

**MINUTES**  
**Potato Association of America**  
**108<sup>th</sup> Annual Member Business Meeting**  
**July 24, 2024 | 1:30– 3:30 pm Pacific | Portland, OR**

**1. Call to Order**

The PAA Annual Business Meeting was called to order by President, Dennis Halterman at 1:30 PM Pacific on Wednesday July 24, 2024.

**2. Remembrance of deceased members and friends this past year**

- Jeff Axford

**3. Additions to agenda**

none

**4. Approval of 2023 business meeting minutes**

A motion to approve the 2023 PAA annual business meeting minutes as posted on the PAA website was made by Tina Brandt and seconded by Jacob Blauer; the motion was unanimously approved.

**5. Officer and Staff reports**

**a. President's report (Dennis Halterman)**

A summary of the written report was received (Appendix 1). The Springer contract was renewed through 2029 with the removal of PAA AJPR page charges as the biggest change. Dennis worked with AMR staff on updating the PAA website and making an effort to make board business transparent, i.e., recordings of monthly business minutes available to Membership. Worked with Larry Hiller, Jim Busse, Ryan Barrett, and Jacob Blauer on expanding the Frank L Haynes endowment with goal of raising \$500K, currently at \$175K.

**b. Treasurer's report (Jeff Miller)**

In Bret's absence; Jeff Miller summarized the treasurer's report.

2023 summary, Springer had included a one-time \$10K stipend and membership income remained stable; Michael reported membership is around 411 members  
The 2023 finance summary revealed expenses (\$65,322.35) greatly surpassed incoming revenue (\$26,299.68).

Jeff reported the current PAA asset total \$517K across the checking account and two remaining CDs.

Portland Conference Cost Overage: Michael Fraley reported that the conference hotel 'The Nines' required full payment prior to the meeting. Jeff Miller acknowledged the Portland LHC secured over \$120K in sponsorships, but the Executive committee authorized to cash out one of three PAA CDs to cover the Portland meeting shortfall. Many PAA members voiced concerns about how the shortfall happened. Hotel attrition rates for not reaching 85% of room reservation block (approximately \$55K) and a high food/beverage cost (\$200K) were noted; food budget in PEI (2023) was \$85K for comparison. Mark Pavek questioned how the contract was initiated with the Portland hotel; Furthermore, if PAA is paying AMR to

manage the association, shouldn't AMR be responsible for this financial loss. Michael reiterated that the PAA Board of Directors is fiscally responsible; AMR does not have authority. It was reported that Jeff M had signed the original contract during his term as PAA president and Dennis had signed the final contract. Several contributing factors were noted: turnover in AMR staff from the original contract (Sagar commented on early discussions with Desirae on attendance concerns with EAPR meeting conflicts on attendance projections). Based on prior west coast meetings, 300 attendees were budgeted with 251 actual registrants. However, many attendees did not stay at room block in The Nines or the secondary hotel. In future meetings, members requested a financial penalty to meeting registrants who are not using the conference hotel (ASHS as an example that implements a \$100/fee registration cost for nonhotel attendees; must improve communication with members on financial repercussions on hotel lodging/contract. The Nines was not a typical conference hotel and was inflexible.

Helen cautioned that future LHC organizers will have difficulty predicting attendance numbers based on previous conference archives; attendee program budget concerns, other meeting conflicts, ie. EAPR, and other travel challenges such as the Delta flight disruptions were noted. Jonathan W sought clarification on whether insurance could have been applied to this instance; Michael reported that conference liability insurance would not be applicable to cover the hotel attrition in this situation

- c. **Secretary Report (Darrin Haagenson)**  
Darrin provided a written report (Appendix 2).
- d. **Administrator Report (Michael Fraley)**  
no report received.

