

*Supporting the Success of its  
Members – America's SBDCs*

**OUR SHARED MISSION**

Deliver high quality, professional business advice, education, and information that generates meaningful results.

**OUR SHARED VISION**

America's SBDCs are highly valued for driving economic prosperity.

**ASBDC'S PURPOSE**

To support the success of its members.

**BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS  
OBJECTIVE**

*To establish the Association's mission, vision, strategic direction, approve the Association's budget and operations plan, and appoint and evaluate the performance of the Association's President, including setting compensation.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called the ASBDC Board of Directors meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed all non-board members in attendance.

**ROLL CALL**

The Secretary completed the Board of Director roll call, quorum present.

PRESENT	BOARD MEMBER	COMMENTS
<b>X</b>	Michele Abraham (South Carolina)	X
<b>X</b>	Mike Bowman (Delaware)	X
<b>X</b>	Carl Brown (District of Columbia)	X
<b>X</b>	Laura Fine (Arkansas)	X
<b>X</b>	Kristin Johnson (Northern CA)	X
<b>X</b>	Steve Lawrence (Houston, TX)	X
<b>X</b>	Beth Melnik (Georgia)	X
<b>X</b>	Linda Rossi (Vermont)	X
<b>X</b>	Lisa Shimkat (Iowa)	X
<b>X</b>	Tee Rowe (America's SBDC)	X

**SECRETARY'S REPORT/APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** – Minutes of the August 2021 BOD meeting were sent out by e-mail. Roll call done. Minutes approved as revised. A motion to approve minutes with a second motion following. The Board voted unanimously to approve as revised.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (MICHELE ABRAHAM)** As I was preparing for today's meeting as my last board meeting as Chair it really caused me to go back and reflect over the last two years. One thing that obviously we all have been dealing with is the unprecedented whirlwind of events with the pandemic. Certainly nothing like we've ever seen before, and it's just amazing that we've had to really go through during this time. I don't know if any of you realize it, but I was literally in my board chair position for about four and a half months before COVID hit.

We had one in person meeting during my two-year tenure, and that was in February of 2020 when we did the spring meeting. We started working on the strategic plan and we all went home and within two weeks, almost everything went virtual. We've all been overwhelmed; everybody has had a tremendous workload. Our organization has stepped up, and we have helped record numbers of businesses to survive and even grow. One of the silver linings out of all of this is that it has really brought new awareness and recognition of the value of the SBDC network around the country. I think that's something to really keep in mind that, despite everything that we've had to deal with throughout all of this, it really has benefited our networks, and I know we all need to be thinking about moving forward, how we continue to keep that level of awareness up there. Despite that, we've soldiered through, and we've had some stellar results, and I think that's something that we should really be proud of.

I want to express my appreciation to all the board members for everything that you've done over the last two years, your dedication and your willingness to take time away from everything that you've had to do in your own networks and to contribute to the achievement of our association goals and help to drive us forward. I think the open candid discussions we've had have been very important toward making well informed wise decisions on behalf of the entire organization. Carl, Linda, Lisa, Marquees, and Kristen, I can't thank you enough for all the work that you've put in. You've shown your dedication to the network and really done some great work while you've been in those roles. I also want to take a minute to commend Tee because he's just instrumental to everything that our network does. We couldn't do it without him. I can't overstate how important his role is and what he does to position us or funding and to be sustained and to thrive in the future. The association staff really hasn't missed a beat, they've continued to support us in so many ways, whether it's with Sponsorships Conference, the Leadership Institute, and Marketing, just very focused and making sure that you continue to do what the network needed.

I think just managing through the pandemic has demanded so much out of all of us, that it's probably been kind of easy to lose sight of some of the good things we've accomplished. The first thing I want to talk about is the SBA relationship. Tee, Linda and I have made, I think, significant progress in building a better working relationship with the group based on transparent communications and better collaboration.

