

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OPTOMETRY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP
(OPAG)
Conference Report 2008 JUN 04**

Attendees:

1.1. OPAG Members: Present were Chuck Jaworski (President), CJ Thompson, , Maricella Bonilla, Gay Nord, & Larry Zubel (Secretary).

1.2. Invited Guests: Mike Candreva

1. Meeting called to order at 10:08 Mountain Time

No old minutes to discuss—no quorum was present then.

2. Old Business

2.1 Retention Pay/Loan Repayment: no changes or new info

2.2 Medical benefits—Tricare: N/R

2.3 Transformation: nothing new for now, but more info might be coming after next week's COA conference in Tucson. Zubel will return with info about deploying OD's, and obstacles to that.

2.4 Civil Service Pay/Title 38: no news or changes

2.5 Uniform Policy: N/R

2.6 Retirements: Ron Sellers will likely retire in 3/09

3. New Business

3.2 OPAG Membership/By-Laws: N/R

3.3 OFRD Report (Zubel): tabled until after COA meeting next week

3.4 Eye Care Coordination Committee (Candreva): pilot programs to start at White Earth and Red Lake to enable folks to get DM laser tx who have no other resources to get such.

3.5 IHS Chief Consultant Report (Candreva): highlights of Fullerton presentation include staffing trends, CS pay and position description issues, loan repayment, scholarships, recruitment and retention, miscellaneous info about facilities & staffing, new ideas for GPRA indicators (and the resistance to adding more at HQ level), & deployments aboard ship for OD's this summer and fall. Details not recounted here, but are available as a PowerPoint presentation from Candreva or myself.

3.6 COA Liaison report (Clary): N/R

3.7 HSO-PAC Liaison report; point made that Nichols is no longer the liaison to the HSO-PAC, so no OD sits there. Meetings are day-long and held monthly, and no interest expressed from membership to commit to being liaison with that sort of schedule.

3.8 JOAG report (Flaitz): N/R

3.9 AFOS Liaison report (Cespon): N/R

3.10 AMSUS Liaison Report (Brown): Brown has related in an e-mail to Candreva that OPAG is being criticized at HQ for a lack of nominations for awards, specifically the David W. Sullins Award for outstanding service to Optometry. Group decided to nominate someone, and Candreva will write up the award.

3.11 Recruitment (Bellware): N/R

3.12 FDA Report (Lewandowski-Walker): N/R

3.13 CDC Report (Duenas): N/R

3.14 GPRA Numbers (Jaworski): Jaworski still trying to add two indicators (screening kids for exams and glaucoma screenings) to national GPRA tally, but is finding resistance to adding to the GPRA workload at this time.

3.15 Billet Report (Candreva): idea of individual officer billets dead, but billets will be re-done to reflect various duties at various levels within the scope of optometry. The point here is to allow officers in clinical billets to be promoted while performing those duties, and not requiring changing duties/assignments for the sake of promotion.

3.16 Discussion of OPAG goals, projects, etc: Recall that the point of OPAG is to liaison between optometry officers and HQ, and advocate for optometry at that level. Ideas for efforts along these lines are welcome. Currently, one such effort is the GPRA indicators (above). Another is to generate a brief primer of what the various awards are for optometrists, their criteria, who awards them, and how one might nominate a deserving optometrist for each. Zubel agreed to generate something along these lines and distribute it. Also, OPAG really ought to communicate with the AOA about the awards we bestow, so that the recipients receive the recognition they deserve.

3.17 Fullerton Meeting report: All went very well, with the typical excellent CME. Garber may possibly bow out of arranging it next time, but we are hoping he decides to continue with it anyway. It was well-attended by IHS, Tribal, and even some private sector docs.

3.18 OPAG funds discussion: Lewandowski-Walker has \$50 of OPAG money in a personal account, because PAG are not supposed to have any of their own money. Other PAG's keep their funds with the COA somehow. We decided to use all of the money we have to reimburse Jaworski for the cost of the award plaques (he fronted all the money for that), and the rest of us, if we wish, can send him a few bucks to cover the remainder. (Total cost was \$160.)

4. Career Development/Promotions/Awards

4.2 Promotions: Candreva reported that the following PHS Officers were successfully promoted to: O-6, CAPT John Stadick and CAPT Keith Cespon; O-5, CDR Christopher Nield, CDR Greg Flaitz, CDR Lynette Dziuk and CDR Robert Chelberg; and O-4, LCDR Anthony Stout.

4.3 Billets: see above note

4.4 Assimilation: N/R

4.5 Pay: N/R

4.6 Positions: workforce is currently split ~ 1/3 in each category of CC, CS, and Tribal hires. Total number of positions is 159 with 28 vacancies.

5. Communications: none

6. Long Term Projects: see above various topics

7. Meetings Fullerton over; COA next week in Tucson; AOA in Seattle (6/08), and AAO in Anaheim in 10/08 (along with AFOS). Navajo Area meeting set for APR 24 & 25, 2009 in Flagstaff.

8. Action Items: Zubel to generate Awards primer, Thompson to generate a "questions and issues" handout for CS optometrists, and Candreva to write up Sullins Award for nominee selected today.

9. OPAG Meetings

9.1 Next meeting will be 06 AUG 2008, 1000 MST, using the same dial-in numbers and passcode unless instructions to the contrary are sent out:

1-800-770-8251 x3975

passcode 0179244