



**Executive Board Meeting Minutes
January 12 - 13, 2025
Virtual Meeting**

Present

Melissa (Moose) Alperin, EdD, MPH, MCHES, *Chair*
Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Rebecca Boulos, PhD, MPH
Jessica Boyer, MPH, MSW
Monique J. Brown PhD, MPH, FGSA
Bryan O. Buckley, DrPH, MPH, MBA, ACC
Karl Cooper, JD
Shontelle Dixon, MPH, CHES, *Vice Chair*
Ella Greene-Moton
Aaron Guest, PhD, MPH, MSW
Benjamin H. Hernandez, MBA
Claude A. Jacob, DrPH, MPH
Amy Lee, MD, MPH, MBA, CPH
Toby Levin, PhD, MPH, CPH, CHES
Nandi Marshall, DrPH, MPH, CHES, CLC, CDE
Rebecca Nevedale
Shirley A. Orr, MHS, APRN, NEA-BC
Donna-Marie Palakiko, PhD, MS, APRN
Virginia Reising, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC, PEL-CSN
Gopal Sankaran, MD, DrPH, MNAMS, CHES
Jimmie Smith, MD, MPH
Melissa Toledo-Ontiveros, MA, MCJ, MPA
Deanna J. Wathington, MD, MPH, FAAFP

Unable to Participate

Kara Suvada



Sunday, January 12, 2025

APHA Board Chair Dr. Alperin called the meeting to order, called roll and read the land acknowledgement. Following brief opening remarks, Dr. Alperin introduced APHA Board Vice Chair, Shontelle Dixon, to conduct an ice breaker/networking activity. At the conclusion of the networking activity, Dr. Alperin requested a motion to approve the Executive Board’s January meeting agenda. The motion was moved and seconded, and with no further comments, a vote was called.

Motion: To approve the Executive Board’s January meeting agenda.
Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

Dr. Alperin then called for a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda. Items on the consent agenda included new agency members; APHA leadership appointments; the APHA parliamentarian (for a one-year term); the Governing Council seat allocation and updates to the Executive Board Handbook. The motion was moved and seconded and hearing no discussion, Dr. Alperin called for a vote.

Motion: To approve the consent agenda.
Items on the consent agenda included new agency members; APHA leadership appointments; the APHA parliamentarian (for a one-year term); the Governing Council seat allocation and updates to the Executive Board Handbook.
Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

At the conclusion of the vote, Dr. Alperin introduced the next agenda item.

APHA Executive Board Fiduciary Responsibility Training - Jackie Henson, JD, Senior Counsel, Baker Donelson

Ms. Henson addressed the following topics in her presentation: the fiduciary duties of APHA executive director and officers; the distinction between governance and management, the interaction between APHA directors, management and staff; APHA’s compliance with IRS requirements as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization; a legal scan of not-for-profit organizations; and her perspective on the potential impact of the incoming Trump Administration on the nonprofit sector.

Ms. Henson also reviewed the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Guide for Board Members of Charitable Organizations, as APHA is incorporated in the state of Massachusetts. At the conclusion of her presentation, Ms. Henson answered questions from Executive Board members. With no further questions, Dr. Alperin thanked Ms. Henson for her presentation and introduced the next agenda item.



Executive Board Goals and Expectations - Melissa (Moose) Alperin, EdD, MPH, MCHES, Chair

Dr. Alperin outlined the Executive Board’s goals for the year, emphasizing the importance of upholding legal and fiduciary responsibilities by staying engaged and ensuring members have the necessary resources to fulfill their duties. Dr. Alperin highlighted the need to support key APHA initiatives, including the implementation of the strategic plan and the new policy brief and development review process. Dr. Alperin also stressed the value of clear communication between Executive Board members and the broader APHA membership. Dr. Alperin encouraged Board members to reach out to her or Ms. Dixon for any support related to their roles.

In closing, Dr. Alperin reminded the Board of her expectations: active participation in Board and committee meetings, preparation, communication and —importantly— having fun. Dr. Alperin then took questions related to her presentation. Hearing no more questions, Dr. Alperin introduced the next agenda item.