We have a firm commitment from the SBA to continue to try to improve upon that and get those out to us even sooner, so that the operations committee really has the time to digest it and provide feedback, not only on the goals, but on the terms and conditions of which we now have. We've worked hard to build a relationship with the new group, and that has been going well, I think that we've developed some trust and much more open communications than we did under the last administration. I really believe they are working with us to move back more to the true intent of a cooperative agreement, and that is

really negotiating on critical issues like our goals, not just arbitrarily handing something down to us and expecting us to comply with it. Even though we didn't get totally to where we wanted to be on goals for this year, I think a lot of that had to do with dealing with the legacy of the last administration. The new Administration has come in with sorely lacking staff, as you all know, they've been desperately understaffed, and I think that has affected a lot of what we've been able to accomplish in the timeframe that we've had but they're showing real concern and support of the SBDC network as a whole and they're very committed to continuing to work with us. We're already working with them on 2023 goals. I can't overstate the importance of the executive team and the board continuing efforts to further strengthen and build our relationship with the SBA and really encourage the new board chair to work closely with Tee and continue to make the progress that we've started with the SBA.

The next thing I think we've done well, is successfully building the 2021-2023 Strategic Plan. We intentionally reduced that back to a three-year plan because of all the impact and unknowns about COVID. We did incorporate some of the early findings of COVID into that plan and we had our priorities for 2021 as part of this meeting. Our goal is to try to create key priorities for our strategic plan. Another thing that I think has done extremely well, is when you look at the phenomenal work that our committees have done over the last two years, each one of them has made important contributions to the network.

A couple of highlights that I'd like to throw out, the leadership committee has done the development of the new programs and continued enhancement of existing programs. Michelle and Christian have worked closely together, along with Linda as the liaison and the other members of that team to really produce programming that's vital to succession planning and the sustenance of our program over the long haul. The accreditation team started doing all our accreditation virtually which is an unbelievable feat and a major endeavor and you guys have done it well. So, congratulations to Joel and the conference committee. I mean trying to take what we had done for 40 plus years in an in-person venue and make it a virtual program is a huge undertaking and you guys had the yeoman's work of doing that. What a phenomenal job. We had an extremely successful first virtual conference last year and I'm very confident that this year is going to be even better. Thank all of you for everything that you've accomplished, and for your dedication to the job and to making sure that we're making our network better.

The next thing is funding, Tee continues to negotiate incremental increases for us every year. I think there was a time when we felt like that probably couldn't happen, but somehow, he manages and we're hopeful that this year we're going to get another jump up to \$140 million and that's exciting that we're continuing to make that headway, and you know, also in large part due to his efforts, we got the phenomenal amount of money through the Cares Act. We've been able to ramp up with new people, great talent, add new tools and services that you know we wouldn't have been able to do before and I know that a lot of that we're going to be able to carry on long past the Cares Act Program. Tee also successfully set up the National COVID website. Congress wanted that done and Tee literally made that happen in a matter of days from when that contract came through. That is instrumental in terms of Congress just continuing to look at us. Thank you Tee and I'm so excited that you're here and you're going to continue to help us go to the next step.

**TREASURER'S REPORT (LISA SHIMKAT)** - The first thing that I want to touch on are the reserves. We have strategic reserve and operational reserve. The strategic reserve is the one which the board members need the percentage of board members and membership to vote on, and then the operational reserve is the one that we usually use more. The strategic reserve right now is at \$2,019,543

the operational reserves at \$117,000. We have seen a decrease in the operational reserve but remember we've also utilized a lot of those great programs that Michelle reference and we've added positions and we've added some very strategic things which will be discussed later.

On the accounts receivable side, we are sitting with about \$70,000 out there in dues still which need to be recovered by the Association. Please make sure that as Tee and Donna reach out to you that you're working with your host institution. We know that a lot of the host institutions have just closed out their year and we were working on a lot of those contracts finishing and getting signed sub recipient contracts. Please focus back on getting the association dues paid that would be greatly appreciated. Our

Conference right now is sitting at about a half a million dollars and receivables. Now the association in our checkbook is sitting healthy right now, just under half a million dollars, as of the end of August, but remember, we still have a lot of payroll, rent and monthly expenditures, as we continue to move forward. On the conference side we have obviously the registrations, but then we also have five states at the 25,000 for the conference that we still need to pay and those are some big chunks that just help us from a cash flow standpoint. There's a lot of questions on are we going to have enough in the checkbook come January to pay some of those bills and so on and that's why it's important to get on now with your accounting departments and look at if you have anything outstanding. If you have questions as to whether you have anything outstanding, please feel free to email Donna or Tee, or both. The last thing on the receivables is about \$25,000 in CARES.

