



Detroit Section of the Society of Plastics Engineers

Board Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2026 Meeting

Meeting Location

ACC Troy / ZOOM/ phone

Board Member Attendance- Murali Chandrasekhar -Bob held proxy, Neil Fuenmayor, Bernd Henkelmann, Sandra McClelland, Tom Miller, Dave Okonski, Bob Petrach, Rob Philp, Keith Siopes, Chris Surbrook. **10/17 voting**

Not present – Jitesh Desai, Todd Hogan, Matt Parkinson, Tom Pickett, Armando Sardanopoli, Laura Shereda, Sassan Tarahomi,
Note Richard Umemoto has resigned.

Emeritus Board (non voting) Norm Kakarala

Non board members – Greg Boston- General Polymers, Dawn Cooper – golf outing chair, Riley Green – General Polymers, Hunter Nofs – General Polymers, Dave Sheridan

Meeting Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by President Rob Philp. Rob said we would focus on golf outing coming up June 16, Dream Cruise activities, and ANTEC brief from Dave. Rob thanked Dave for representing us at ANTEC and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Roll call was called with 10 out of 17 members present, establishing a quorum.

Approval of the Minutes

Rob Philp

Minutes of March 9, 2026 Board Meeting were pending approval. Rob referenced copies Bob sent out for review. **Neil moved** minutes be approved as presented for 2026-03-09. **Dave seconded.**

Motion passed.

Treasurer's report

Dave Okonski

Dave reviewed reports. The Detroit Section is presently financially solvent with a checking account balance of \$166,285.17 and an investment portfolio having a market value of about \$4.3M. For the period 7/1/2025 to 5/10/2026, income exceeded expenses by \$8,335.61

Financial Performance,	BUDGET (Entire Fiscal Year)	ACTUAL (7/1/25 - 5/10/26)
INCOME	\$ 1,138,000.00	\$ 500,790.85
EXPENSES	\$ 1,113,165.00	\$ 492,455.24
Fiscal Year: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026		

For the period 3/8/2026 to 5/10/2026, income exceeded expenses by \$53,241.85

Financial Performance	BUDGET	ACTUAL
-----------------------	--------	--------

Committee elected to also give an honorable mention essay as this essay demonstrates why we do what we do.



Honorable Mention



General Business Information: Emerson McGuire – Honorable Mention

Albert Einstein once said "With every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. With every problem, there's a solution, just a matter of being action." The world is changing. I believe we are on the rise as it is seen as extremely innovative, it allows for a better cost, efficiency, and rate of production. But I **aspire** speak not about the big corporations' effect on the macro, but about the micro, the young minds. My name is Emerson McGuire, and I **aspire** talk about how much plastics have changed my life, in just one hundred, and seventy-six days.

It started in 2025, I had done a quick tour around a school, William D Ford Career Technical Center. My parents persuaded me to go, I went without any purpose, reason, and I nearly dreaded the experience. On that first look, nothing caught my attention. It came in the end where I told a staff member. "Nothing really caught my eye, but Mechanics may be cool." I did not know that one small answer, changed my outlook on everything. **See at that time I was the most any kid, not interested in much, especially not in school, and not particularly looking forward.** In my mind I had always thought "I have another 2 years, there's always going to be time for me to find what I like." But if I knew what I know now, that night was my time.

Fast forward another ten months, the day is September 2nd 2025, a young adult's nightmare, the first day of school. I dropped everything back, as everyday would always be the same, up at, been the same subjects, been out of my mind. **Something changed that day, something new, not for the time being, but for my future.** The class went as all my others, we introduced ourselves, met new people, and I met some great friends. And even greater teachers, such as Mrs. Barnard.

One specific thing that really stuck out to me was our 3D printer, 3D printing. We did a small and proved on making a plastic fidget spinner. On the first day I thought it would be easy, something simple, just three circles around one center circle. **What's hard about that?** Soon I knew I was so wrong. **There was so much we learned about creativity in plastics, specifically in 3D printing.** We looked over and over, with different designs, shapes, and all new ideas. Until we found the one we saw as perfect.

