

SRRERSSA ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING NOTES

July 13, 2007
Morganton, NC

Present: North Carolina: Christine Barrier, Ann Dalton, Melissa Lynch, Tracy E. Brown, Teresa Story, Mary Sue Wright-Baker, Marilyn Y. Gore, Chris Austin, Faye Black, Martha Smith, Kim Gibson, Kay Morton, Leeann Crump, Devona Beard, Melanie Storey, Jean Sigmon, Alice Pennix, Fran Little, Joyce Dorsey, Donna Fulp (**presiding**) and Carol Horne; **South Carolina:** Tammy P. Morton; **Louisiana:** Mary Baronet; **West Virginia:** Gloria Collett; **Mississippi:** Joyce Thompson, Denise Coleman, Marilyn Walters, Colleen Butler, Glenda Jenkins and Sharon Smith. **Facilitator:** Mitchell B. Owens.

Meeting called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Donna Fulp.

She welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to the first ever meeting to form the new association. Our goal for the day was to have some type of association in place by the time the meeting was over. She introduced Dr. Mitchell B. Owens, Director, Personal & Organizational Development, NC Cooperative Extension Service. He is here to help us lay the foundation for the new association.

Mitch explained how he liked to facilitate things in meetings by breaking up into groups, etc. His goal as facilitator was to take us as far into the planning process as we could go and to keep us on task.

He asked that we go around the room and introduce ourselves and tell a unique detail about ourselves. He explained that our ability to understand each other would come from learning about each other.

He gave us a list of questions to answer in small groups that would help us to make good decisions about how to form the association into the best one that it could be.

Each state reported on how many members their association had, how administration supports us, what types of professional development that we do, how fundraising is handled, how communications are achieved, and a few accomplishments of the state associations.

Mitch introduced Marilyn Gore of JCEP who talked to us about how to handle meetings, etc. at the national level. JCEP is the Joint Council of Extension Professionals. She shared the purpose, goals, and strategic plan of this group and how they might help us. She also shared a copy of the group's by-laws.

A question was asked as to how dues were paid. She said that they were paid to the state level and then a set portion of those dues were sent to the national office. She also suggested using a Management Copy to form the national association. It helps with how to collect and handle dues and other items.

Before taking a break, we were given an assignment to come up with three things that we would like to have accomplished by the end of the day. We were also asked to list any concerns that we might have so that we could address them.

SRRERSSA ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING NOTES

July 13, 2007
Morganton, NC

Some concerns listed were how to collect dues, what would the dues be, how to engage retirees, and several others. One major concern was who would sign checks because one state's employees had been asked to sign a statement that they would not sign checks for any associations as long as they were state employees.

It was suggested that we keep in mind the amount of time it takes to be a regional or national officer. Some administrators might not want you to spend that kind of time on a regional/national project. Meetings should be self-supporting if possible.

Some of the goals that we wanted to accomplish by days end were by-laws, membership, dues, communication, location and time of the first annual meeting. We were broken up into groups and given different tasks. These tasks were to work on a mission statement, by-laws, meeting location and time, officers and dues.

What are the three most important things that we would want the association to do? Two of the biggest concerns are funding and support from Administration.

A couple of the main goals of the association would be to garner respect for our profession and to help members develop a professional reputation nationwide.

The question of who the association benefits should be settled now before we start writing the by-laws. This would cover us as to who can be considered for membership.

Some states include program assistants in their membership as well as the administrative assistants. Meetings could be adjusted as to program content to include these personnel as well in the membership of the association. A fee structure will be developed that can include program assistants and research associates as well as the administrative assistants.

It was decided that the focus of the group would be on administrative assistants and associates at the regional level. Differences across the states would be managed via a fee schedule. It would then be up to the different personnel as to whether or not they participated in the association or not.

It was decided that the wording of "support staff" would be used instead of restricting it to Administrative Assistants and Associates.

Group was split up to work on mission statement, organizational structure, location of first annual meeting that would be equal traveling distance for all and a timeframe for this meeting, and outline of by-laws.

Mission Statement developed was "The Southern Regional Extension and Research Support Staff Association will improve the lives and careers of members by providing one voice to improve the development of Extension and Research across the Southern Region through professional recognition, networking with states, Administrative Advocacy, and professional and personal improvement." This is not the final draft of this and will be revised as needed.

SRERSSA ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING NOTES

July 13, 2007
Morganton, NC

Officers to be elected would be President, Vice President, Administrative Liaison (one per state), Recording Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, and Webmaster. These interim officers would represent us until we can elect officers at the first meeting. **By-laws** would be sent to the state association sixty days prior to the organizational meeting. If approved by state members, a state member would attend and vote in favor of the by-laws, must be a member of both to do so. Who may join: any current member of any a state association. **Dues:** paid annually and date due will be set in the by-laws. Discrimination statement would follow along the lines of what's on everyone's letterhead. **Classes of membership:** Active, Retiree, and Honorary. Voting would be done by Active and Retiree members and requires a quorum of 50% plus one. Meetings would be one annual meeting per year. Officers would rotate by state and state rotation needs to be set either alphabetically or by drawing names from a pool. President/Vice President can not be from the same state. Names would be drawn from the states that are actively participating in the association. Committees would consist of both standing and as needed. All states should be represented. Standing committees would be awards, annual meeting, membership, budget and finance, and constitution and by-laws. Sub committee for annual meeting would be professional development, activities and events. **Dissolution of association:** Would be determined by by-laws but we recommend equal disbursement of funds to each state association if there should come a time that association is dissolved. Parliamentary procedure would follow Robert's Rules of order. Amendments would be presented 30 days prior to annual meeting at which time they would be voted on. Amendments can only be made at the annual meeting and would have to pass with a quorum of 50% plus one. Retirees can be voting members and can serve on committees. Question was asked as to whether retirees could serve as an officer.

Planning Committee: The dates of July 9-11, 2008 at either the University of Georgia, Athens, GA or University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN were presented. It was determined that these dates weren't good for everyone due to camps, fairs, horse/cattle/sheep shows, etc. Several other dates were thrown out for consideration. Planning committee was to get together later and let us know what the plan would be. A list of email addresses was gathered for this purpose. For professional improvement, it was suggested that each state would present a workshop. Administration would also be included in order to facilitate a question and answer session if they had concerns. Several possible themes for the meeting were put before the group: "Stepping Out – Moving on Up", "New Beginnings – New Frontiers", "Blazing New Trails", "Bigger and Better", "New Gateways to 2008" or "Branching Out". If you have any ideas for themes, email them to Kay Morton.

Plans for the future: by-laws would be developed. First meeting would be the official election of officers and acceptance of the by-laws. A name has been established along with a mission statement. By-laws committee needs to incorporate information about budget into the plan.

Nominations were taken from those attending and an election of interim officers was held. Interim officers elected were President – Donna Fulp, NC; Vice President – Mary Baronet, LA; Recording Secretary – Tammy Morton, SC; Membership Secretary – Glenda Jenkins, MS; Treasurer – Gloria Collett, WV; and Webmaster – Tracy E. Brown, NC. Each state was to go to administration and ask for help appointing an administrative liaison from each state.

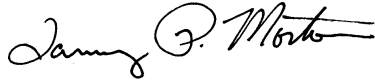
SRRSSA ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING NOTES

July 13, 2007
Morganton, NC

Committee assignments were made by sign-up before the meeting was adjourned. An invitation to the North Carolina Association meeting in September was issued before everyone left.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tammy P. Morton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Tammy P. Morton
Interim Recording Secretary