

OPAG Minutes 08/02/2017

Mission: Represent and advocate for the professional discipline of optometry and its Commissioned officers, civil servants, contract and tribal optometrists serving within the Public Health Service and affiliated services.

OPAG Voting members

Present:

- CAPT Cameron Scott (Chair)
- CDR Robert Chelberg (Chair-Elect)
- CDR Robert Kesead
- CDR Nima Desai
- CDR Craig Rennard
- LT Jill Thompson

Absent:

- CAPT Kathleen Wooten
- CAPT Chris Nield
- LCDR Laura Alexander

Liaisons/Co-Chairs

CAPT Dawn Clary
CDR Sarah Stienbarger
CDR Erin Giles
LT Emily Mathiak

CONGRATULATIONS to all Optometrists receiving promotions!! CAPT Mike Davis, CAPT Chris Nield, CAPT Cameron Scott, CDR Craig Rennard, LCDR Laura Alexander.

Approval of Minutes

All in favor; Minutes approved.

Subcommittee Chair Reports

1. **Administrative Management:** CDR Rob Chelberg
Subcommittee activity has slowed in second half of the year. Now recruiting for new voting members. Process defined by new bylaws and no longer determined internally. Official list of voting members must be approved by HSPAC before announced by OPAG. Uncertain how many positions needing to be filled at this time. List must be submitted to HSPAC by September 30 though. Chair-elect will be voted on internally, probably in November.

RAM event in Chattanooga was great experience and deployment credit was given. Highly recommend getting involved in a RAM event if possible. There are plans to have 5 RAM events with PHS each year.

2. **Awards:** LCDR Laura Alexander
No report
3. **Communications:** LT Jill Thompson/LT Emily Mathiak
Max.gov is now functional. Sponsorship is available for those who don't have .gov email addresses to access directly on their own. Sponsorship information can be forwarded if needed. Cameron and Jill are the current administrators for the OPAG site and can upload documents as needed. More guidance to be received regarding what documents are to be uploaded. Training video has been posted and can be viewed by anyone with access to the site.
Website updates have been on hold across USPHS due to disconnect between the work site and the production site to actually be viewed on the website. Previously submitted update requests are now starting to be processed though.
4. **Data & Evaluations:** Cameron for CAPT Chris Nield
Not much action regarding surveys but there has been survey data collected regarding promotions.
5. **Policy:** CDR Craig Rennard
Still waiting on standardization of PAG SOP template, needs to be voted on by leadership. After approved, that will be the standard for all PAGs to base their modifications on.
6. **Recruitment (Ad Hoc):** CDR Sarah Stienbarger
Currently have 31 OD vacancies across IHS. Several people are going through the CC application process though. AS has submitted paperwork, waiting for security & medical review. MG waiting for security, medical and Presidential signature. RA is waiting for Presidential signature. WT & AT are working 1662's and awaiting Presidential signature. None of these individuals are filling vacancies though, they're currently working in IHS positions and transitioning from CS to CC. Working to recruit 3 individuals from the Navy, Army and Fort Belvoir considering changing USPHS. CC is former officer interested in applying but GPA is too low, only interested in working in IHS if able to be commissioned. She has been offered a position and is working with her liaison. Previously had tried to get GPA exemption for JK but he's no longer interested in the CC and no longer working for IHS. According to Oklahoma Area Liaison, OPAG's involvement is not needed to get a GPA exemption. The request must come from the area director, with concurrence from CPO, who may request technical assessment opinion from OPAG. CPO is supportive of getting applicants GPA exemptions though.
Request was received to submit a PAG Rubric, which is what incoming applicants are graded on. Applicants will be getting screened by PAG instead of DC. Initial submission was given to meet request but will be adjusted following a recent training to make it more in line with what's actually needed. Each possible officer applicant will be graded by 3 individuals.
7. **Stakeholder & Community Engagement:** Cameron/Rob for CAPT Kathleen Wooten
Rob presented on PAG/PAC leadership call regarding Stakeholder involvement. Covered AAO, AOA, RAM, connection to IHS in general and universities through students/residency program, board certification, AFOS, newsletter, CAPT Clary and her position in IHS. Positive feedback was received and seemed to be ahead of a lot of the PAGs.
8. **Technical Readiness:** CDR Robert Kesead/CAPT Larry Zubel
No report

9. **Training, Education & Mentorship:** CDR Nima Desai/CDR Sarah Stienbarger
Discussion regarding difficulty matching mentors/mentees, especially with CDR to CAPT. Can take months for matches to be made. Working on a newsletter as well.

Liaison Reports

AAO: Ryan Manning, Barb Cohn (diplomates): No report

AFOS: CDR Greg Smith: No Report

AMSUS: Barb Cohn: No Report

APHA Vision Care: vacant

Chief Clinical Consultant: CAPT Dawn Clary

OPAG is getting favorable feedback from HSPAC at this time. Possible increase in retention bonus for Optometry being considered, making it equal with DoD or even higher with recruitment difficulty. Now have approved GS 12 Optometry Staff position that is available to HR at all area offices. Title 38 pay scale also be evaluated.

FDA: Kim Lewandowski-Walker: No Report

JOAG: vacant

JVN: CDR Chris Nield: No report

National Combined Council IHS: Larry Zubel (CEO), Greg Smith (CEO)

PACE: Barb Cohn: No report

PHS Recruitment/Applicant Placement: CDR Sarah Stienbarger:
Discussed during subcommittee reports.

Discussion Topics

None.

Meeting adjourned

Upcoming OPAG meetings

October 4, 2017

December 6, 2017

All meetings are:

8:00 AM Alaska

9:00 AM Pacific

10:00 AM Mountain

11:00 AM Central

12:00 PM Eastern

**Call in number for October 4, 2017 OPAG meeting:
1(877)546-1567 pw 63158**