Board Training - Shontelle Dixon, MPH, CHES, Vice Chair

Ms. Dixon led the Executive Board training session, providing an overview of APHA and introducing key staff members. She outlined the composition, powers, and responsibilities of the Executive Board, ensuring members understood their roles. Ms. Dixon then reviewed Executive Board meetings, covering key dates, agenda development, and expectations for both virtual and in-person meetings. Ms. Dixon then provided an overview of Executive Board committees, detailing their charges, meeting frequency and other essential information.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Ms. Dixon answered questions related to the work of the Executive Board. Hearing no further questions, Dr. Alperin thanked Ms. Dixon for her presentation and introduced the next item on the meeting agenda.

Association Update / Policy Discussion – Georges C. Benjamin, MD, Executive Director

Dr. Benjamin opened his presentation by announcing the passing of Dr. Mohammad Akhter, former APHA Executive Director, in January. Dr. Benjamin highlighted Dr. Akhter’s accomplishments and encouraged members of the Executive Board to keep him and his family in their thoughts.

Dr. Benjamin provided an update on the search for the next Editor-in-Chief of the *American Journal of Public Health*, noting that proposals from potential search consultants are due in January. A search committee is being assembled, with the goal of appointing the new Editor-in-Chief by July 1, 2025. Dr. Benjamin then addressed APHA’s information technology matters, including a review of the website outage that occurred over the holidays, the ongoing website redesign, and the upcoming iMIS (membership database) project. It was noted that this marks the first redesign of the APHA website since its launch in October 2014. The project, which began in summer 2024, is expected to be completed by May 2025.

Dr. Benjamin then discussed APHA’s efforts to enhance security at all in-person events and at the APHA headquarters building. He announced that National Public Health Week 2025 will be held April 7-13; the Policy Action Institute 2025 is scheduled for June 16-17 in Washington, DC and the APHA 2025



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Annual Meeting will take place Nov. 2-5, in Washington, DC. Dr. Benjamin noted that the call for abstracts opened on Jan. 6, with a submission deadline of March 28.

Dr. Benjamin then discussed the results of the 2024 elections and their impact on APHA and public health. He highlighted that the Republicans now control the White House, U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, with the Administration benefiting from a sympathetic Supreme Court. Dr. Benjamin then provided the Executive Board with an overview of the U.S. health agenda, identifying opportunities such as controlling healthcare costs and building the next-generation public health system.

Dr. Benjamin then discussed APHA's Strategic Plan and APHA's advocacy priorities for 2025, the priorities include:

- Protect public health funding and agency integrity,
- Protect the Affordable Care Act and expand access to care,
- Address the health impacts of climate change,
- Protect full access to women's health services,
- Strengthen and uphold critical public health laws,
- Address the nation's gun violence epidemic, and
- Continue support for a cease-fire, the release of all hostages and humanitarian aid in the Israel-Hamas war.

Dr. Benjamin then discussed other important public health issues to monitor, such as supporting the FDA's prohibition on the sale of menthol cigarettes; passing a long-term Farm Bill to protect nutrition security; protecting nutrition standards for children and continuing to monitor and address relevant Project 2025 policy proposals.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Dr. Benjamin took questions from members of the Executive Board. Hearing no further questions, Dr. Alperin thanked Dr. Benjamin for his presentation and introduced the next item on the meeting agenda.

Report of the President – Deanna Wathington, MD, MPH, FAAFP

Dr. Wathington began by outlining her priorities for her presidential year. Emphasizing her role as a representative voice of APHA's mission, policy priorities, member communities and strategic plan. Dr. Wathington expressed her commitment to expanding APHA's health equity approach to address aging, disability status, LGBTQ+ and gender identity, ethnicity/culture/language, immigrant/refugee status and indigeneity. Additionally, Dr. Wathington pledged to continue advocating for reproductive justice; rethinking public health funding to optimize community engagement, sustainability, health impact and relevance; and supporting efforts to recruit and develop the next generation of public health workers.

Dr. Wathington invited the Executive Board to join her in fostering an equity-conscious "we" identity—a shared sense of belonging where individuals see themselves as part of a collective rather than solely as individuals. Dr. Wathington then shared her experiences from the 2024 Annual Meeting and her first Affiliate visits noting she attend the Hawaii Public Health Association virtually and participated in-person at the Oklahoma Public Health Association and Illinois Public Health Association Meetings.