Remember, we have multiple folks through the association that were able to build a percentage of their salaries to CARES and we also have IDC. The IDC is approximately about \$117,000 but that will go up a little bit with some additional potential funding through CARES as well. I'm still waiting to get the details on that and forward an update on that. The cash flow side of the association is something that is crucial, and you can contribute to the that aspect. Finally, everything else, as far as conference is seeming to be right on track. I know, there was a little bit of a glitch when many of the presentations were recorded over, but I think that has been rectified and kudos to Mike Bowman and Joel for all your hard work, and not just throwing your hands up in the air, when suddenly, you realize that there's a lot more work that needs to be done in a short period of time.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT (TEE ROWE)** - Staff here has really done an extraordinary job. We always have pretty good response on appropriations. The House moved up what they call a minibus, a package of about six appropriations bills. They send it over to the Senate financial services, which is a bill we're in. It was a part of that 140 million dollars. The Senate has marked up a couple of the bills in that package, but they haven't gotten to financial services yet. I have spoken with both Senator Van Hollen and Senator Smith staff and they're totally supportive of us, so I think we're in great shape. There's funding for incubators and accelerators. I can't remember how much that's open to all sorts of nonprofits, but I worked with the staff to make sure that it was very clear that SBDC's would be eligible entities for all of that grant funding. There's also funding language in there to support rural conferences. I think we could support rural business conferences. I think that would be a great effort to support our rural efforts. The problem is, all the other stuff in the \$3.5 trillion is probably going to blow this thing sky high.

I'm not sure how much of that reconciliation money and language is going to survive. But the reason I bring this up is that's what sucking all the air out of the room and Congress right now. There are more conservative democrats, 10 or 11 of them are having a real problem with the size of the package. The progressive democrats are saying everything or nothing and that means they take down the infrastructure

bill, as well the bipartisan infrastructure bill, so it's all rather a mess. Frankly, I'm not sure in the next 10 days, whether they're going to be able to get much of anything done on that and then again, they may find a way to bully it through the House. I have been working to make sure our issues are covered, so if you think of something please send me an email.

I want to make sure I'm touching on all the bases. I hope after that we will be able to then get moving on reauthorization. I know the women's business centers have been putting a ton of pressure on the committee staff because they really want to change their funding formula, so that it's more than \$150,000 for a women's business center. So hopefully, the House will get it moving then it's a question of whether Senator Cardin and Senator Paul can get the Senate Committee to start moving. Turning to SBA as Michelle said she's been working closely with Nancyellen on reforming the goal line. Nancyellen is not looking at this from a gotchas standpoint, she's not looking to be punitive in terms of holding people to goals, I think she and the staff there in DC are struggling with finding a rational baseline. When we look at which year the economy was ticking along well you know, we had functional zero unemployment and a lot of business activity, client numbers went off the charts because everybody was coming to us for assistance. Now we're going into how things have been going this year and I don't think anyone is sure of what the economy is going to be doing.

## LIAISON REPORTS

**Laura Fine reported:** No report

**Linda Rossi reported:** No report

**Mike Bowman reported:** No report

**Steve Lawrence reported:** No report

**Beth Melnik reported:** No report

**Kristin Johnson reported:** No report

**Lisa Shimkat reported:** Discussion as requested just doing a view and I'm not getting into the details. Topics discussed - National increases in funding, operational reserves have been used in the last several years to pay for initiatives; leadership institute, national impact survey, and assistance with cash flow. Current balances, dues, monetize salary, non-conference sponsorships and association expense reductions.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Accreditation Committee – reported by Mark Delisle:** When we had our series of accreditation committee meetings this month, we reviewed new reports and it was noted in the team's observations that there was an individual in this program who was serving on a loan committee and we had discussion around this matter.

**Conference Committee - reported by Joel Youngs:** Exciting week. We've got over 3000 people registered. Pre-conference workshops are happening today. I think we have four or five different ones

that are occurring today. We're excited we've got over 100 presentations that will be available to be viewed for six months out following this week. MTV our provider that we had last year did a wonderful job but they've upped their game and so they've provided an upgrade to their platform, so I think the interface looks wonderful. Some tweaks from this year to last year, your committee ended up moderating all the live Q and A sessions and we will have live Q and A sessions all week long. A live Q and A will also be recorded and then appended to the recorded session.

