

Meeting Minutes for Forensic Professional TG Business Meeting

22-September-2004

Meeting called to order by Dave Leonard at 1630 hrs.

Old Business

The HFES HQ wants us to update the FP TG brochure. There appear to be few changes, but the brochure needs to be reviewed by the group.

Ric Olsen hands out the FP position paper, which gives background information to attorney's and others who may want to know the history and scientific bases for the HF profession.

Dave introduces Alison Vredenburg, the new President of the FP TG.

New Business

Notes from the COTG meeting:

- The HFES Newsletter will focus on one TG each month.
- The American Institute of Physics has several 90-sec. video clips focusing on ergonomics. The HFES can use those clips for our purposes.
- Each TG can do its own website and link to the HFES.

Treasurer's Report (Mike Maddox)

- Our balance as of 1-January-2004 was \$4292.24. Between 1-January and 31-August-2004, our income was \$1258.25 and expenditures totaled \$230.58, for a net gain of \$1027.67. Our balance as of 31-August was \$5319.91.
- Our membership as of 31-August was 266.

HFES Proceedings

Access to HFES Proceedings articles are now exclusively via CD. A member commented that, at least on one occasion, an opposing attorney has raised this issue and stated that, since many university libraries do not purchase the HFES Proceedings CD's, they have had trouble getting copies of manuscripts. A discussion of this issue raised many points including the fact that attorneys are free to purchase their own copies of the Proceedings CD's and that university libraries are trimming their holdings in many areas, but could still gain access to

the CD's if required. The Proceedings articles are copyright-protected, so providing copies to attorneys is not necessarily a wise thing to do. Richard Hornick pointed out that the fact Proceedings articles are provided on CD can be portrayed as a positive thing, e.g., they're searchable.

Membership

- A wide-ranging discussion of membership took place at the business meeting. We currently have 266 members. The lower limit for TG membership has been set by the HFES at 150 members. Our membership is relatively stable, but a number of members present at the meeting presented options for increasing our membership numbers. Several of the points raised about this topic are presented below.
- We should realize that our membership will be "naturally" limited. Not everyone wants to be a forensic practitioner and a certain level of experience is required to enter forensic practice.
- It is not clear that there is a consensus among the FP TG that we actually need to grow our membership.
- Who cares how many members we have? We care about having high-quality people who are involved with the TG.
- It is not in our best interests to merge with another TG (which was a point offered for discussion).
- The value of having more members is having blocks of papers or other sessions at the annual meeting. However, we didn't fill up our paper slots this year. We can increase our presence at the meeting by submitting more papers and perhaps having poster sessions.
- Members of the TG should cite the FPG on their resume'.
- One can be a member of the TG without being a member of HFES. Perhaps a path to increasing membership outside the HF community.
- Perhaps we should reduce or eliminate dues. This topic received quite a bit of discussion. There were suggestions that dues might be dropped for graduate students or that they might be waived for the first year of membership in the TG. After much debate, the group decided to table the idea of changing the dues structure. The prevailing sentiment was that this aspect of the TG is not broken and did not need to be fixed.

Newsletter

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Erik was not present, so Ric Olsen gave the surrogate Newsletter report. We currently sent about 50 copies of the newsletter by snail mail and 300 copies via e-mail.

Website

There was no discussion regarding the website other than to acknowledge that Erik has done a very good job on the site. A group “thank you” and virtual hug was designated for Erik’s work on the website.

Program

Dan Johnson reported on this year’s program. Electronic submission, several years in the making, has made things much easier for the Program Chair and the reviewers. There was a short discussion of the fact that the manuscript could be uploaded as a file, but the abstract cannot – it must be pasted into a particular space. Most members felt this was not a serious problem.

The main issue with the program is that there are simply too few submissions. Dan cited a Newsletter article related to forensic issues as perhaps scaring potential submitters. That is, they might feel that, if they are not research-oriented, then there is no place on the program for applied papers they might want to submit.

There were a number of suggestions for dealing with this problem. Among those discussed were the following:

- Define topic-area-specific sessions, such as “slip and fall”. Encourage applied papers in these topical areas.
- Provide alternative formats and define broader topics. One suggestion was to have a session devoted to success stories, *i.e.*, cases that have led to fundamental change for the better.
- Ken Laughery suggested that we actually go out and solicit presenters for a particular theme.

All of these suggestions were well-received. The consensus among the members appears to be that we should do all of these things.

Brochure

Dave Leonard will review the brochure, make suggestions for changes, and pass the new draft around for comment.

Next Election

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Alison suggested that everyone consider nominations for each FPG office.

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Forensic Handbook

The new Forensic Handbook will be coming out shortly. Several FPG members have authored or co-authored chapters in the handbook. This was mentioned for information only.

The meeting was adjourned at 1735 hours.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Maddox, Secretary/Treasurer.