## **6. Standing Committee Reports**

- a. **Editorial Board (Dennis H, on behalf of Samuel Essah)**  
The AJPR journal health including a formal report of submission turnaround time, impact factor, final submissions will be distributed in a final written report. Dennis noted the elimination of Springer AJPR page charges; several topics were introduced for member discussion including: does the AJPR require all papers to be open access? Currently it is an option for author submissions. Josh P questioned the publication declining trends; is it just AJPR or other journals, and Helen commented that there are many more journal options, but EAPR submissions have remained steady compared to decreasing AJPR submissions. Member consensus is the additional page charge fees have been a deterrent. Dennis commented on the struggle in getting reviewers. There could be a benefit of editorial board member turnover in allowing junior staff an enhanced role in the review process. Several topics to improve submissions were shared including special issues and review papers.
- b. **Finance (Bret Nedrow)**  
As noted in the treasurer's report.
- c. **Leadership Identification and Development (Jeff Miller)**  
Jeff acknowledged all the nominees and commended outgoing directors Ryan Barrett and Tina Barrett for their service. Jeff announced the two new directors: Ken Frost and Kasia Duellman; Vice President elect Benita Matheson, and Jonathan Whitworth will serve as President; Jeff Miller is newly elected treasurer.

d. **Awards and Recognition Committee**

- **Honorary Life Members (Jeff Miller)**

Jeff announced the three 2024 HLM inductees: Jonathan Whitworth, Eugenia Banks, and Paul Bethke. Confusion from members as to when HLM honorees would be announced. Carrie Wohleb reported that HLM winners are announced prior to the annual meeting so colleagues can participate in their celebration of this milestone.

- **Frank L. Haynes Graduate Student Research Award (Munevver Dogramaci)** 13 oral, 9 poster presentations were in this year's competition with awards presented at the Wednesday evening (7/24/25) annual banquet.

e. **Association and Industry Outreach**

- i. **Promotion/Communication/Marketing (Dennis Halterman)**

AMR facilitates much of the responsibilities for industry outreach, but the committee provides suggested updates to Website. Dennis reported social media numbers; 1245 twitter followers, 968 Facebook and 1200 Instagram followers.

f. **Membership (Jonathan Whitworth)**

Jonathan reported no formal membership meeting; polling members on meeting times; suggested improvement to website included providing attendee list for networking to facilitate new scientists and students looking to collaborate; member would be able to opt out of networking list. Rich and other shared concerns about how to recruit sustaining members; what are benefits to sustaining members?

g. **Standing Rules Document (Dennis Halterman)**

Dennis shared that changes were made in how the monthly Board meetings were run; a 'first to five' vote replaced some traditional Roberts Rules of Order decorum; this provided increase flexibility for members to share opinion and permits more efficient meeting execution.

h. **Bylaws Committee (Jonathan Whitworth)**

Two noted changes included 1) nonvoting members as liaisons for checking accounts (Canada and US) and 2) a title changes for AMRs Michael Fraley from Director to Executive Director.

i. **Site Selection (Susie Thompson)**

A formal report was received (Appendix 3).

Committee consisting of Susie, Ryan Barrett, Jeff Miller, Michael Fraley, Sagar Sathuvalli, Dennis Halterman. Noted challenges remain in getting members to volunteer to host a meeting. No meeting location has been identified for 2026 and although a couple of locations for 2027 have been discussed, no formal letter of invitation has been received. The topic of alternating meetings every other year (not favored by members) and piggybacking to other meetings such as NCC215 meeting were discussed.

7. **Section Reports**

a. **Breeding & Genetics – Noelle Anglin**

no report was given.

b. **Extension, Production & Management – Rhett Spear**

Storage organization NAPSO symposium was discussed in addition to repercussion of a Monday-Friday annual meeting schedule; growing reports were received from ME, MI, WI, MN, ND, MB, ID, OR, WA, and AZ. New officers for 2025 include: Bee Khim Chim (Chair), Andy Robinson (Vice-Chair), Ibrahim Kutay Ozturk (Secretary)

c. **Plant Protection – Darin Gibson**

Darin reported 30 people attended the section meeting. Blackleg, potato beetles were significant, ongoing issues; some late blight concerns were noted and tank mix efficacy concerns. Encouraged more member article publications. Jeff M volunteered to facilitate getting pictures to Website.

2024 Section officers include: Luke Thurgood (Chair), Harlene Hatterman-Valenti (Vice-Chair), and Mohamad Chikh-Ali (Secretary).

d. **Physiology – Jacob Blauer**

The physiology section meeting conflicted with WIPR so only 5 people attended. The section will sponsor webinars to engage membership with preliminary topics noted: training on equipment or Potatoes USA topics. Directors in the Physiology section will help identify webinar topics.

