



May 17, 2017

Editor's Note: This is the first installment of a periodic news brief on whazzup with our growing group! No Wolf Blitzer. No Anderson Cooper. No fake news. The goal of this communication tool is simply to enlist, engage and empower those consultants, contractors, architects, engineers and product/service providers (the term *vendors* officially ends now) who serve and support the AA AE airports membership.

### **Corporate Committee Steering Group Openings: Expressions of Interest Needed Now**

The Corporate Committee Steering Group (CCSG) is comprised of seasoned consultants, contractors, architects, engineers and product/service providers. Individuals, not companies, interested in serving on the CCSG must self-nominate by submitting an **expression of interest** that clearly states why they aspire to the heavy lifting and sweat equity of the work we do. These individuals also need to include a brief professional bio (i.e., we don't need to know you played the trombone in your high school marching band) and an accompanying statement from their employer in support of their consistent participation in corporate committee meetings. Election to the CCSG represents a three-year commitment with three face-to-face meetings each year: ACC/AAAE Planning, Design & Construction Symposium in the winter, AA AE Annual Conference in the spring and the F. Russell Hoyt National Airports Conference in the fall. **Expressions of interest for currently available CCSG positions should be submitted to Chair Mark Sapp, Vice Chair Jon Faucher and our AA AE Committee Liaison, Amy Trivette, no later than Monday, June 5.** Our current CCSG members will be asked to carefully consider the qualifications of all self-nominated candidates and submit their selections, via private ballot, during June. Newly elected CCSG members will be notified by June 30.

### **Engagement 101 at the 2017 AA AE Annual Conference in Long Beach**

LAWA's Roger Johnson, Asheville's Lew Bleiweis and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood's Mark Gale participated in our Airport Roundtable last week. The main topic of conversation was the sharing of various airport perspectives on Public-Private Partnerships (P3). Committee members who attended benefitted by learning more about several of the different flavors of P3s currently contemplated and/or underway at airports around the country. Information from this informal, interesting and interactive conversation will be included in the upcoming committee meeting notes from Long Beach.

### **Engagement 102 to Debut at the 2017 National Airports Conference in Las Vegas, Oct. 1**

Your CC Leadership Team will be comparing ideas and notes this summer for the next chapter in our committee's continuing efforts to better engage the AA AE airport membership and add value for all. We're excited and totally open for all CC membership input and suggestions. Stand by, this should be fun!

## Opinion: Confessions of a Slow Learner...or how I learned to leverage my AAAE membership

When I had my first opportunity to engage, as a product/service provider, with the AAAE membership over a dozen years ago, I was really jazzed! While having had the good fortune to spend my workaday career in and around commercial aviation—both my personal *and* professional passion—2003 was my first chance to get up close and personal with airport decision-makers from all over the country—sweet!

Okay, so there I was, a sales guy working for an innovative company with cool new technologies for airports. I jumped in head first only to find the bottom of the pool a tad sooner than I had expected (ouch). Honestly, it took me a couple years to figure out that, no matter how good our stuff was, I wasn't getting the traction I had initially expected to naturally grow organically from our AAAE membership, sponsorship and exhibition dollars. Here is what this Slow Learner finally came up with:

- If I wasn't paying attention to what keeps airport people awake at night, why should they pay attention to what we brought to the party or I had to say? Once I started sitting in on conference sessions where airport professionals did deep dives into their challenges and opportunities, I started to get it. Understanding the business issues—financial, operational, statutory and/or regulatory, etc. they were dealing with—was the piece I had been missing.
- It is an old adage for us business development types, but it's worth repeating in my opinion: Don't sell a product, solve the problem...duh! Once I became an AAAE regional and national conference recidivist, sitting in on many of the sessions instead of doing email in my exhibit hall booth, things started to change. Airport folks, whether over a cup of coffee in the morning or an adult beverage (or few) in the evening, actually started asking about what my company does. Go figure!

Flash forward to the current day: Like John Duval, Claudia Holliday, Brian Reed and others before me who have served as Chair of the Corporate Committee, I am now looking forward to making a substantive difference, along with my Vice Chair CC Wingman, Jon Faucher, in the value proposition CC members both make and receive from their investment of time, talent and money. *Yup, that's right; I said it...and money; no regrets, no apologies.*

CC membership and participation does not cost any more money than we already pay for the level of AAAE engagement our respective firms are willing to invest. Yes, it is an expense, but together we can make that expense a value proposition-investment to those people who sign our conference registration and/or sponsorship requests, as well as our paychecks. How do we do that? This Slow Learner can only pass along his hard lessons learned, first-person advice:

- Give a damn.
- Get involved.
- Stay involved.
- Add real value.
- Make a difference.

Thanks to anybody and everybody who has actually read my rant. We're looking to serve and would love to have you with us moving forward.

Respectfully – Mark Sapp, AAAE Corporate Committee Chair 2017-2019