

American Fisheries Society Management Committee Meeting Call

July 18, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Participants

MC Members: Joe Margraf, Jesse Trushenski, Julie Defilippi, Mark Porath, Cleve Steward, Dave Coughlan, Kristen Ferry, Melissa Wuellner, Ron Essig (participated by GoToMeeting connection but not voice), and Doug Austen (non-voting).

Constitutional Consultant: John Boreman

AFS Staff: Dan Cassidy, Tom Bigford, Taylor Pool, Katrina Dunn, and Eva Przygodzki

Guest: None

Meeting Minutes

1. **Meeting called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Margraf and quorum established** (by Boreman)
2. **Approve Agenda** - no changes requested
3. **Approval of Management Committee minutes** from June 20, 2016, by unanimous consent.

Minor correction by Trushenski will be submitted by email to Austen and incorporated into the minutes.

4. **President elect's Report – Margraf for Essig**

- A. Essig is in Britain for the annual meeting of the Fisheries Society of the British Isles.
- B. Austen report that the Kansas City meeting planning has experienced some challenges, particularly with fundraising. Local fundraising has not been successful. AFS staff have recently stepped in to provide assistance. Contacts have been made locally, regionally and nationally. Recent improvement in trade show booth sales have resulted in a nearly full trade show. Registration is currently at about 840 with a projection of 1,110 to 1,200.

5. **Executive Director's Report –Austen**

- A. Overview and discussion of the draft report on Future of the Nations Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Policy Recommendations for the Next Administration) –Pool, Bigford, and Austen
 - (1) After an introduction and review of the history of the document development by Austen, Bigford and Pool, it was noted that Steve McMullin discussed his comments with AFS staff. Others have submitted some email comments, as well, and Pool and Bigford have modified the document to reflect suggestions as appropriate.
 - (2) Margraf and Trushenski suggested that an introductory statement, executive summary, or some other narrative at the start of the document is needed to establish a vision, role and purpose and place this document in proper context. This should also serve to help the reader understand the flow, interconnectivity and sequence of statements.
 - (3) Steward expressed support for the document and requested that additional info-graphics such as the ADAAP example would be helpful. As currently constructed it appears unbalanced with a substantive graphic associated with only a single topic. It was noted by Pool that graphics were widely requested but no others were submitted.
 - (4) Porath noted the challenge of elegant and simple design to engage readers but also needing sufficient substance in the recommendations to result in serious discussion. Edits will be made to a variety of recommendation to increase depth.
 - (5) Defilippi requested additional background documentation on some marine facts in order to allow for validation.
 - (6) Trushenski suggested that follow-up discussions with a subset of Fish Administrators would help to ensure that content is appropriate and acceptable.

- (7) Future steps – (a) Additional comments are solicited and edits will be made to further ensure that the document appropriately reflects AFS values and sentiments.
(b) The next version will be sent to the Governing Board (GB) in early August as well as being included in the Briefing Book. Comments will be solicited from the GB prior to the Kansas City meeting in order to allow Pool and Bigford to compile the comments and prepare responses.
(c) These will be presented at the GB meeting and further discussion will be scheduled.
(d) Other open discussions will take place in Kansas City.
(e) A new version will be crafted based upon all Kansas City input and final approval, if needed, will be provided by the Officers or Management Committee.
(f) A communications and distribution plan will be developed in conjunction with AFS communications staff. Furthermore, AFS leadership and membership will be given additional materials to support any local efforts to share the document with respective U.S. House and Senate members.
(g) All efforts will be made to convey the document to the new Presidential administration and develop relationships that will support productive future dialogue.

B. Discussion of AFS policy re-engineering proposal (Bigford) (Attachment A)

- (1) It was reiterated that 37 of the 38 AFS policy statements will have expired by the time of the Kansas City meeting. The current process simply is not effective and is burdensome.
(2) A set of alternative methods for policy development have been constructed by Bigford and are in the process of review by AFS leadership. Option #4 is the preferred option by staff. Discussion focused on the need to ensure that we have sufficient science background for policy positions.
(3) Further discussion will take place in Kansas City during the Governing Board meeting.

C. AFS staffing update - Austen introduced new AFS Policy Development staff Katrina Dunn who started employment with AFS on 18 July.