2024 officers include Jim Busse (Chair), Gustavo Teixeira (Vice-Chair) and Darrin Haagenson (Secretary) with Graham Ellis and Nora Olsen as Directors.

e. **Utilization & Marketing – Rhett Spear**

Section discussed cosponsoring 2025 storage symposium with NAPSO

2024 officers include: Amber Walker (Chair), Colby Roberston (Vice-chair) and Addie Waxman (Secretary)

f. **Certification – Chris Dunbar**

a formal report from winter meeting was received.

**8. Board of Directors Actions: 2022 - 2023 – Dennis Halterman, President**

The dates following the approved motions below represent the approved motions during Dennis Halterman's term as President.

The outlined board actions were approved by consensus of membership at the PAA annual business meeting on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Motions Passed, July 2023 – June 2024:**

- **MOTION** by Ryan Barrett and seconded by Jeff Miller to accept the proposed Springer contract draft revisions that stipulate a five-year contract duration, a 20% annual Springer Royalty payment, AJPR will publish 2 special issue topics per year, the association will eliminate the \$800 AJPR page fees with Springer providing a one-time stipend of \$10,000. The motion was approved by unanimous vote (09-15-2023).
- **MOTION** by Ryan Barrett and seconded by Jim Busse that Madison, Wisconsin serve as site location for the 2025 PAA annual meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous vote (10-20-2023).

- **MOTION** by Jeff Miller and seconded by Ryan Barrett to amend the PAA Bylaws Article V Board of Directors, Section 2. Non-voting members, financial liaison. These non-voting members of the Board are not required to attend Board meetings and only serve to facilitate access to the financial accounts based in Maine and Canada, respectively. These non-voting board members serve for a period of one year and can be re-appointed. One non-voting member who resides in the state of Maine will be appointed as the "Financial Liaison-Maine" and another non-voting member will be appointed as the "Financial Liaison-Canada". The motion was approved by unanimous vote (10-20-2023).
- **MOTION** by Jacob Blauer and seconded by Ryan Barrett that annual PAA membership fee be increased from \$100 to \$150 beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and the motion was unanimously approved (12-15-2023).
- **MOTION:** The 2024 PAA Budget as submitted by the finance committee was approved unanimously (12-15-2023).
- **MOTION** by Jeff Miller and seconded by Bret Nedrow to approve the 3-year AMR contract as written, and the motion was unanimously approved (12-15-2023).
- **MOTION** by Ryan Barrett and seconded by Jeff Miller to remove Angela Richardson and Diane Dufek as co-signers from the PAA's University of Maine Credit Union account, and the motion was unanimously approved (03-15-2024)
- **MOTION** by Jeff Miller and seconded by Rhett Spear to add signatories Dennis Halterman, Bret Nedrow, Ek Han Tan, Michael Fraley, and Jennifer Dickie to the PAA's University of Maine Credit Union account, and the motion was unanimously approved (03-15-2024).
- **MOTION:** the site selection committee moved and was seconded by Tina Brandt to award the Madison (WI) Monona Terrace Convention Center/Hilton the 2025 PAA Annual Meeting contract, and the motion was unanimously approved (04-19-2024).
- **MOTION** by Jacob Blauer and seconded by Jonathan Whitworth to change HLM registration from a full blanket registration to an á la carte registration; the motion was unanimously approved (04-19-2024).  
**MOTION :** by Ryan Barrett and seconded by Jeff Miller to award the Embassy Suites (Madison) the secondary lodging contract for the 2025 PAA annual meeting as presented, and the motion was an unanimously approved (05-17-2024).  
**MOTION :** by Jonathan Whitworth and seconded by Rhett Spears to approve the Board nominations for membership vote as presented, and the motion was an unanimously approved (05-17-2024).
- **MOTION:** by HLM committee to induct Paul Bethke, Eugenia Banks, and Jonathan Whitworth as 2024 Honorary Life Members and the motioned was approved by BoD members with Jonathan Whitworth abstaining (06-21-2024).
- **MOTION:** by Jeff Miller and seconded by Tina Brandt to cash out PAA CD#13 to offset cost for the 2024 annual PAA Portland meeting shortfall and the motion was unanimously approved by the board of directors (special zoom BoD vote, 07-16-2024).

