2025 to 6/30/2026 to date -1/12/2026 and the Check Registry for the time 11-14-25 to 1-12-26. All but one scholarship check is cashed and it was a reissue after initial check had a stop payment issued as it was sent to an incorrect address and lost.

Jitesh moved treasurer's report be approved as presented. **Bernd seconded. Motion passed.**

Education/ Scholarship Committee

Sandra McClelland

Sandra thanked Stacey Barnard -William D Ford Career-Technical Center and Mark Richardson – SPE Foundation Director of Education for coming to update us on William . Ford Junior Researcher Program.

The SPE Jr. Researcher program is an elite program that offers junior and senior standing students at the William D Ford Career-Technical Center the opportunity to work directly with an industry mentor on meaningful engineering projects involving plastic materials.

At the beginning of the year, students receive intensive "pre-engineering" coursework that covers the basics of material properties, plastics materials, a history of plastics, design basics, and GD&T basics.

Students get to choose their project based on their own interests. Projects are approved by the teacher and mentor before work begins.

2024-25 projects included:

1. 3D printed end-of-arm tooling for FANUC classroom robot
2. Test recycled ABS filaments against commercially available prime filament
3. Modify Power Wheels vehicles to accommodate physically challenged children
4. Design and thermoform a car body to compete in the SPE Thermoforming Conference R/C Car Competition
5. Work with The Materials Group to test recycled automotive material properties
6. Design and 3D print an enclosure for an electronic circuit

The presentation included photos that may be in newsletter.

This year's Jr. Researchers have completed half of the pre-engineering curriculum and have chosen their projects. The next step is a project description and budget.

2025-26 projects and students include:

- 3D printed RC vehicle chassis – Luke Feroni and Joey Sackrison
- Recycled ABS filament -Kendall Lilly and Aaliyah Portis
- 3D printed drone chassis – Thurston Playlock
- Microplastic investigation – Evan Cox
- 3D printed lamp with integrated LEDs – Zoe Johnson
- 3D printed RC boat hull – Emerson McGuire and Joshua Balden

We had a great discussion with Stacey and Mark. Stacey is the full time instructor for the Program, Stacey teaches mechatronics, CAD/CAM. They have access to and learn to use metal lathes, mills, precision measuring equipment, electronics and and 3D printers. Mark acts as a mentor and is there at least every Thursday. Mark is doing the mentoring as must be within the school day. Expanding the program is difficult without more mentors available during school hours. Both Mark and Stacey were very impressed with the students' work and commitment.

Students at William D Ford Career-Technical Center are bound for both trades and college and have internships that count towards class credits.

Rob commented that as SPE and industry members we need to help find more internships.

Mark noted that transparency with Stacey and William D Ford Career-Technical Center and SME Prime is great, there is never any question where our money is going and benefits from our efforts. Still need to coordinate with Ford (Ellen Lee) for visit to the Ford additive center.

Students are "in class" 7-2 every day.

Mark also shared 2025 PlastiVan® Statistics and thanked SPE Detroit Section

Students served by SPE Detroit Section: 6977

Total days in classroom sponsored by SPE Detroit Section: 58

SPE Detroit Section percentage of total visits: 37%

Jr. Researcher students served by SPE Detroit Section: 20

Relative to PlastiVan® visits Bernd asked about notification so SPE members could attend. Mark said they try to give a month, Tom said we usually get about 2 weeks lead time, but there are glitches that often shorten that. Mark acknowledged the room for improvement.

Membership/Next Gen

Laura Shereda

No Laura at meeting and no report.

Sustainability Conference

Sassan Tarahomi

Sassan was not present so there was no report. Neil asked Rob for updates. Rob said he missed last meeting but said we have sponsorship problems and commitment issues and manpower issues and most of the sustainability industry is not in this area. Conference most likely will pivot to all virtual. particularly

Annual Toy Program (Dec. 2025) / Golf Outing

Rob Philp

Toys ESD sent a thank you, we are still trying to get some photos from them for newsletter.

Golf Outing Rob reported that it will be at Cherry Creek June 16, 2026. Dawn will chair event.

TPO conference (not on agenda but inserted here)**Rob Philp**

2026 TPO conference will be September 28 through October 1, 2026.

First TPO committee meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2026.

Internships/Student chapter meetings**Rob Philp**

Rob has had students reaching out looking for internships. We will put in the newsletter and appeal to our members.

Rob is in process working with student chapters to hold one or more BoD meetings with student chapters at their locations.

Newsletter**Rob Philp**

Rob still working with Jill Houser to put get a newsletter together. If you have content/ photos, send to Rob.

Old Business/ New Business**No old business.****New Business**

SPE/ PLASTICS merger. Rob said on line meeting that was to explain was as clear as mud.

Supposedly no changes to SPE membership. Tom said Councilors emails also said the same and little followup though some Councilors were not happy that merger is apparently a done deal yet no prior review with Council. Sandra said CCOW should be able to override SPE Board. Merger would probably affect chapters not incorporated separately from SPE but large chapters incorporated independently like Detroit would be safe financially.

Mark Richardson noted SPE Foundation was solid with PLASTICS and expected to continue as is or with even more support for its mission.

Bernd did note there probably will be more problem getting sponsorships from companies already a part of PLASTICS as cost to be a part of PLASTICS is very high for companies.

Neil asked about visit of William D Ford Career-Technical Center to Ford Additive.

Tom Miller said he would not be able to go to ANTEC and if someone else was planning to go, he'd assign his Councilor proxy.

Mark Llasera -ZANINI USA , was introduced as Bernd's guest.

Next meeting is February 9, 2026 and will be in person at ACC and virtual.

Bernd made a motion to adjourn, Neil seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.

AGAIN Next BOD Meeting: February 9, 2026 ACC and Zoom 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

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

Agenda from today's meeting is on following page.



**SPE Detroit Section –
January 12 2026 BOD Meeting
Proposed Agenda
ACC Office & Virtual**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98848652784?pwd=Wui6yD9rgn7NXSMxS6h1tcu9WAuXtp.1>

Meeting ID: 988 4865 2784

Passcode: 995983

One tap mobile

1 301 715 8592,,98848652784#,,,,*995983# US

	5:30 PM Meeting Start	
5:30 PM	Meeting Call to Order	Rob Philp
5:35 PM	Roll Call, Welcome, and Introductions	Rob Philp
5:35 PM	Approval of Minutes (June, 2025)	Bob Petrach
5:40 PM	President's Message	Rob Philp
5:50 PM	Treasurer's Report	Dave Okonski
6:10 PM	Education/ Scholarship Committee	Sandra McClelland / Tom Miller
6:20 PM	Sustainability World Congress – Status / Updates	Sassan
6:25 PM	Membership/Next Gen – Status/Updates/Plans Nominations/Elections	Laura Shereda Bob Petrach
6:30 PM	Open Positions / Succession Planning	
6:40 PM	Annual Toy Program (Dec. 2025) / Golf Outing	Neil / Rob / Karen / Dawn
6:45 PM	Internships / Student Chapter Meetings	Rob Philp
6:50 PM	Newsletter	Open / Jill Houser /Rob Philp
6:55 PM	Old/New Business	All
7:30 PM	Meeting Adjourned	Rob Philp

Next BOD Meeting: February 9, 2025 ACC Office & Virtual