What I had never been able to see, in this experience compared to any other, is that she had done it differently. **She taught us to become, not just for learning on the plastic readiness, but on yourself.** **She had a different perspective of how people behaved, she knew the real world.** She was unlike any other teacher because she didn't train you to get the 10 points, the A grade, and pass. She trained your mental fortitude, and that put this class from just doing, to learning. **Mrs. Barnard had a way of breaking people down, and building them up so much better.** She trained for the real world, and she trained you to be who you really are.

With hard work and determination, came success. **More than ever, I had seen a dramatic spike in my academic ability.** I was **going, going, quack, then missing assignments, and I felt like.** **She taught me who I could be, and I showed myself my own potential.** And I took that and ran. **I am now enrolled in the SPE Foundation's Junior Researchers program and I could never be happier.** I am happy with what I have accomplished now, but I have been taught to look ahead as well, to who I may become one day. In the words of Angela Duckworth, "Our Potential is one thing, what we do with it is quite another."

The April 17 visit by students from William D Ford students went very well.
A thank you from Stacey Barnard, instructor is included.

Ford AM Labs Visit, Friday, April 17, 2026

Hello all,

I would like to sincerely thank you for the outstanding tour you provided for my students. The experience was meaningful, engaging, and highly relevant to their studies in plastics, CAD, and 3D printing.

The visit exposed them to a wide range of new and fascinating concepts and processes. They were so immersed in the experience that they were rendered speechless. They only shared their observations and questions throughout the tour in quiet conversations with me. For many of these students who are planning to pursue careers in engineering, seeing professionals at work—especially on an industrial scale—was both inspiring and confidence-building.

They were particularly excited to discover that they are using the same CAD software as your engineers, which reinforced the real-world relevance of their classroom learning.

I have attached a list of student reflections from the trip, written in their own words. Thank you again for the time and effort you invested in making this such a valuable experience. I look forward to the opportunity to bring another group of students back next school year.

With appreciation,

Ms. Stacey Barnard (she/her/hers)

Robotics & Engineering (Mechatronics) Instructor

William D. Ford Career Technical Center

36455 Marquette, Westland, 48185



Ford Labs Visit, Friday, April 17, 2026 Impressions from the Students (in their words)

Ford Labs Visit, Friday, April 17, 2026 Impressions from the Students (in their words): •

- There were a lot of people using CAD to design products.
- There were so many different jobs. Some people were 3D printing, some were doing welding line shaping (?), and some were building robots.
- I found the cars being built impressive.
- The sand 3D printer was incredible.
- The autonomous car was so cool!
- I really liked the programmable carts, especially for the drones.
- The SLS (I think) printers with the powder and lasers were mind-blowing.
- The big yellow robotic arms are just like the ones we have in the classroom.
- I was really impressed with the big metal printers that they used for F1 car parts.
- The self-driving cars—the perfect human sensing was crazy!
- Powder bed fusion - I didn't even know something like that existed.
- The models for the liquid metal that were made out of sand. (His teacher was fascinated by this too!!)
- The mock assembly line-I didn't know that automated robots moved the cars.
- I was amazed at the size of the 3D printers-they were so big and there were so many different kinds.
- How friendly and nice all of the people we met at the facility were.

Rob thanked Tom and Sandra for efforts organizing this.

The board continues to consolidate scholarship funds under the Education budget for clearer accounting and coordination. Education Committee is working on budget for next year to be approved at the June planning meeting. If you have any ideas you would like included in the plan, please contact Tom and Sandra by May 29.

Sustainability Conference

Sassan Tarahomi

Rob explained that due to lack of sponsors that the Sustainability Conference was canceled despite two years of effort from the team.

Rob explained that the \$12,500 deposit paid last year was forfeited, but Huntington Place would use it as a credit if we scheduled another event. Time period on that credit was not clear. Rob said Huntington Place staff was very good to work with. Information on conference has been removed from our website.

Dream Cruise Event

Bernd Henkelmann

Event will be August 15. Save the date flyer to be ready by Golf outing. Working on details. Neil mentioned it is still joint with Automotive though amount of their participation is TBD. Bernd asked Sandra and Tom to share information with students. More joint events possible.

Rob mentioned future of EAV was in doubt. Norm said EAV was scheduled for May 18-19 2027.

Back to Dream Cruise Neil thought more signage was needed. Our event is not open to the public but we want to make our presence known.

