

american **CAMP** association™  
Committee Meeting Notes

1. Committee Name: Public Policy Committee
2. Committee Chair: Sharon Kosch
3. Meeting Dates: October 25, 2004
4. Meeting Location: Washington, D.C. – Various locations
5. Role Call:

**Committee Members Present:** Sharon Kosch, Chair; Jane Sanborn; and Steve Sudduth

**Staff Present:** Peg L. Smith (via phone for first meeting), Rachel Williams and Susan E. Yoder

6. Discussion and Actions:

**A. Visit to Mike Johnson, OBC:** The group met with Johnson for advice on counsel on re-igniting federal public policy efforts. Johnson shared that ACA needs to do two things:

1. Build an alliance of permanent friends in DC.
2. Develop visible advocates for camp in Congress.

Concerning Criminal Background Checks, Johnson advised that we:

1. Develop a public policy crisis management plan before we need it.
2. Consider working in the next Congress to get Biden's bill reintroduced.
3. Consider working to introduce a resolution to have the Justice Department call a national conference of state attorneys-general to iron out the issues around a national registry of criminal records that would allow nationwide access to fingerprint based checks.

Smith shared with Johnson our needs:

1. The need for occasional on-the-ground federal public policy assistance.
2. Help in building "permanent friends."
3. Help in developing a public policy crisis management plan that uses our current situation with camp # 39898 as a case study.

In response to Smith, Johnson had the following suggestions:

1. We should not have sporadic counsel. In fact he shared that he would be unable to offer sporadic counsel – but would require a more full-time presence.

2. Consider full time counsel – perhaps with a firm that is less expensive than OBC.
3. Consider beefing up our alliances with associations that have companion issues – they could then give us the “inside” information that we lack.

When asked about what associations ACA might ally with, Johnson gave the following suggestions:

1. Associations that have a reputation for success in public policy.
2. Associations that have a reputation for being constituent focused.
3. Associations that have a membership structure that would allow ACA to be a “player”.
4. Associations with issue compatibility.

The group discussed the challenges of managing relationships with other alliances and associations. They recognized the significant time involved in managing those relationships, attending meetings, and being active overall.

Yoder discussed with Johnson that a learning experience for ACA will be to talk with other organizations in similar situations (non-DC based, but national in scope) that have had public policy success – to learn how they do their work. **Johnson said he would forward the names of a few associations he feels are successful in federal public policy efforts to Yoder.** He offered two as beginning examples – the International Hair Salon Association, and the National Association of School Administrators. Sudduth shared examples of alliances that the Maine Youth Camp Director’s Association has. **The group discussed the need to find out what other alliances the Sections have already fostered.**

The group discussed with Johnson the benchmarking study that has just been completed. **Johnson suggested that the benchmarking data needed to be analyzed with an eye for what could be used from a public policy perspective.**

Johnson also offered an additional perspective about how we can be successful with federal public policy efforts:

1. Educate our members about what we are doing with public policy and why it should be important to them and their camp.

**B. Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange:** Kosch and Yoder met with Sherri Powar of the Alliance. Powar shared the recent work of the Alliance related to J1 Visas. Powar is going to mail us our options for membership in the Alliance. Kosch and Yoder reviewed their work and plan to make a recommendation to the Committee that we consider becoming re-involved with the Alliance because they could help keep us current on immigration issues and advocate for issues of relevance to the international camp counselor and camp staff programs.

**C. US Forest Service:** Sanborn, Sudduth, and Williams met with the US Forest Service. Sanborn will provide notes.

**D. Overview of Issues:** After all the meetings, the group got together to strategize about next steps and preparation for a committee teleconference. The following next steps were agreed upon:

1. Get the benchmark data analyzed with an eye for public policy (Smith, Kosch)
2. Work on developing a public policy crisis response plan about the background checks issue (Kosch, Smith, Yoder, Johnson?)
3. Analyze the results of the election (after Nov 2) and how our public policy efforts will be affected (all, Johnson?)
4. Re-inventory the sections – who they know, what alliances they have (Kosch, Yoder, Smith)
5. Develop a competency list for legislative chairs, and public policy committee members (Kosch, et al.)
6. Review public lands statement for new revision (Sanborn, Sudduth)
7. Develop a plan for better tracking of our public policy efforts (Yoder, Williams, Kosch)
8. Contact committee to set up a teleconference (Kosch)
9. Develop agenda for teleconference (Kosch, Yoder)

#### **7. Summary of Items Requiring Action By Staff:**

- A. Prepare meeting notes (**Yoder**)
- B. Get the benchmark data analyzed with an eye for public policy (**Smith, Kosch**)
- C. Work on developing a public policy crisis response plan about the background checks issue (Kosch, **Smith, Yoder**, Johnson?)
- D. Re-inventory the sections – who they know, what alliances they have (Kosch, **Yoder, Smith**)
- E. Develop a plan for better tracking of our public policy efforts (**Yoder, Williams, Kosch**)
- F. Develop agenda for teleconference (Kosch, **Yoder**)

#### **8. Summary of Assignments to Committee Members:**

- A. Get the benchmark data analyzed with an eye for public policy (Smith, **Kosch**)
- B. Work on developing a public policy crisis response plan about the background checks issue (**Kosch**, Smith, Yoder, Johnson?)
- C. Analyze the results of the election (after Nov 2) and how our public policy efforts will be affected (**all**, Johnson?)
- D. Re-inventory the sections – who they know, what alliances they have (**Kosch**, Yoder, Smith)
- E. Develop a competency list for legislative chairs, and public policy committee members (**Kosch**, et al.)

- F. Review public lands statement for new revision (**Sanborn, Sudduth**)
- G. Develop a plan for better tracking of our public policy efforts (Yoder, Williams, **Kosch**)
- H. Contact committee to set up a teleconference (**Kosch**)
- I. Develop agenda for teleconference (**Kosch**, Yoder)

- 9. **Summary of Motions:** None
- 10. **Next Meeting:** To be determined, Fall 2004 Teleconference
- 11. **Notes Submitted by:** Susan E. Yoder  
October 28, 2004