D. Financial update (see Attachment B)

E. Governing Board reporting tool (WebformZ) – Review of the process leading up to the current proposal from ISG was presented by Austen. The ISG proposal for \$49,864 was described along with the additional programmatic uses of the WebFormZ software. Additional discussion by Trushenski highlighted the substantial anticipated value of the GB reporting tool to AFS.

Motion: Authorize staff to sign proposal from ISG after ESAB review and affirmation of approach. Moved by Trushenski, 2nd by Defilippi. Approved by unanimous consent.

6. Other Business

- A. None

7. Next Management Committee call – There will be no MC call on Monday, August 15. Next meeting will be in Kansas City at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, August 19

8. Meeting ended 2:35pm

Attachment A

Strengthening the AFS Policy Program

This analysis was requested by the Governing Board at its April 2016 meeting. The AFS Policy Program was asked to evaluate current activities (policy statements, comment letters, resolutions, web offerings, social media postings, congressional briefings, symposia and other events at AFS meetings, and more) and propose alternatives for improved success. This effort will:

- complete this report for discussion during the GB meeting in Kansas City;
- identify a preferred direction; and
- prepare our Society for implementation.

Policy Program History - AFS interests in policy and advocacy date back to our formative years in the 1870s when we shared scientific opinions on shellfish aquaculture. Over the decades our interests expanded to include finfish and all fisheries issues, and stretched well beyond science. During our 63rd annual meeting (1933) then-President Fred A. Westerman appointed a committee to draft an American Game Fish Policy, signaling our first official foray into Society policy statements. After five years of effort, the North American Fish Policy was presented at the 68th annual meeting, adopted by the membership, and published in the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society (1939, 68:40-51).

The AFS Policy Program has evolved over the decades. AFS President Carlos Fetterolf led a successful effort during 1992-1993 to encourage our Society to advocate for sound science and management. His work provided the basis the AFS "Advocacy Guidelines" in place today (see <http://fisheries.org/policy-media/advocacy-guidelines/>).

During that same era AFS developed a multi-pronged approach to policy matters. We created a Resource Policy Committee to help the Society evaluate, develop, and maintain resource policies by assessing concerns of the membership, advising the AFS President and Executive Director about aquatic resource issues, producing or coordinating draft resource policy statements for Society approval, and reviewing approved policies to ensure continued usefulness (see <http://fisheries.org/about/committees/resource-policy-committee/>). AFS also established a Resolutions Committee that occasionally has ventured into policy (see <http://fisheries.org/about/governance/procedures/standing-and-special-committee/#resolutions>). Finally, our Society has become more active in writing letters to influence decisions related to fish. Several times each year since 2007 we have submitted technical comments via our own letters or by co-signing with multiple groups (see <http://fisheries.org/policy-media/policy-letters/>). The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (a consortium of more than 100 fishing and hunting groups), FishNet (mostly recreational fishing interests, led by the American Sportfishing Association), and the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies (six professional societies) have proven to be our most effective allies in letter-writing campaigns. The National Wildlife Federation, coupled with other general membership organizations, might offer fourth type of network to generate joint policy letters. Similarly, efforts such as ASA FishNet and the Fisheries Action Network from the mid-1990s might help AFS identify key opportunities but we need to proceed cautiously as some efforts lean toward advocacy and may be counter to our mission.

Early Policy Program efforts were supported by a series of short-term interns and entry-level staff:

- 1997-2008 – Sea Grant Fellows (Lee Benaka, Nature McGinn, Katherine McLaughlin, Alesia Read (each for approximately one-year)
- 2003-2013 – Policy and Development Coordinator position on the AFS staff and filled by four individuals (Brooke Zanetell, Jessica Guebther, Elden Hawkes, Kevin Lynch)

In the midst of those early years, AFS also hosted three federal employees for short-term projects, including establishing closer connections with key agencies. Ron Eisler from the U.S. Geological Survey, Eugene Fritz from NOAA/National Ocean Service, and Margaret

Lorenz from NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service each worked on short-term assignment at AFS in the early 2000s.

The efforts of those 11 individuals supported the AFS Policy Program through 2014, and set the stage for two significant advances. First, AFS pursued cooperative agreements with two federal agencies. The first agreement was with the NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service to provide services, including policy work via a congressional briefing. The five-year NOAA agreement was renewed to ensure a professional relationship through fiscal year 2020. AFS signed a second multi-year financial arrangement in mid-2015 with the U.S. Forest Service to organize one congressional briefing each year. Other agreements with the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management are possible, each with a strong policy thread. Those activities build nicely on AFS staff efforts to track policy-related actions by Congress, government agencies, and natural resource partners and write occasional letters regarding their actions.