Please be mindful as we move forward, and we figure out how we're going to deliver professional development. Just one of the things I want to plant in people's minds. In an effort to help the association keep their costs down enter some contractual relationships in advance. So, we've already got the next seven contracts signed. So, as we think about how we're delivering professional development, keep in mind we've already made a financial commitment that we need to weigh in, so don't lose sight of that. I just wanted to make sure that everybody was aware of that, because I know that we get so busy dealing with everything going on, keep in mind that the conference is your primary financial vehicle for driving.

At least as things stand, right now, it's your primary driver for driving money for funding this association and its costs, so it's important, and I say that because, at some point in time I'm going to sunset off being committee chair as soon as I can get find a chairman that'll let me stop doing this. This has been a Labor of love, I really have appreciated the fact that Ron originally got me involved in this and then brilliant mentorship by Drew Towns Meyer, I really appreciate their efforts and everybody on the committee has been wonderful to work with. Thank you so much for members, state directors and associated state directors for allowing your people to not only participate on the committee but to help keep professional development to the forefront of their minds.

**Strategic Plan – reported by Michelle:** Open for discussion/suggestions. The Strategic Pillars topics: Under Innovative - markets; approaches and services; SBDC Workforce; Under results oriented - Collaborations; Operations; Under sustainable - Leadership; Financial Model; SBDC Brand Value/Recognition.

**Updates from network – report by Nancyellen:** I think, in the last year and a half it's been extremely challenging there's been a lot of uncertainty. We've had a lot of success and a lot of accomplishments. I've seen what you all have been able to do while responding to your own internal challenges. You guys have been amazing and in for the most part that's been because of the partnership. In addition to the goals, we have continued to enhance processes plated oversight and monitoring and will continue to do so. We're always trying to work with the ASBDC leadership, but also with the team on the ground and fortify some of those relationships. Another area that we're focused on in terms of optimizing processes is of course leveraging technology to give us data and information and greater visibility and in being able to work smarter to help all of you.

**Leadership Institute: reported by Christian Conroy: -** The leadership institute focuses on providing four core services. Leadership transition and development strategic; planning and operations; and program performance and sustainability, and these four items are all directly in support of enabling us to accomplish our mission and fulfill our vision. Topics discussed managing an SBDC network leader's transitions, welcome packets, mentorship program, SBDC network; building network capacity; coaching; new SBDC network leaders, ALEX webinars, state directors roundtables, and. 2 associate state directors and other key network staff and strengthening networks. We're going to be facing a tidal wave in leadership changes. We have over 20% of the network so far indicated that they anticipate that there'll be a change in network director.

Legislative Committee – no report

**International Trade Committee – No report**

Intersection Groups – No report

**Marketing Committee – reported by Michelle:** Market Committee is already at work and getting things prepared. I think most of you know there's a toolkit online already that's great and got a lot of great examples and things that you can use. You may want to put that on your calendars and be thinking ahead about what you plan to do in your respective States.

**Operations Committee – no report**

**Research and Data Committee – no reported**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Annual Impact Survey – reported by Christian Conroy:** I would say right now that's really kind of preliminary I think I need to go through, and first make sure the data is clean. There are some items that need to be looked at in more detail, I think, before we have an analysis of what's in there. I'll compile a full report of all the findings, so that everybody in the network can use it for benchmarking and to identify best practices and things like that.

**Association Grant update – reported by Tee Rowe:** I don't know if it's good news or bad news, but I haven't heard any requests from the office of Inspector General in a while. I don't know if that means they've found enough to write an essay report, or whether they're frustrated that they can't find anything. I'm hoping for the ladder.

**National Impact Survey update – reported by Tee Rowe:** Dr Chrisman finished it up and sent it to us, and I will email it out to everyone and then I'll send it on up to our friends on the Hill.

## **NEW BUSINESS –**

**Michelle reported -** I had only one item that I have for new business, and I got a note from Jody Kenan about something that's come up in one of the accreditation reviews.

## **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Laura and motion was seconded by Lisa. The motion carried unanimously.