FLORIDA SOCIETY OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS
TASK FORCE REPORT: MEETINGS ANALYSIS
January 26, 2013

At the last regular meeting of the FSMA Executive Council, a task force was created to address the issue of State seminars/meetings. Concern was being expressed that there were repeated financial losses. Treasurer Mary Lou Allison, CMA-C(AAMA) projected the revenue expense figures for the prior 2 year period. The charge was to analyze event and make recommendation(s).

The Task Force A.M.O.S. (analyze meetings/offer solutions) started the project by establishing priorities, gathering available data and discussing assumptive issues such as impact of economy, changing member market, etc.. Over riding consideration was the changing volunteer market and whether changes to what we already do would have any impact. Opinion exchanges was requested for a variety of issues including but not limited to: registration fees and discounts, frequency of moving meetings/locations, importance of what factors when choosing locations, Chapter involvement experience, attendee analysis, revenue/expense, contract issues, eliminating some/all state seminars, competition of Chapter held meetings at same time as State meetings, recycled topics, financial and time element burdens to Executive Council, volunteer market changes, importance/non importance of onsite business meetings/are there alternatives and most importantly are we capable of introducing flexibility to anticipate volunteer market changes vs reactive "fixes".

All task force members understood that the State Society seminars were not viewed as a revenue source, and that break even as often as possible was to be attempted thru "smart" decisions meant to minimize loss.

Mary Lou Allison, Treasurer provided financials and the income/expense report as follows:

IMPORTANT: Please note the numbers reflect all income/expense and not just registration or attendee related. Examples: Speakers' Fees vary, office supplies vary, the Annual Meeting includes additional income from raffles/store

Meeting	Income	Expense	Profit/Loss	Location
09-10				
Fall	1630.	1957.	(327.05)	Orlando
Winter	1900.	2280.11	(380.11)	Orlando
Annual	8715.	7583.30	+113.17	Orlando
10-11				
Fall	2365.	2430.53	(65.53)	Orlando
Winter	2645.	2663.62	(18.62)	Tampa
Annual	8610.	7867.08	+242.92	Orlando
11-12				
Fall	2615.	2425.51	+189.49	Jacksonville
Winter	1685.	2837.80	(1152.80)	Tampa
Annual	5577.50	5449.08	+128.42	Orlando
12-13				
Fall	2943.	3259.90	(316.90)	Port St Lucie

The Task Force eliminated the Annual Meeting stats from further studies as it differs from the other meetings; exampled by added sources of revenue, cost and contract enhancements from length of stay.

Marsha Benedict, Ruth Lapio provided the attendance stats as follows:

	10-15-11 Jacksonville:	1-14-12 Tampa:	4-20-12 Orlando:	10-13-2012
Total Attendees	50	35	44	64
Members	30	33	28	33
Students	13	1	15	23
Student Member	1	-	-	6
Educators	6	-	-	
Non Member	-	-	-	2
First Timer	-	2	-	6

It was established that the underlying priority intent of State meetings is service to members. This purpose remains consistent with The Task Force suggestions to upgrade the State Meetings service ability. The secondary purpose is introduction of Society to students and potential new members. It was also agreed that we should "break even" as often as possible and that there is always a potential for a slight loss due to gross attendance, and when determined an underserved area needs the support.

In order to minimize loss and achieve purpose of meetings the key considerations are location (proximity to potential attendee population), hotel contract and seminar promotion in combination with reasonable registration fees.

Marketing experts state that once value is established, the motivation is easy access, time and cost. Value of seminars are interpreted differently by age, position, experience, finances, time available, etc.. Also, CEUs are available in a multitude of other formats, at times Chapters and State compete with meetings at the same time; networking is not considered a priority value to a millennium generation; topics are repeated multiple times in short time frames. The effort to gain new members and new student members thru state seminars has minimal if any success.

CONCLUSION:

- **The statistics assisted, but did not reveal a common issue as there are many variables. They do however support that the seminars are a service to membership. The available statistics did not reveal detriment relative to moving the meetings. Early indication is that attendance is increasing. While higher losses are usually directly related to low attendance, what we are looking at for the most part are food, contract penalties and increase in speaker fees. For future reference, it should be noted that the attendee mix can also be a determining factor when the discounted fee registrations are disproportionately higher than the member fee registrants.**

- **Financial/attendance data indicates the potential for continued losses at Winter Mtg.**

- **Continue to move location of State meetings to service members while keeping the Annual Meeting in Orlando.**

- **Establish a formal meetings co-manage/team environment with Chapters.**

- **Minimize per meeting losses while enhancing attendance with an emphasis on the "home field advantage", request of Chapters in that region to schedule Chapter meetings that do not compete with State meeting. Emphasize importance of fresh topics to encourage locals into hearing something new.**

- **An opportunity is now presented to conduct the business of the Society in a timely fashion with a conference/media method. We can start with a conference call and consider advancing to more sophisticated method of web AV conferencing if we can justify a return on investment. There would be an expense involved however there is the possibility of reaching a different member population who would choose to participate via teleconference. The vehicle needs to be a "use based" system vs. a monthly charge or at least minimal monthly charge. This Task Force briefly reviewed the available systems and this appears to be possible.**

- **Clearly define the empowerment, authority and lines of communication of State Chairs and Chapter Chairs. However, State Meetings Coordinator should remain the one who contracts and has all authority related to hotel to maintain cost integrity.**

- **Cooperate, communicate and celebrate Chapter involvement to create local value for those considering attendance/membership. Start seminar promotion in that region earlier.**

- **Encourage Chapter involvement with agreed upon onsite Ways and Means event with Chapter retention of profit. It would be understood that no related expense including gratis attendance/meals would be incurred by State.**

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Eliminate the Winter Meeting to minimize loss and reduce overburden of resources and avoid interfering with Chapter Holiday events. The choice to eliminate this meeting over other was secondary to "seasonal" rates and availability of hotels, assumed increased workloads in healthcare offices during season, school breaks and post holiday syndromes.**

RECOMMENDATION:

- **There being no further business, dissolve the Task Force A.M.O.S.**

This Task Force Chair and members thank Marketing Committee member Mary Morris for input and Ruth Lapio for providing registration information.

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