Dr. Wathington noted that she has several meetings coming up over the next few months including, but not limited to the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, the Epilepsy Foundation



Public Health Institute, the Iowa Public Health Association Meeting, National Public Health Week activities, and the New York Public Health Association Meeting.

Dr. Alperin thanked Dr. Wathington for her presentation and called for a motion for the Executive Board to enter a period of executive session to discuss personnel matters. The motion was moved and seconded and hearing no discussion, Dr. Alperin called for a vote. The motion was approved by acclamation.

Motion: For the Executive Board to enter a period of executive session.
Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

Upon exiting the period of executive session, Dr. Alperin provided closing remarks, and the meeting adjourned for the day at 5:53 p.m. eastern time.

Monday, January 13, 2025

Dr. Alperin called the meeting to order, called the roll and established a quorum. Dr. Alperin called for a motion for the Executive Board to enter a period of executive session to discuss personnel matters. The motion was moved and seconded and hearing no discussion, Dr. Alperin called for a vote. The motion was approved by acclamation.

Motion: For the Executive Board to enter a period of executive session.
Outcome: Approved by acclamation.

Upon exiting the period of executive session, Dr. Alperin provided an opportunity for Executive Board members to ask Dr. Wathington questions from the previous day. At the conclusion of the questions, Dr. Alperin introduced the next agenda item.

Report of the Speaker of the Governing Council – Aaron Guest, PhD, MPH, MSW

Dr. Guest began by outlining his duties as the Speaker of the Governing Council and presenting the results of the Annual Meeting survey. The survey indicated overall positive feedback regarding the Council’s operations and engagement, though challenges remain with processes and new member orientation.

Dr. Guest highlighted several key aspects from the meeting survey(?): engaging discussions on policy proposals, active participant input, and the decision to split the meeting into two days, which improved understanding and interaction among Councilors. On the other hand, he noted some survey comments(?) that may need addressing, such as repeated comments from the same individuals, suggestions to shorten the meeting by cutting non-essential topics, and concerns over disruptive behavior—including heated arguments and protests. Dr. Guest then shared several suggestions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council.

Dr. Guest also reviewed the work of the Ad-Hoc Task Force on Policy Brief Implementation and the Ad-Hoc Task Force on Nominations and the APHA Election Process. Dr. Guest discussed the Governing



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Council's schedule for the year, including the dates for the Speaking with the Speaker and Policy Listening Sessions, as well as the 2025 Mid-year and Annual Meetings. Specifically, the Mid-year meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 9 from 2-4:30 p.m. eastern and the Governing Council will reconvene on November 1 from 3-6 p.m. and on November 4 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. eastern.

Finally, Dr. Guest moved to adopt the "Together We Thrive: Health Across the Lifespan" emphases for the 2026 Annual Meeting and Expo in San Antonio, TX. Dr. Alperin then called for discussion, and with no further comments, a vote was taken.

Motion:	That the Executive Board adopt "Together We Thrive: Health Across the Lifespan" emphases for the 2026 Annual Meeting and Expo in San Antonio, TX.
Outcome:	Approved by acclamation.

Dr. Guest then made the following motions related to the election of Governing Councilors. Dr. Alperin called for comments and with no further comments, called for the vote.

Motion:	To establish that all Governing Councilors (including ex-officio members) for the subsequent Council year be elected by July 30th, or in the case of Standing Committee Chairs, appointed to office no later than September 30th of the preceding year. Vacancies that occur following this deadline must be filled within 45 days. Vacancies in the Governing Councilor and Section Chair roles occurring more than 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting must be filled by appointment by the Section Council until the next election. Vacancies occurring less than 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting can be filled via the proxy process.
Motion:	To establish a mechanism by which an individual cannot serve as a proxy for two consecutive Governing Council meetings for the same member unit.
Motion:	To establish a mechanism by which an individual cannot serve as a proxy for consecutive Governing Council years for the same member unit.
Motion:	To establish a Standing Rule that Sections and SPIGS unable to fill all Governing Councilors positions by the deadlines listed above for two (2) consecutive years, shall lose one Governing Council seat for a period of two years. This will allow for any existing standing the minimum number of Councilors per Member Unit within the Bylaws.
Outcome:	Approved by acclamation.

