



## President's Message

# How Does AAEM Work?

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AAEM President

*"There is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer."* — General James Doolittle

Ever wonder how volunteer organizations accomplish anything? Seems simple ... dedicated, motivated volunteers with a great work ethic who believe in a common cause. After our recent board of directors meeting and lobbying day on Capitol Hill, I sat thinking about all the people that make AAEM work, specifically the BOD, the Committees and Task Forces, Sections and Chapters, and of course our staff from EDI. Certainly for most, there's an altruistic aspect of serving their specialty and their fellow emergency physicians that motivates their participation, but I believe it's also a heartfelt dedication to AAEM's tenants of democracy, integrity, transparency, advocacy, and championing the rights of the individual emergency physician.

Following the board meeting, a relatively new BOD member mentioned that there seemed to be a significant number of controversial discussions. From my viewpoint, the discussions and decisions made were a testament to the democratic process that AAEM embodies. Four times a year, board members take time out of their busy schedules (several with brand new babies!) to meet in person and provide the expertise, insight, and leadership needed to accomplish the Academy's goals. Between meetings, each board member serves as the BOD liaison to several of our 24 committees/task forces, helping them formulate and accomplish the specific goals and objectives the BOD and the Committees collaboratively developed. Every other month the five members of the Executive Committee have a conference call, to discuss ongoing AAEM business and issues. Meanwhile the Committees and Task Forces are constantly working to move the mission of AAEM forward. All of this work requires support services, and year-in and year-out, our EDI staff have provided AAEM with a level of expertise and dedication second to none.

As an example of what the board actually does during a BOD meeting and as a brief update, let me review some agenda items and decisions from December. And by the way, please remember to vote in the upcoming BOD election.

With an eye to fiduciary responsibility and to maximize the impact of our members' dues, the BOD focused on developing a more austere budget for 2017 that will provide AAEM with the financial freedom to accomplish new projects in coming years. To further this end, a waste reduction task force was formed that will identify ways to streamline staff work and improve efficiency and productivity.

The Marketing Task Force, led by Megan Healy, reviewed options for a new logo, slogan, and tag line. We will shortly be asking the membership to weigh in on several excellent options.

Ideas for presenting our due process agenda to the new leaders at HHS, CMS, and DOJ were formulated with our advocacy partner in Washington, Williams and Jensen.

With the tremendous success that Bob Stuntz and the Social Media Committee have already had in expanding AAEM's social media

footprint, and with a focus on expansion of this strategic plan initiative, the BOD approved the funding for an additional staff FTE to support social media.



The BOD reviewed the plans for all educational meetings, including MEMC and AAEM17, and approved funding for several new initiatives at Scientific Assembly aimed at member wellness and mentorship. Come to the Scientific Assembly, it's going to be a phenomenal meeting!

On the heels of the successful formation of the Critical Care Section, the BOD approved the development of an Ultrasound Section.

I could go on with the remainder of the three-page agenda, but you get the idea. It's clear that the success and productivity of the Academy depends on the volunteers who serve on the BOD, our Committees/Task Forces, and our Sections and Chapters, as well as on our professional support staff from EDI. The Academy, myself in particular, owe those volunteers and our dedicated staff a debt of gratitude. Next time you see an EDI staff member, a Committee/TF/Section/Chapter chair/member, or a BOD member you know or who has been helpful to you — take a moment to say thank you and feel free to share any feedback or new ideas you have for the Academy.

### Take Home Points

Come to Scientific Assembly — Hats off to the AAEM17 Planning Subcommittee, who did an incredible job of crafting yet another state of the art meeting.

Our members are the Academy's lifeblood — without your involvement AAEM grinds to a halt. In order to focus on the individual practitioners of EM and their expanding needs, our committees must be strong. Please do not underestimate the value of your potential contribution. We need your brain power, your expertise, your service, your involvement, and your infectious energy. Two heads are better than one, and three better than two. This is your opportunity to "pay it forward" and improve the services AAEM members enjoy. Join a committee or task force today!

Don't forget to participate in democracy and vote in the BOD election, and if possible please attend the town hall session at the Scientific Assembly.

Finally, remember how much a little thank you means! I realize that a significant number of our members only interact with our staff via email or telephone. I want everyone to be able to put a face with those names, so I asked Executive Director Kay Whalen to provide us with a poster of our incredible EDI staff. If you're in Orlando, make sure to stop by the registration desk and say thanks! ■

### AAEM Antitrust Compliance Plan:

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