Golf Outing

Dawn Cooper

Dawn reported that it will be at Cherry Creek June 16, 2026. Rob commented that it is a great course and Cherry Creek was a great host. Minimum number of foursomes to break even is 18 and at this time look good with 8 to date and at least 10 in the works. A request was made to come up with a dinner only price for those not interested in golfing. Neil asked about prizes, Dawn said there will be a few but effort did not match reward in the past

Toy Program

Ron Philp

Dawn was willing to take lead on this. Still trying to figure out details. AMT tooling that was supposed to be a part of the Rose City facility auction was not. Neil recapped last year's effort by him and Karen buying recycled content plastic toys on Amazon and using ESD's distribution system. Hope to have a committee and direction by June meeting. Dawn noted that if we can figure out a way to manufacture our own toys, she could handle distribution, distribution network continues to ask he about the program. Rob thanked Dawn for her efforts on this. A follow-up meeting for June 18th at 11 a.m. via Zoom to further discuss toy manufacturing possibilities and other topics.

Membership/Next Gen

Laura Shereda

No Report.

Internships

Ron Philp

Rob has been connecting students with companies, but no successes yet. Greg asked what kind of internships, technical focused or business focused. General Polymers may have some business internships. Everyone would like to know what is reasonable pay range.

Student Chapter Meeting Planning

Ron Philp

The group discussed organizing a meeting with a student chapter, potentially at Kettering or MSU, though timing presents challenges due to Kettering's variable schedule. They agreed to explore holding the meeting after summer break, with Rob taking the lead on contacting the A section folks. Conversation then shifted back to challenges with finding internships for students,

particularly in the plastics industry, where companies are cutting back on intern programs due to budget constraints. Rob proposed creating a website section with intake forms to match students with potential internship opportunities, and the group discussed potential formats for combining their board meeting with the student chapter meeting.

Newsletter

Ron Philp

The group discussed the need to produce a newsletter, with Bob proposing that everyone contribute on what they do within the section. Due date September 4th. Rob reviewed the importance of having all members contribute content rather than relying on one person to compile everything. There should be an article on elections and an update about the ANTEC conference in Pittsburgh, which focused on smart manufacturing and AI integration in injection molding and extrusion processes.

Nomination and Elections

Bob Petrach

Current board members with terms ending 6-30-2026 are Todd Hogan, Armando Sardanopoli, Keith Siopes, Chris Surbrook, and Richard Umemoto. Richard has resigned. Todd Hogan, Armando Sardanopoli, Keith Siopes, and Chris Surbrook, have agreed to run for reelection. Dave Sheridan also will be a candidate. Neil and Karen coordinating elections through SPE as we are running too late to try running our own election.

ANTEC

Dave Okonski

Dave said focus was on smart manufacturing incorporating AI into design. Monday before the leadership meeting an informal councilors meeting was held by some focusing on the merger.

SPE-Plastics Industry Association Merger

The meeting focused on the merger between SPE and the Plastics Industry Association. Rob explained that SPE remains a separate division with individual memberships while gaining access to the larger association's marketing and conference management resources. The discussion covered potential collaboration opportunities, including having SPE-run pavilions within NPE manufacturing floors and leveraging Plastics Industry Association's marketing capabilities to boost conference attendance. The conversation ended with planning for upcoming board elections, where several current. ANTEC will be at NPE.

Plastics Industry Association is very interested in the work of the SPE Foundation and expanding it to help with workforce development.

New Business

None

Next meeting is June 22, 2026 and will be in person at ACC and virtual.

Bob made a motion to adjourn, Bernd seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

AGAIN Next BOD Meeting: June 22, 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 follows.



**SPE Detroit Section –
May 11 2026 BOD Meeting
Proposed Agenda
ACC Office & Virtual**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98904438181?pwd=FOz8Ygu9lgjzAlzCEpyqOR6jDamlw.1>

Meeting ID: 989 0443 8181

Passcode: 328573

One tap mobile

1 646 931 3860,,98904438181#,,,,*328573# 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 (March 9, 2026)	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 / Rob
6:25 PM	Membership/Next Gen – Status/Updates/Plans Nominations/Elections	Laura Shereda Bob Petrach
6:30 PM	Dream Cruise	Bernd/Neil/Rob
6:40 PM	Annual Toy Program (2026) / 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: June 22, 2026 ACC Office & Virtual