Dr. Guest thanked the members of the Executive Board for their patience as they worked through the motions. Dr. Alperin thanked Dr. Guest for his presentation and introduced the next agenda item.



Understanding APHA’s Financial Profile – Georges Benjamin, MD and Kemi Oluwafemi, MBA, CPA, Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Oluwafemi provided the Executive Board with an orientation on APHA’s financial profile. Her presentation addressed the definition of a budget, APHA’s budgeting process, an overview of APHA’s financial reports and audit documents, and key financial details. She concluded by discussing the work of the Executive Board’s Finance and Audit Committee.

Dr. Benjamin reviewed APHA’s business model, key competitors, product lines, the current business climate, and APHA’s current financial standing, including a detailed breakdown of APHA’s revenue and expenses based on the FY2024 audit.

After their presentations, both Dr. Benjamin and Ms. Oluwafemi answered questions from the members of the Executive Board. Hearing no more questions, Dr. Alperin thanked Dr. Benjamin and Ms. Oluwafemi for their presentations and introduced the next agenda item.

Report of the Treasurer – Benjamin Hernandez, MBA, Treasurer

Mr. Hernandez opened his presentation by introducing the members of the Finance and Audit Committee. Mr. Hernandez then explained the role and responsibility of the committee which: oversees the APHA budget process; holds monthly and ad-hoc meetings to review current financial information; selects the auditing firm, the timeline for the annual audit, and makes recommendations on approving the audit the Executive Board; reviews and monitors financial practices; and approves reserve fund and investment policies and practices.

Mr. Hernandez then discussed the status of the FY2025 budget as of November 2024 (the December financials were not ready for the January 2025 meeting). Mr. Hernandez reported that total revenues were \$15,123,107 with total expenditures of \$11,358,382, resulting in a profit of \$3,764,725. Mr. Hernandez also noted that most of APHA’s revenue is raised during the first half of the fiscal year due to the Annual Meeting.

Mr. Hernandez then discussed the budget document that Ms. Oluwafemi sends in advance of each Executive Board meeting. Mr. Hernandez informed the Board that year-end projections —an important tool for forecasting APHA’s fiscal outcome— will be available beginning at the end of January. Additionally, in January the Finance and Audit Committee will approve the FY2026 budget guidelines and principles, which staff will use to create the upcoming budget.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Hernandez and Dr. Benjamin answered questions regarding APHA finances and business model. With no further questions, Dr. Alperin thanked Mr. Hernandez for his presentation and introduced the next agenda item.



Executive Board Committee Presentations

Committee on Social Responsibility – Claude Jacob, DrPH, MPH, Chair

Dr. Jacob opened his presentation by outlining the role of the Committee on Social Responsibility within APHA. Dr. Jacob explained that the committee’s primary focus is evaluating potential donors—whether corporate, foundation, organizational, or individual—to APHA or its member units. He thanked the Executive Board for approving the proposed amendments to the committee’s composition.

Dr. Jacob then reviewed the committee’s schedule for 2025 and detailed its work plan, which includes evaluating prospective funding entities and updating the committee’s evaluation tools and other resources as necessary. Finally, he introduced the committee members and expressed his gratitude to the staff liaison, Torrey Wasserman.

Development Committee – Amy Lee, MD, MPH, MBA, CPH, Chair

Dr. Lee began her presentation by outlining the role of the Development Committee. Dr. Lee explained that the Committee has oversight of the development process; sets, monitors and works with staff and the Board to achieve Executive Board fundraising goals and works with the Executive Board and staff to identify entities to refer to the Committee on Social Responsibility for review. Dr. Lee noted the Committee has additional responsibilities outlined in the pre-meeting reading materials.

Dr. Lee then discussed the recent changes to the composition of the Development Committee, reviewed its 2025 meeting schedule and highlighted key areas on the Committee’s work plan. One major goal for 2025 is achieving 100% participation in APHA giving from Executive Board members. As of the January meeting, 41.7% (10 out of 24 members) had contributed. The committee is also working toward 100% participation from the Governing Council. Dr. Lee concluded her remarks by thanking the members of the Development Committee and inviting staff liaison to the Committee, Torrey Wasserman to make brief remarks related to the newly established 1872 Giving Society.

