



TO: APTA Board of Directors Members

FROM: Michael J. Scanlon 
Chair

DATE: November 30, 2010

SUBJECT: **APTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RETREAT REPORT**

Your new executive committee recently held its annual retreat to plan for the year ahead and to discuss policy issues affecting the association. We had an excellent meeting and I write to report to you on some of the key issues discussed and actions taken.

Selection of the Next APTA President

With Bill Millar's announcement last month that he does not want to renew his employment contract when it expires on October 31, 2011, the executive committee held extensive discussion and outlined a draft process for recruiting the next APTA President. The process is set forth in the following paragraphs for your review and comment.

To ensure the entire APTA Board of Directors has the benefit of your comments, please post them to the forum discussion entitled [Selecting the Next APTA President](#) at the board's collaboration page.

Central to the selection process will be a presidential selection task force appointed by the chair and consisting of nine to 11 members, with most coming from the board. Our intent is to appoint a diverse and balanced task force with strong knowledge of APTA, the association's work, and the president's role in that work.

The executive committee has recommended that we employ an executive search firm to assist the task force. The task force itself will be asked to work with the APTA staff to draft criteria to select a suitable search firm. Our intent is to utilize a non-APTA member search firm to avoid any perception of favoring one APTA member firm over others and, most importantly, to avoid any appearance of conflicts of interest.

The task force will be asked to review the role of the APTA President and, in consultation with Bill Millar, update the president's job description. We anticipate the APTA President continuing to serve in a CEO-style role. The task force will develop appropriate criteria and weights to be used in matching candidates against the updated job description.

Executive Committee

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President

William Millar

The executive committee does not believe Bill should serve as a member of the task force but, he has assured us of his willingness to assist the task force as it carries out its work, if it so desires. APTA's chief counsel and vice president-corporate affairs, Jim LaRusch, will provide the administrative support and serve as a resource for the task force. We determined that the task force should interview key APTA staff members to help identify the qualities that have led to Bill's success and the cohesive teamwork that characterizes the staff's everyday efforts.

We believe it extremely important to avoid a time lapse between Bill and his successor and have drafted an aggressive timeline in an effort to guard against that possibility. The first step in our draft process is to receive your comments, no later than December 15, about it.

We will make adjustments and further consultations as necessary based on your comments and I expect to appoint the task force no later than January 7, 2011.

Once the board member comments are received and incorporated into the final process, the APTA staff will begin to seek expressions of interest from executive search firms to allow the task force to start work immediately on the search firm selection process. Our target date for completing that selection and contracting with a search firm is February 18.

The task force will be asked to develop the updated job description and presidential selection criteria in January and February, working with the executive search firm in the final weeks of that process.

The recruitment phase of the plan will commence in March with a slate of candidates presented to the task force by April 29.

Candidate interviews will be conducted by the task force through May 27, and the final candidate(s) should be interviewed by June 10. The task force will be asked to make its selection and commence contract negotiations by June 30, and we hope to present the final candidate and employment terms to the full board for its approval about July 15, 2011.

With the limited number of APTA Board of Directors meetings between now and July 15, 2011, we believe the task force and executive committee must be in regular communication with the full board throughout the process. We have identified the following points and target dates in the process to provide board updates, with other updates as necessary:

- Appointment of the task force – January 7, 2011.
- Selection of an executive search firm – February 18, 2011.
- Draft job attributes and characteristics open for board comments – approximately March 1, 2011, until March 11, 2011, with final discussion at the March 12 board of directors meeting.
- Candidate interviews in process/status – May 13, 2011.
- Final candidates selected and interviewed – June 10, 2011.

Confidentiality is absolutely essential for a successful process. The task force will be directed to maintain strict confidentiality of the names of candidates throughout the process and to schedule interviews for times and places that protect that confidentiality.

Finally, we must prohibit lobbying the task force to preserve the integrity of our selection process.

Please post your comments on this draft plan to our forum discussion entitled [Selecting the Next APTA President](#) at the board's collaboration page at your first opportunity and, in any case, prior to December 15.

Now, let me turn to other issues we dealt with during the retreat.

Legislative Strategy

We spent substantial time reviewing APTA's legislative strategy and any course corrections we may have to make in light the recent elections. While we recognize some of our authorization recommendations should be stressed more than others, we do not believe any substantive changes to our adopted authorization recommendations ("the green book") are in order at this time. We also reviewed our research, communications, and advocacy strategy, with emphasis on our continued press for authorization and outreach to the incoming Congress, particularly new members.

APTA Governance

We also continued to work on APTA's governance transition, reviewing and commenting on the drafts prepared by the board's working group on its expectations and work plan. The executive committee provided a number of recommendations for the working group's consideration on the APTA Board of Directors' role in association governance and relationship with its executive committee, the strategic issues for the board in the coming years, and the board's communication and collaboration model. We are pleased to report that the executive committee and working group's thoughts on these vital topics are strongly aligned and believe our association will benefit greatly from our bold shift in governance models.

There were two recommendations from the working group and joined by the executive committee concerning our meeting schedule. The first was to schedule a **virtual** meeting of the APTA Board of Directors for **Friday, January 7, 2011, starting at noon**. This meeting will provide a forum to discuss and adopt the working group's recommendations, and to announce the members of our presidential selection task force. Please mark your calendars now and plan to join this virtual meeting. The APTA staff will send out additional information including call-in numbers and agenda materials as we get closer to the meeting date.

The second scheduling recommendation was to move the date of the next face-to-face meeting of the APTA Board of Directors to **Saturday, March 12, 2011, starting at noon in Washington, DC**. We collectively believe that the board's new role cannot be adequately served in the short session time available in the usual Sunday time slot and have decided to move it to the longer Saturday time slot traditionally occupied by the executive committee meeting.

Other Items

As is customary at the annual retreat, the executive committee conducted its mid-year performance review of our president, Bill Millar, and concluded he continues to perform his duties in an outstanding manner.

Finally, I am extremely pleased to report that on our final afternoon in New Orleans, your executive committee, senior staff, spouses, and significant others worked to ease the suffering of the people of New Orleans. Facing the national disgrace of hundreds of families' homes still uninhabitable five years after Katrina, we worked with the St. Bernard Project to help in restoring just a few of those homes. The experience of helping people with nowhere else to turn was deeply moving and put all of our personal problems in perspective. I hope we can replicate that experience as a board and an association when we go to New Orleans next October for the APTA Annual Conference and EXPO 2011. For now, please visit the project's web site at www.stbernardproject.org to learn more about the work and get motivated to help out next year.

As you can see from this report, we had a very substantive and productive retreat. The members of your executive committee are committed to the difficult tasks ahead and are looking forward to serving our association over the coming year.

If you have any questions regarding our retreat deliberations, please do not hesitate to contact APTA President Bill Millar or me. Please make your plans now to attend both the APTA Board of Directors virtual meeting at noon, January 7, 2011, and our face-to-face meeting at noon on March 12, 2011 in Washington, DC. Information to assist you in making your travel plans for the 2011 Legislative Conference, March 13-15, 2011 is at www.apta.com/mc/2011/Pages/Legislative.