The second major action unfolded over the past few years, encouraged by Executive Director Doug Austen and reflected by financial decisions made by AFS leadership. The goal was to support a deeper commitment to policy across the fisheries and aquatic resource sectors. In the intervening 2.5 years, the following personnel actions have positioned AFS to play an active role in fisheries issues, and established a solid basis for future improvements.

- March 2014 – Hired first Policy Director (Tom Bigford) (part-time).
- October 2014 – Enhanced staff capacity when new Policy Intern and Policy Fellow programs were approved by AFS leadership.
- December 2014 – Tested the idea of a paid Policy Internship for young AFS members who are in undergraduate school or early in their graduate schooling. One intern (Owen Mulvey-McFerron) was hired to work on a mix of policy tasks.
- January 2015 – Hired first Policy Fellow (Patrick Shirey) to update and merge our three policies on threatened and endangered species. The paid, half-time, six-month Policy Fellowship was designed for a fisheries professional who has completed graduate training and moved into the work force.
- April 2015 – Invested more deeply in the Policy Internship program, renewing our contract with Owen Mulvey-McFerron and hiring Valerie Holland, both for the summer.
- December 2015 – With support from leadership, hired a Policy Analyst to add long-term stability and depth to the Policy Program. As a full-time employee, Taylor Pool provided immediate benefits across all program tasks. Also in December AFS hired a second Policy Fellow (Tracy Wendt), this time focusing on instream flow issues.
- April 2016 – Hired two more paid summer Policy Interns (undergraduates Zach Steffensmeier and Marcos Holland) to work on several priority projects.

We are now at another critical juncture as we challenge ourselves to serve a stronger role in the natural resource and fisheries arenas. Questions include whether a different mix of products and roles would enable AFS to wield greater influence either alone or with our partners.

Throughout this history, AFS staff have worked closely with the AFS Resource Policy Committee and other AFS units. While AFS has written several dozen letters to government leaders on fish issues our focus has been to summarize the literature and creating policy statements for priority topics – 38 as of mid-2016. Those statements are the primary products of the Resource Policy Committee, supplemented recently by the two AFS Policy Fellows listed above.

In combination, the literature reviews, policies, letters, and other products represent a steady effort to make best use of AFS staff and to reflect our strategic plan, especially our six goals:

- Science Goal: Advance and promote fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic sciences.
- Education Goal: Support education and professional development in fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic sciences.
- Communication Goal: Disseminate fisheries science information.

- Networking Goal: Provide forums and networks to promote interaction among fisheries professionals and students.
- Advocacy Goal: Promote the fisheries profession and support evidence-based decision making for the conservation, development, and wise use of fisheries resources and aquatic ecosystems.
- Governance Goal: Practice good governance of the Society and its member units.

Each goal embraces our policy and advocacy efforts and is supported more deeply by more specific strategies (see <http://fisheries.org/about/governance/strategic-plan-2015-2019/>).

Our Charge – Our charge is to do better, to strengthen our performance. The opportunity is real since the AFS Policy Program efforts during the past two decades have not been accompanied by a clear strategy to apply those policies to fisheries decisions. Our efforts to review the literature and develop policy recommendations usually stopped there, followed by minimal communication with affected industries, agencies, or legislatures. That shortcoming left our Society on the fringes of important decisions, a lapse that became more evident in the past two years as AFS sharpened its policy focus and sought to become more influential in aquatic science arenas. AFS, the experts on fisheries since 1870, remains a minor player in the eyes of most decision makers. We need to change that perception and reality.

Society concerns became more serious during the past year. At the suggestion of Executive Director Doug Austen and with the full support of the AFS Policy team, these issues were raised in late 2015 and placed on the agenda for our 2016 Mid-Year Governing Board meeting. The Mid-Year GB discussion aired concerns related to efficiency and effectiveness, leading to consensus around the charge.

This report responds to that GB task and will inform a more detailed discussion at the Governing Board meeting in Kansas City on August 20, 2016. Our hope is that the Governing Board will accept the recommendations described below, and charge the Society to proceed with implementation. A special meeting has been scheduled on August 24 in Kansas City to discuss those next steps and our schedule.