## 9. New Business

### a. Future meeting logistics- Jeff Miller/Michael Fraley

Michael summarized the responses from a Monday lunch survey (124 members); July was the most favored meeting timeslot, followed by March, with members being against a

October/November timeslot. Having some type of agricultural tour was encouraged (potato or non-potato). A noted concern observed in the Portland meeting was the overlapping and early morning section meetings. A Monday-Friday meeting schedule was suggested to increase networking opportunities; Monday would be open to Section, SCRI, Potatoes USA, President's reception other, where concurrent sessions would run Tuesday- Thursday, ending with a Friday tour. Sunday meetings were suggested but Sunday meetings could present a religious conflict for growers, others.

Members questioned the justification of extending meeting dates: is it to accommodate section meetings or NAPSO? Dennis stated the Madison schedule is mostly locked in with Symposium/Grower industry day on Monday and the Board was addressing concerns of overlapping meetings. Many members favored a pre/post meetings addition.

Members raised several concerns about improving communication for Section meetings such as what the annual business meeting reports expectations for section chairs are. Premeeting virtual section meetings via zoom were suggested as an option. This could allow for a fun section event (i.e, hiking, at the annual meeting). The context of 'section' terminology was discussed; New members may be deterred from attending a 'formal section' meeting; renaming to 'interest' or 'focus group' may improve new member participation.

A membership survey to solicit input from members on these topics will be distributed at a later dated.

Jeff shared the ongoing work of Kiran at AMR; two potential locations (Orlando or New Orleans) were identified for 2026 based on availability and overall conference accommodations. Several members voiced concerns on a New Orleans location (dirty, uncomfortable summer weather, hurricanes); Michael shared that event cancellation insurance would be obtained if New Orleans was selected.

**Motion:** Darin Gibson moved that Jeff Miller serve as the Chair of the 2026 local host committee and was seconded by Susie Thompson. The motion was unanimously approved. Jeff commented that D. Gibson, F. Goktepe, and M. Maughan will serve on this committee.

## **9. Recognition of Portland Hosts (Dennis Halterman)**

Dennis commended Sagar Sathuvalli and the LHC on a job well done in hosting the 108<sup>th</sup> annual meeting. There were 249 delegates representing 33 states, 6 provinces and 6 countries. The schedule included 88 oral and 25 poster presentations.

## **10. Passing of Presidential Gavel (Dennis Halterman/Jonathan Whitworth)**

Gavel passed from Dennis Halterman to Jonathan Whitworth who will serve as President for 2024-2025.

*The annual business meeting adjourned at 3:26 PM, Pacific.*

Respectfully submitted: Darrin Haagenson, PAA Secretary

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **PAA President's Report**

**Dennis Halterman**

**July 24, 2024**

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as President of the PAA over the past year. Below are some of the efforts that I have been involved with since beginning my term:

- I held an orientation meeting with all board members at the first board meeting to introduce a different way of conducting some business at our meetings. We used consensus voting for some non-critical and non-financial decisions during our meetings. This has the benefit of allowing people to express their support or disapproval of their efforts and facilitates discussion.
- I reviewed and improved the Standing Rules document to include changes to voting procedures during board meetings, submitting meeting recordings into the minutes, and introduce board representatives from states/countries where the Association has financial holdings.
- I worked with Jeff Miller, the PAA Board, and Springer to renew our Springer contract for 2024-2029. This includes a significant change to remove publication fees in return for a one-time \$10,000 stipend.
- I worked with AMR to update the PAA website to make it easier for our members to find information.
- To make PAA Board business more transparent to our members, we started sharing recordings of our monthly business meetings in the members-only section of the website. This also allows board members who miss a monthly meeting to review the business that was discussed.
- I worked with Larry Hiller, Jacob Blauer, Jim Busse, and Ryan Barrett to begin an effort to increase the funding of the Frank L. Haynes endowment in order to support student registrations to the annual meeting and offer travel awards. We have set a goal of \$500,000 for the endowment. I plan to continue this effort as I transition to the past-president role.
- Worked with Melinda Waldrop at Spudman to develop articles from the PAA. Articles were submitted to highlight HLM awardees, spotlight Frank L. Haynes student competition winners, deployment of GM potato in Africa with increased late blight resistance, potato mop top virus resistance, using wild potatoes in breeding efforts, and a Meet the PAA article.
- Assisted Sagar and the Portland local host committee, along with AMR, to organize the annual meeting. I also worked with Michael Fraley and Kiran-Durae Barkey (AMR) to sign contracts for the 2025 meeting in Madison, WI. This included the development of a list of expectations and duties for meeting planning in order to clarify the roles of AMR and the local host committee in the meeting planning. Process.

