

**ENRLS Council Q2 Meeting DRAFT Minutes – Wednesday, May 13, 2020 – 11:00am**  
**Zoom Video Conference; Meeting ID 88389790430**

**I. Welcome and Introductions – Susan Maxwell.**

Susan Maxwell opened the meeting at 11:09am with roll call:

- a. ENRLS Council and Committee Co-Chairs Present via Zoom: Susan Maxwell, Nathan Block, Pete Wahl, Buck Benson, Greg Ellis, Erin Chancellor, Kellie Billings-Ray, Kristen Fancher, Lisa Dyar, Heather Palmer, Ashleigh Acevedo, Mary Mendoza, David Klein, Steve McMillen, Aaron Vargas, Connie Westfall.

Non-ENRLS Council Present via Zoom: Natalie Myhra (SBOT staff).

- b. ENRLS Council Absent: Walt Shelton, Mike Dillinger, Chris Schlag, Jon Bull.

The business agenda began with the Secretary’s Report.

**II. Secretary’s Report – Erin Chancellor.**

- a. Approval of minutes of the ENRLS Council Q1 meeting.

Draft minutes for the ENRLS Council Q1 Meeting, held on February 19, 2020, were circulated prior to the meeting. Edits received prior to the meeting were incorporated. No further corrections or edits were offered at the meeting. David Klein moved to approve the minutes. Nathan Block seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

- b. Approval of minutes of the ENRLS Council special called (telephonic) meeting.

Maxwell circulated prior to the meeting the draft minutes for the special called ENRLS Council meeting that occurred via telephone on April 24, 2020. Steve McMillen moved to approve the minutes. Block seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**III. Issues Regarding the 2020 Texas Environmental Superconference.**

- a. Status update on event contract termination – Susan Maxwell, Lisa Dyar, Mary Mendoza, and David Klein.

Maxwell reported that Mary Mendoza has emailed, hand-delivered, and faxed notice of termination of the ENRLS Section’s contract with the Four Seasons to host the 2020 Environmental Superconference due to force majeure caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



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b. Options for conducting ENRLS 2020 Annual Meeting – Susan Maxwell.

Maxwell informed the group that, due to the shift to limited virtual programming in lieu of the live 2020 State Bar of Texas (SBOT) Annual Meeting, the Council Officers had determined that ENRLS will forego presenting an online version of its intended CLE program. ENRLS hopes to be involved in the 2021 Annual Meeting. Maxwell further informed the Council of the alternative electronic option, as outlined by SBOT staff, for conducting the 2020 ENRLS Annual Meeting, which usually takes place at Superconference. Further details for that electronic meeting will be developed to synchronize with timing of the Superconference alternative virtual program.

c. Evaluation of technically feasible options, and related ENRLS direction, for offering alternative virtual Superconference programming – Steve McMillen.

McMillen presented the issues and started the Council's preliminary discussion on holding a virtual program in lieu of the in-person 2020 Superconference. General options under consideration include working with TexasBarCLE, evaluating vendor options to host and produce an online program, and self-producing an online program. The Council's consensus was to focus on a shorter virtual program, ideally to be held over the two days originally scheduled for the Superconference (August 6-7). Additional topics discussed included potential registration fees, sponsorship opportunities, and related expense and budget issues. Dyar and other designated Council members will continue to work with the Superconference planning committee on developing alternative options for a 2020 virtual program, the Membership & Sponsorship Committee co-chairs will develop some recommendations on sponsorship potential for such a program, and the ENRLS Council will revisit these issues for decision at a later meeting.

d. Other related issues – Susan Maxwell.

i. *Timing of e-blast notification to ENRLS membership.*

The Council determined that Maxwell should proceed to send out an e-blast notification to all Section members regarding cancellation of the in-person 2020 Superconference and general plans for a virtual program.

ii. *Planning and contract negotiations for 2021 Superconference.*

Maxwell reported that, in consultation with SBOT staff, no action will yet be taken to proceed with 2021 Superconference planning and venue contract negotiations.



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**IV. Treasurer’s Report – Pete Wahl.**

a. Highlights of YTD financial reports.

Pete Wahl reported that, with less than a month remaining in the current fiscal year, the Section is positioned to end the year under budget. The Section’s amount of cash exceeds the fund balance benchmark set out in the ENRLS’ recently adopted Internal Financial Controls Policy.

b. Discussion of draft ENRLS budget for FY2020-21.

Wahl led the Council’s discussion of a preliminary draft for the Section’s 2020-21 budget, based on assumptions of significantly curtailed revenues (Superconference registration or sponsorships) and facility expenses associated with the 2020 Superconference. Committee co-chairs and others discussed and agreed upon several measures to limit additional spending for the remainder of the current year, in a variety of program areas, in order to conserve cash reserves and limit the extent of projected deficit in the 2020-21 budget.

As a working draft for the 2020-21 budget, Council members proposed reductions in expense line items for various program areas and administrative functions, as compared to the 2019-20 budget. Following the Q2 meeting, Wahl will continue to work with committee co-chairs and other Council members to refine the proposed draft budget. The Council will revisit the proposed budget, in conjunction with further developed plans for the 2020 Superconference virtual program, at a subsequent meeting timed to allow for timely submission of the adopted ENRLS 2020-21 budget to the State Bar prior to July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Wahl reminded the Council of the two benchmarks under the Section’s Internal Financial Controls Policy regarding revisions to the ENRLS budget, once adopted: (1) for a line item variance over \$5,000, the Treasurer must notify the Council and give an explanation, and (2) for a line item variance over \$20,000, the Council must amend the budget. Consistent with the Internal Financial Controls Policy, Wahl provided an explanation for all line-items that varied from budget more than \$5,000. No line-items exceeded the \$20,000 threshold requiring budget amendment.

**V. Committee Reports – Updates & Recommendations.**

a. Publications & Communications Committee – Ashleigh Acevedo & Aaron Vargas, Co-chairs.

Ashleigh Acevedo presented the committee report, reporting out that there have been some TELJ delays related to COVID-19, but the publication schedule is not entirely derailed. The students have continued to work, and they are only about 1.5 months behind for the upcoming issues.



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- b. Law School Programs Committee – Walt Shelton, Kristen Fancher & Kellie Billings Ray, Co-chairs.

Kristen Fancher presented the committee report. For law school programs, there will be more to report in August 2020, as the committee hopes to resume more regular campus activity for the fall semester. For the ENRLS 2020 summer internships, new program coordinator Kimberly Kelley has connected with all the placement agencies and interns to ensure that a remote work version of the internships is still viable under agency operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**VI. Other Business.**

- a. Update on Nominating Committee – Susan Maxwell.

Maxwell reported out that this process is underway. Maxwell will report back on the logistics for getting this information out to the Section membership, in connection with the electronic ENRLS Annual Meeting.

**VII. Adjourn.**

Maxwell moved to adjourn the meeting. Greg Ellis seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:31pm.