Our Options – Reflecting on our charge from the Governing Board, we should consider options to take greater advantage of our primary assets (fisheries-related knowledge and experience) as we seek to become more influential in the science, management, policy, and education arenas. Those options range from the status quo to a major shift, as summarized below and presented in greater depth in the two tables at the end of this report.

- Option #1, Status Quo: This option reflects our current approach, with a focus on occasional letters (about 2-5 per year, perhaps more depending on how our new role evolves with the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies, CASS) we write, signing on to more letters (perhaps 10-15) authored by others but with an AFS signature indicating concurrence, briefings or other tasks as required via cooperative agreements or other legal documents, our traditional 5-yr reviews on existing policies (addressing about 7-8 of our 38 policies annually), and a new policy statement about every 2-4 years.
- Option #2, Revised By-laws to Ease Workload: This option covers the same suite of activities mentioned under Option #1 but with one significant change. Since our work on policies is our most challenging task, this option would shift from a 5-yr to a 10-yr review cycle for existing policies (about 3-4 policies reviewed annually, down from 7-8 under Option #1). The reduced pace would be matched with revised AFS by-laws to enable us to incorporate the best available science in a schedule we would hope to maintain.
- Option #3, Shift to Shorter Background Documents: With this option we would revise all existing policy documents into much more concise summaries and policy statements. The intent is to reduce effort in writing and updating the documents while also increasing the prospects of decision makers reading our products. As with Options #1 and 2, we'd transition toward shorter documents over the course of years, revising about 7-8 per year if we combine shorter documents with a 10-yr review cycle.

- Option #4, Redirect Primary Focus to Letters, Briefings, and Other Actions: Since policy statements and related literature reviews require so much effort, this option proposes to shift our attention away from policies and to other tools to share fisheries knowledge and influence decisions. We would need to develop a priority list of issues to address and partners to share the effort. Fortunately AFS has some history in this arena so the shift would not be too abrupt.

With each option AFS will need to provide the capacity to succeed. Permanent staff in Bethesda, temporary Policy Fellows and Interns, AFS volunteers on the Resource Policies Committee (RPC), and experts from other AFS units will need to redirect effort toward our selected approach. One option could be to ask each AFS division and/or section to identify a person to serve on the RPC, thereby enhancing the RPC's technical capacity and its ability to respond nimbly to worthy issues. Another proactive approach based on established priorities would be to seek subject-matter experts to work on the issues we anticipate during some planning cycle. Both offer increased capacity compared to the status quo and simply reacting as an opportunity arises.

Preferred Approach – The AFS Policy Program recommends Option #4, a major shift away from lengthy policy documents and toward products that are more likely to influence decision makers. The mix of products envisioned with this option would be easier to match with annual priorities, more flexible to accommodate proactive and reactive opportunities, and more suitable for partnering with other organizations and agencies. Option #4 would position AFS to become more influential across the fisheries and aquatic resource communities. Furthermore, ending the need to maintain 38 policies would free up time to focus on timely issues where AFS can make a difference.

Our preferred approach has some important implications:

- This recommendation includes an emphasis on shorter, more strategic documents rather than lengthy literature reviews. Some of the issues addressed in those documents can be identified proactively (priority issues such as climate change, research needs, or hatchery operations) while others will require flexible reaction (events such as chemical spills, budget cuts, or proposed regulations). AFS will need to establish the capacity to meet both types of demands.
- For each policy initiative, from the largest congressional briefing to a special letter, we need a communications plan complete with roles, tasks, and a schedule. The plan should be finalized at the same time as the policy product to ensure timely action and full success. We also need a plan to guide timely implementation of this option.
- With an eye toward the personnel needed to implement this recommendation, AFS needs to retain its two Policy staff positions (Director and Analyst), the Policy Fellow, and the Policy Interns. We also need to work with the Resource Policies Committee to match membership with anticipated roles and issues. That Committee is likely to be a very important source of much-needed capacity.
- We also need to develop criteria to help us identify which issues (or types of issues) we should address based on priorities and can address based on workload and internal procedures.
- With a new approach to our Policy work, the Policy Program will need to work with the AFS Constitutional Consultant to identify changes to Society by-laws and guidance.
- One important administrative point is the review processes leading to final approval. We need to establish a streamlined review process so our products can be timely. That also includes guidance on who can approve an AFS position and sign a document on behalf of the Society.
- We'll also need to work with the Communications Director and website team to create content, post changes, etc. For example, we'll need to update the Policy link that includes archived and "active" policy statements and the links to letters (links provided on page 1).

