Oklahoma Academy of Physician Associates
March 2026 Board Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2026; 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Via Zoom

Board Members Present: Don Guthrie, Jeff Burke, Jeanine Smith, Audra Ball, Christy Niehues, Johnnie Gilpen, Melissa Loftis, Keith Plummer, Helga Price, Nicole Mason (entered the meeting at 7:23 pm), Sam Simmons, President, Student Advisory Committee

Board Members Not Present: Krista Barnes, Jennifer Putnam, Courtney Patin, Elizabeth DiSalvatore, Brendan Reiman – Student Representative

Others Present: Jan Loftis, Tyler Powell, Don Flinn, Susan Thomas, Audrey Poole, Tamara Brown, Abigail Rupp – Student Representative, Will Parker – Student Representative, Taryn Vaught – Student Representative

I. **Call to Order**
   - **Don Guthrie calls the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.**

II. **Approval of Agenda**
   - **Motion to approve the agenda made by Jeff Burke; Christy Niehues seconds. All approved. Motion passes.**

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. January 5, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes
2. February 3, 2026 Special Board Meeting Minutes
3. Student Reports

- **Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Jeff Burke; Christy Niehues seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.**

IV. Reports

1. Legislative & Governmental Affairs – Keith Plummer, Jan Loftis
    - Clean-up bill is moving along. Speaker of the House has put his name on the bill and Senator Rowe will hear it in committee. This will run before the deadline of Thursday, March 5th.
    - The Oklahoma Medical Board is taking care of passing the permanent rules through the legislator this year. There is no need for a grassroots effort. Sandra Harrison, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Medical Board, will let us know if they are in need of help getting the rules through the legislature.
    - Bills to watch:
        - HB 3784 regarding micro pigmentation. Changing the wording to independent practitioner and will include PAs.
        - SB 1836 regarding mental health screenings by PCPs and what the screening tool would be. PAs would provide that screening if they are a PCP.
    - ASEP – Put out a white letter stating that no APP should treat a patient in the ER without a physician on-site that is board certified and ER trained. They are trying to push this onto legislators and have gotten it passed in two states. They have been pushing this for years. We will keep an eye on the situation.

2. PAPAC – Audra Ball, Nicole Mason
    - A total of $14,500 in campaign checks went out in January of 2026.
    - The OAPA newsletter went out in February. In the newsletter we encouraged members to donate $10 a month to PAPAC.
        - Results from the newsletter PAPAC ask: one-time donation of $500, and a monthly donation of $120 were received.
    - The Gooden Group will work with PAPAC chairs to develop a PAPAC PR donations push.

3. CME Committee – Christy Niehues, Susan Thomas
    - The contract for V-Cube and Core Apps was sent to the board ahead of the meeting to review. The CME Committee voted to approve these contracts. There were no questions or change requests to the contracts.
    - **Motion from the CME Committee to approve the V-Cube contract. All in favor. Motion passes.**
    - **Motion from the CME Committee to approve the Core App contract. All in favor. Motion passes.**

4. Executive Director Report – Susan Thomas
    - Introduced Tamara Brown as the new OAPA employee and Membership Coordinator.
    - Introduced Will Parker as the new student representative for OSU.
    - The website crashed in December of 2025 and January of 2026 due to an increase in traffic that the shared server could not handle. Back40 recommended moving over to a dedicate server for the OAPA. This would increase our monthly fee to Back40 from $75 to $300.
        - **Motion to approve increasing the Back40 monthly budget to $300 for our own server and coming from savings if needed, made by Keith Plummer; Helga Price seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.**
    - Last year, during conference registration, we had several payment issues. We are working with Back40 to fix those issues before conference registration goes up this year. However, we would like to fix the payment issue at the same time we do the website updates.
    - Discussed what conferences OAPA should attend.
        - We will not attend the OOA conference.
        - We will attend the PLICO conference. However, there is no information out for their 2026 conference. Susan will check with PLICO to see if they are doing a conference this year.
        - Susan will check with OAFP for more information on their conference.
    - The OAPA Board Retreat is April 25-26. Susan is needing confirmation on who will be staying overnight so she can confirm rooms.

5. Social Committee – Christy Niehues
    - We are planning a Thunder Tulsa Night Social for Friday March 27th, 6:30 – 9:30pm. We are looking at locations along the riverwalk. We will socialize and watch the Thunder game.
    - For the conference reception we are looking at singo, karaoke, or dueling pianos.
    - There will not be a Legislative Reception this year unless Jan Loftis feels there is a need.

6. PR Committee – Helga Price
    - The PR Committee met last Wednesday, February 25th and discussed the following:
        - Extending the Gooden Group contract to April 30th in order to complete more PR push items and use the rest of our contracted funds.

- We are working with Mega Media to pitch a story to AAPA regarding Oklahoma being a model state.
- The committee decided to do testimonials for the Gooden Group. These would be written testimonials. Gooden Group quoted 6.5k – 8k for video testimonials if we wanted to do that.
- Mega Media put together topics to pitch to news stations each month. We will help find PAs to fill those slots.
- Mega Media put together talking points for the OAPA. (These were sent to the board prior to the meeting) The committee was good with all of the talking points except any that talked about ratios. Those will be removed.
- Audrey Poole and Tamara Brown put together a monthly staff driven social, emailing, and texting PR plan. (This plan was sent to the board prior to the meeting). The committee was in approval for the plan.
- The OAPA staff requested discretion on sharing social posts and newsworthy items from AAPA and the PA Programs. The committee made a motion to allow them discretion and that motion passed.
    - **Motion from the PR Committee to allow the staff discretion to post on social media PA newsworthy items from AAPA and PA programs. All in favor. Motion passes.**
- The PA Historical Society reached out to Audrey and requested PR history items that the OAPA has. The PR Committee motioned and passed for the PA History Society access to our oral history PR items.
    - **Motion from the PR Committee to allow the PA History Society to have access to our oral PR items. All in favor. Motion passes.**
- Newsletter went out in February and it went great.

7. Student Affairs Committee – Elizabeth DiSalvatore
    - No report – Chair was not present for meeting.

8. Governance Committee – Don Guthrie
    - The proposed ballot the Governance Committee approved was sent to the board prior to the meeting for review.
        - **Motion from the Governance Committee to approve the Ballot as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.**

9. Financial Affairs Committee – Krista Barnes
    - Krista was not present for the meeting. Don Guthrie went over the December financials that was given to the board prior to the meeting.
        - **Motion to approve the December Financials made by Keith Plummer; Jeff Burke seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.**

V. New Business

- Johnnie Gilpen requested that the OKIPA link to join be updated.
    - Audrey Poole and Don Guthrie are working with OKIPA to get their membership portal up and running. Once that is ready, the link will go out to the OAPA membership.
- Johnnie Gilpen stated there is a lack of communication with the OU PAs and Form 5.
    - The OAPA has sent out several emails and notifications regarding Form 5. The Medical Board has done so as well.

VI. Old Business

- None

Adjourn – 8:09 pm

- **Motion to adjourn made by Keith Plummer; Melissa Loftis seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.**