



International Association  
of Business Communicators

**IABC Annual General Meeting**  
Virtual AGM  
Sunday, 23 June 2024, 4:30 – 5:45 p.m. CDT

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

Maliha Aqeel called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. CDT.

**Presentation of Credentials Committee:**

Chair Maliha Aqeel introduced the 2024 Credentials Committee.

- Michael Nord, Credentials Committee Chair (IABC EMENA)
- Deb Hileman (IABC USA)
- Samantha Rae Ayoub (IABC Canada East)
- Adam Fuss (IABC USA)
- Arnab Roy (IABC USA)
- Chantelle Cabral (IABC Canada East)

On behalf of the Credentials Committee, the IABC 2024 Annual General Meeting has reached a quorum. To meet the quorum, IABC needed 210 votes to be represented in the vote. 2 Chapters, 9 Regions, and 9 International Executive Board members participated in the vote, representing 279 votes and exceeding the quorum. The virtual voting was tabulated on 23 June 2024 and approved by the credentials committee.

**Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes and Audit Report**

Have you read and reviewed the minutes of the 2023 AGM? How do you vote?

- 98% of delegates approved the vote.
- 2% of delegates abstained from the vote.
- **Motion carried.**

**Audit Report with Julie Ludwig:**

- Seldon Fox audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of IABC, which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as of December 31, 2023, and 2022, and the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years that ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.
- In their opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the International Association of Business Communicators as of December 31, 2023, and 2022, and the changes in its net assets (deficit) and its cash flows for the years then ended by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.
- While we have received a clean audit, IABC is not out of the woods and will have to continue on the path.

**Treasurer Report with Ann-Marie Blake:**

- Three objectives; financial stability, financial efficiency, transparency, and education.
- Have had to make some very difficult decisions but they have paid off and we have made the most profit in 10 years.

- We have been able to start looking to the future, paying down the SBA loan, and our cash flow is much more predictable and reliable.
- We have started making strides to diversify our income streams and steering away from membership being the main contributor from 52% in 2020.
- The makeup of the finance committee has changed and now consists of all regional treasurers.

### **Approval of 2024-2025 IEB Positions**

The proposed slate of board positions to be elected as specified in the Notice of Annual General Meeting, how do you vote?

- 98% of delegates approved the vote.
- 2% of respondents abstained from the vote.
- **Motion carried.**

### **Chair Report with Maliha Aqeel:**

- I am filled with pride for all we have accomplished and optimism for the future.
- Task force 2.0 built on the task force's recommendations to rebuild the structure.
- IABC Accomplishments through the year:
  - Transitioning to an annual dues cycle and revitalizing our corporate membership program.
  - Launched heads of communication SIG
  - Launched new Masterclasses
  - Partnerships have played a crucial role
- More than 30 communication professionals participated in this year's Gift of Communication

### **Executive Director Report with Peter Finn:**

- 2023-2024 Activities: Strategic Plan
  - Bring the IABC community closer together to create significant value by efficiently utilizing resources and technologies
  - Organizational Design Task Force 1.0 and 2.0
  - Growth of Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) over 2023-2024
  - Revitalizing our corporate membership program
  - Share services model
  - US Region restructure
  - Revamping The Hub and completing a full redesign of the IABC website for FY24 implementation
- How will we grow?
  - Micro-credentialing
  - New certification programs
  - Focus on thought leadership
  - Further refine the design of in-person programming

### **Incoming Chair Remarks with Kamyar Naficy:**

- The hardest part is always execution and IABC is about 2/3 through the stronger together plan. We are at a great stage now and have reached a stable and solid footing. We have won back the opportunity to be ambitious and breathe new life into commercial activity. We need to do all of this in a way that does not risk our financial stability. Comms professionals are playing an increasingly important role in businesses. This presents IABC and the global comms community to help and shape for as many stakeholders as possible. The next year will be the first year of a newly invigorated IABC. International, inclusive, and invigorative.