Recommended Implementation Schedule – With our preferred Option #4 we will need a schedule of issues we can anticipate in the next year or three (the proactive portion of our workload) coupled with a list of AFS Policy Program members (staff and member

volunteers) who can dedicate appropriate time to each issue. That schedule will need to be revisited at least annually, reflecting obligations in cooperative agreements with federal agencies (now NOAA/NMFS, USDA/USFS), fellow scientific societies (such as the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies), hunting and fishing groups (such as through the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership), or other citizen-based groups (National Wildlife Federation, FishNet, The Nature Conservancy). We'll also want to connect our efforts to our annual and division meetings so issues can be vetted and decisions shared. This effort promises to require more hands-on leadership than the status quo, at least in the beginning. We recommend that AFS staff coordinate this effort and that all AFS efforts be shared with all appropriate units. Work on a topic deemed important to an AFS division (geographic component) or section (technical knowledge) would involve AFS staff to track and assist in the short term and keep records for longer term use.

As proposed, implementation will begin in Kansas City with a special meeting on August 24 after the Governing Board renders its decision. Our intent is to integrate the new approach into Policy work throughout the Society by late 2016. Tasks will be incorporated into annual work plans for the Executive Director, Policy staff, and Resource Policy Committee effective with 2017.

AFS Policy Program – Options for Future Directions

Option/Key features	Primary Product	Secondary Products	Process	AFS Staff Role	RPC Role	Partnerships	Implications to AFS Guidance
Status quo (review/revise every 5 years)	Background documents (3-75p) supporting brief AFS policy statements (1-3p) with actions. 38 currently; only 2 are up-to-date	Communications plan with press release, distribution, visits, etc. – rarely prepared but sorely needed	Reflected in existing by-laws, guidelines, etc. but rarely maintained correctly due to insufficient capacity and expertise; continuing status quo would ignore reality	Assist RPC with emphasis on steps with MC and GB; employ AFS Policy Fellow to assist on one policy per year	Assisted by some current RPC members but not a primary role. Occasionally serve as lead authors with experts from other AFS units but oft-times do not engage in writing	No history of joining with others beyond affiliations of AFS members on RPC	Pro: No need to change procedures but need to recognize existing processes are not followed Con: Lapsed policies complicate our workloads and confuse public
#1 – Adjust existing process (e.g., review/revise every 10 years)	Same but review and revision schedule would be extended beyond existing 5yr cycle to reflect AFS capacity	Same as with status quo	Would need firm commitment to adapt to new schedule reflected in AFS guidance to be revised	Increase support to RPC and involved units; uncertain if additional capacity can be expected from other units	Increase direct role and unit partnerships; perhaps adjust membership	Could remain AFS- only effort or with partners such as TRCP, CASS, etc.	Pro: Con: Will need to revise AFS guidance to reflect new procedures and schedule. Lots of work but necessary
#2 – Shift to shorter documents	2-5p statements with merged background and very concise policy positions (1-2p)	Same as with status quo	Would need firm commitment to reflect AFS guidance that would need to be revised	Still need additional support to RPC but less than #1; could reinvent RPC role and membership	Could shift as needs change from detailed documents to something shorter/concise	Subject-matter partner could help to convert best-available information into new format; with TRCP and partners or not	Pro: Con: More extensive revisions than with #1 would be needed for RPC guidance and AFS by-laws, including perhaps the review and approval process
#3 – Focus on letters and briefings	Letters to leaders in agencies, legislatures, and industry or briefings of them or others; convey policy intentions in letter	Still requires a communications plan but different from those needed for other options with formal products; handouts to summarize issues	Would need major revision of AFS policy and firm commitment to adapt on new process and schedule	Greater role with existing units and staff roles but lead could shift if RPC role changes	Could shift to new role converting literature into short documents or letters; might benefit from members adept at communications rather than subject-matter expertise	Greater opportunity to work with TRCP, CASS, and other existing networks	Pro: Con: Even more extensive changes than #1 or 2 since AFS would move away from background documents and policy statements to typical advocacy products like letters and briefing materials