- Coordinated with the AJPR editorial board, the PAA board, AMR, and Springer to allow members to opt out of receiving a printed copy of the AJPR journal. This will save the Association thousands of dollars every year.
- I worked with AMR and the Finance committee to establish a bank account in Canada in order to facilitate the processing of registration payments for our Canadian members. This included the identification of financial liaisons located in Canada.
- Facilitated the transition between chairs of the Frank L. Haynes student competition committee from Paul Bethke to Munewver Dorgramaci. I conducted an 'exit interview' with Paul to determine if any changes were necessary to the system.
- I worked with the PAA Board and AMR to renew our AMR contract for 2024-2026.

I feel honored to have worked with the PAA Board of Directors, in particular Jeff Miller and Jonathan Whitworth, and the staff at AMR in an effort to continue the growth of the Potato Association of America and increase the value of our membership.



## **APPENDIX 2**

### **PAA Secretary's Report Darrin Haagenson 108<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Meeting | 24 July 2024**

As secretary, I record the annual business meeting minutes, monthly Board of Directors minutes, and other special meeting minutes/votes as called by President Dennis Halterman. In my other role as secretary, I assist AMR staff and the local host committee with the concurrent session planning of the annual meeting.

I am grateful for the support of President Dennis Halterman and the PAA Board of Directors throughout the year.

## APPENDIX 3

### PAA Site Selection Committee Report – 2024

The Site Selection Committee held several email discussions and Zoom meetings from August 2023 through June 2024 (most recently April 16 and June 18, 2024).

The Committee is comprised of past and current LAC members, the PAA President, and team members from AMR. The current committee has boiled down to Ryan Barrett, Jeff Miller, Dennis Halterman, Sagar Sathuvalli, Michael Fraley as the AMR rep, and myself. Our charge is to secure invitations from prospective hosts with the goal of having a line-up of 3+ years approved, active LACs, and schedule +3 years in advance of the current PAA host site. Per our current status, we have our fabulous Oregon hosts in 2024 and Wisconsin hosts for 2025 but have been unable to secure a host site for 2026. Several sites are considering 2027 and beyond, though the committee has no invitation in hand for any upcoming meetings.

Since 2020, it has become increasingly difficult to secure host sites with varying reasons why groups will not step up. The committee has always tried to alternate sites from East to West, and with a mix of Canadian and US sites, in order to take pressure off of industry sponsors and potential neighboring hosts and to provide a mix of agriculture for attendees to see and learn about during their travels. Care has been taken to avoid conflicts with other professional meetings and/or growing season demands, but we continue to miss the participation of our certification colleagues due to their time demands for field inspections.

The committee has considered many options, including selecting non-potato growing areas and sites, changing the time of year for meetings, piggybacking on to other meetings including the Potato Expo or NCCC215, going to an alternating year schedule with the World Potato Congress, and many others. Dennis has taken these ideas to the Executive Committee, which precipitated the survey conducted during Tuesday's luncheon (July 23, 2024). Thank you to everyone for your thoughts.

During our discussions, we have also considered dropping the Site Selection committee, with the role AMR now plays in our society. After exploring and discussing it has been determined that we will keep this committee intact.

Finally, I have been the site selection chair for more than a decade this go round and am planning to step down in the near future. Jeff Miller is graciously considering taking on this role.

Respectfully submitted,



Asunta (Susie) Thompson  
Potato Breeder, North Dakota State University  
Site Selection Committee Chair