Ms. Wasserman thanked Dr. Lee and noted that the inspiration for the APHA 1872 Society is Dr. Wathington. In the summer of 2024, Dr. Wathington asked APHA staff to investigate the possibility of establishing the Society. Ms. Wasserman then shared information related to the Society, including its purpose, the parameters for giving and other important facts. More information concerning the APHA 1872 Society can be found on the [APHA website](#).

Governance Committee – Shontelle Dixon, MPH, CHES, Chair

Ms. Dixon opened her presentation by outlining the purpose of the Governance Committee and introducing its members. Ms. Dixon then provided an update on the work of the Code of Conduct Subcommittee, noting that several Code of Conduct complaints were received following the 2024 Annual Meeting in Minneapolis.

Next, Ms. Dixon reviewed the Governance Committee’s 2025 work plan, which includes conducting the annual review of the Executive Board Handbook; implementing an Executive Board mentorship program; developing a process for maintaining Executive Board policies and actions, among other initiatives. Ms.



Dixon concluded her remarks by summarizing the Committee’s upcoming activities. The Governance Committee workplan is available in the January Executive Board pre-reading materials.

Following her presentation, Ms. Dixon answered questions from the Board. With no no further questions, Dr. Alperin thanked Ms. Dixon for her report and moved on to the next agenda item.

APHA Strategic Plan Update – Jessica Boyer, MPH, MSW, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee; Ann Ramosz, PhD, Senior Consultant, Brighter Strategies, LLC, Celeste Philip - Senior Public Health Advisor - Health and Medical Affairs, APHA

Ms. Boyer opened the presentation with brief remarks on the work of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, highlighting its purposing and expressing gratitude to its members for their efforts. Ms. Boyer then introduced Dr. Ramosz, from Brighter Strategies, APHA’s strategic plan implementation consultant.

Dr. Ramosz provided an overview of the methodology Brighter Strategies is using to implement APHA’s strategic plan. Ms. Ramosz reviewed the 2024 year-long roadmap, confirming that all activities had been completed. Ms. Ramosz then introduced the 2025 year-long roadmap, which focuses on finalizing metric and evaluation plans, assessing tactics, and reporting outcomes. Additionally, Ms. Ramosz presented data from the membership survey conducted prior to the Annual Meeting and the results of a subsequent survey released via social media.

Ms. Ramosz then invited each workgroup staff leader to present updates from their respective areas. Each Workgroup representative provided an overview including a summary of workgroup objectives, past and ongoing initiatives and proposed metrics.

- Workgroup 1: Build Workforce Capacity and Effectiveness – Yeatoe McIntosh
- Workgroup 2: Champion Public Health – Don Hoppert
- Workgroup 3: Advance Equitable Public Health Practice and Outcomes – Lawrence Haynes
- Workgroup 4: Improve Member Engagement and Satisfaction – Demond McWilliams
- Workgroup 5: Executive Operational Excellence – Vina HuLamm

Dr. Ramosz concluded by sharing insights from focus group sessions held at the 2024 Annual Meeting. These discussed centered on Workgroup 6 – Reimagining the APHA Membership Model. The Strategic Plan Implementation Report is available in the January Executive Board meeting pre-reading materials.

Dr. Alperin thanked Ms. Boyer, Dr. Ramosz, Dr. Phillip and the APHA staff for their presentations and introduced the final item on the meeting agenda.

Generative Discussion, concluding remarks and adjournment - Melissa (Moose) Alperin, EdD, MPH, MCHES, Chair

Dr. Alperin facilitated a generative discussion on the results of the 2024 elections, during which Executive Board members shared their insights and engaged in a dynamic exchange. The conversation covered various topics, including the contributions of past APHA presidents, key legislative developments to monitor, and effective strategies for engaging with the incoming Administration and Congress. At the



conclusion of the discussion, Dr. Alperin provided brief closing remarks and reminded the Board that the next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 10, 2025, via Zoom.

Dr. Alperin then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved and seconded and hearing no discussion, Dr. Alperin called for the vote. The motion was approved by acclamation.

Motion:	To adjourn the meeting.
Outcome:	Approved by acclamation.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m. eastern.

The next meeting of the APHA Executive Board will take place on Monday, March 10, 2025, from 2-4 p.m. eastern time, via Zoom.