Associated Workload Implications

Option/Key features	Convert to New Option	Establish List of AFS Priorities	Identify Upcoming Opportunities	Pace for Conversion	Identify Policy Team
#1 – Status quo	Revise AFS website to move out-of-date documents to new “archive” section	Review 1998 table as revised in April 2016	Supplement existing table with emerging issues based on AFS interests or current events, e.g., fire, drought. Compare to assistance available from AFS units.	Assign priorities based on April 2016 table and assistance expected from AFS units	Revisit role of RPC, AFS staff, and AFS units on reviews and revisions of existing policy statements
#2 – Adjust existing process	After creating new “archive” section for policy statements place dates for original approval, 5yr sunset date, and new date based on new process that might be based on a 7yr or longer sunset. Make changes to guidance documents, as listed below for Option #2. Consider archive for policy letters and other products that may become dated.	Establish new sunset dates with sweeping amendment to existing dates	Revisit archived documents and consider new issues to establish list of future action, beginning in late 2016	With existing process extended to new sunset schedule, determine number of issues per year AFS can revisit over the new extended review cycle. Work rate will depend on expected assistance primarily from the RPC but also other AFS units and AFS staff.	Conduct review as described under Status Quo to determine realistic pace and expectations
#3 – Shift to shorter documents	Work with constitutional consultant to update “Advocacy Guidelines: Guidelines for Making Policy Statements,” “Use of Best Available Science,” “AFS Procedures – Standing and Special Committees: Resource Policy Committee,” AFS Procedures – Operational Policies and Procedures, “Policy Statements,” and “Policy Letters.”	Establish new list of priorities to be addressed with shorter document (possible project for summer interns). Connect to effort to develop recos for next President. Finalize criteria for setting priorities.	Some of our existing 38 policies might be re-cast as shorter documents for use in priority efforts. Those condensed versions might also be helpful when writing letters or developing talking points.	Some issues covered by our existing documents remain timely and consider full consideration as 2016 priorities. Without a serious staff increase we are likely to be limited to a pace of perhaps 3-5 issues per year.	Conduct review as described under Status Quo to determine realistic pace and expectations
#4 – Focus on letters and briefings	Would require edits to same documents as listed for #2	Establish new list of priorities to be addressed with shorter document as described for #3.	Opportunities increase with each election and political transition. 2016-2017 promises to be busy with letters and perhaps agency support to NOAA and USFS.	We need to act quickly to move away from policy statements and to products more suitable for the decisions we hope to influence.	Staff lead in Bethesda but with clear role for the RPC and experts from other units.

Attachment B



American Fisheries Society

Organized 1870 to Promote the Conservation, Development and Wise Utilization of the Fisheries

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Ron Essig
President 2015-2016

Douglas J. Austen
Executive Director

July 13, 2016

To: AFS Management Committee
From: Daniel Cassidy
Re: May 2016 Financial Reports

Following are the reports for May 2016. You will note the new format for the income and expense statement emphasizing programmatic and functional based reporting, as opposed to the prior reports which were predominantly account-based (with a few exceptions like for the annual meeting). Included on the income and expense report are new columns for-- current period results and last year annual actual; both for comparison purposes. Even with these new changes, AFS retains the capability to produce reports in more detail, like on an account basis, and is planning to add these reports to the menu of options.

A few benefits of these changes include:

- Ease of determining the change in revenues and expenses
- Ability to identify the sources and uses of financial resources
- Simplicity in determining remaining funds to be collected or spent in the vs. YTD Actual column.
- Ability to export these reports to excel for analysis, forecasting and budgeting purposes.

There is still work to do for more accurately classifying transactions, for instance Advocacy expenses are currently recorded in Administration and will need to be re-classed. Other opportunities include providing details of changes in restricted funds such as Sully, etc. and presenting more information about the status grant and contracts.

Regarding the May financial reports, assets have dropped significantly due in part to a combination of higher overall expenses and lower income, plus the transfer of assets from cash to the investment account which has not fully recovered from market declines last year. Programs are showing varying results with the largest question heading into the summer being the potential success of the KC annual meeting. Currently, registration, sponsorships and exhibitor sales are trailing where expected, though the early registration deadline helped garner more registrants and staff are making a full-court press on fundraising and exhibitor sales. On a brighter note, AFS has hired a new Development Director. Her name is Katrina Dunn and she begins work on July 18.

Finally, AFS is winding up its relationship with its outsourced accounting firm of seven years, Deleon & Stang at the end of this month. We have contracted with an individual, Jo-Anne Williams, to assume accounting manager responsibilities. Jo-Anne started work in July and will be working two days per week.