### **General Q&A:**

- *Andrew Kaszowski – IABC London:* We got out of the pandemic, but we know there will be future challenges. What preparations for those do we have?

- We have tried to stop being so top-down in our new structure – so the board would also like to hear from the members.
- *Pamela Proverbs – IABC Barbados*: We do not feel that IABC is inclusive or that we are growing stronger together. We are being marginalized and have not gotten our money. We have been cast out of the Southern region.
  - It is important to hear when things are not working, and it is important to acknowledge. We could not move forward until the US regions voted to dissolve and merge. After that was done, we could then focus on the next steps in South America and the Caribbean. This only happened a couple of weeks ago. We would like our staff to come up with an action plan to let us know how we can organize all of these chapters into one region and provide representation on the IEB. We will be setting you up for success to ensure you get your money and take into account currency issues and geographic distances. We can learn from colleagues in APAC and Africa as well to see what has worked for them.
- *Bonnie Caver – IABC Austin*: Are we hesitant to start putting money back into reserves or what is the plan on that?
  - We need to clear out our SBA loan to get rid of that liability. We will talk about that with the next finance committee. We have had to tug on those reserves where there is not much left. The priority is to pay off the SBA loan.
- *Zora Artis – IABC Victoria*: As members, we do not feel informed. We are not doing ourselves what we teach. When looking at the Stronger Together plan and coming up in 2025, we are not where it should be. We feel in the dark and you should know that and work on that.
- *Rhonda Sciarra – IABC St. Louis*: What is the status of the foundation and where is it going?
  - This year the foundation worked with USC Annenberg. All foundation action items and forces have been moving forward as planned. We had this money in the foundation for research so we partnered with someone who does it well and has a report that IABC can stand behind. That has been the main focus alongside the yearly tasks.
- *John Clemons – IABC North Carolina*: Would like to step back to the comment made by Zora. There was no comment made by anyone up there, could you please say something?
  - We have communicated the changes in the association more now than ever. We also have heard from members that we are communicating too much so we have started to consolidate to the Bulletin. Some people read everything, and some do not. Communications have gotten lost as well and we now are using HubSpot to secure better deliverability. We have listening sessions as well and have been working with our chapters and regions.
- *Theresa Zumwald - IABC Greater Cincinnati*: I think it would be terrific to bring more young people into the association. I would challenge the research foundation to do a study on how to bring more young people into the association. We need to wake up to the fact that they will join for different reasons than I did in 1995.
- Have you surveyed members on what they would like to see or how to communicate with members?
  - We do an annual member survey where we do get feedback.
- There have been more communications than my colleague and a lot about the task force in recent years. I think there is a misalignment between chapter and region leaders and IEB. Creating that alignment is a challenge for the incoming board. We have talked about shared value and do not receive much dividend at the corporate level.
  - When the first Org Design Task Force proposed their plan, they wanted to flatten the organization and you will start to see that come together a bit more.
- *Kaleigh Maclaren – IABC Ottawa*: How are we taking and connecting the dots of ideas that are happening between the committees, regions, and chapters and delivering on them?
  - We are looking at something beyond basecamp and have looked at our committees for cross-pollination but do not think we have been successful at that. From a content perspective, I think we still have some work to do. We look to our PD committee, but I think there is a lot more we could do in terms of collaboration. The responsibility to trickle down information relies on everyone in this room. We need all of you to make sure that we are stronger together.

- *Victor:* The communications I receive are very commercial and I feel like a customer and not a member. IABC is a member organization. Do we have a communication plan? I prioritize the emails that I read. I always read my chapter emails, and then regional emails from HQ. Does HQ equip local chapters to be their choice?
  - We do not have a comms plan and it would not win a Gold Quill. We do need to have one and I know that Kam has talked about that often for his year. If we do not have the right resources internally, we need to outsource it.

**Adjournment:**

Julie motioned to adjourn the meeting. Maliha Aqeel seconded the motion, and the 2024 Annual General Meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m. CDT.