



Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.

Informational Memo Pursuant to Motion C2009.03

OVERVIEW

Conference Motion 2009.03 states: RID conduct a formal investigation on remote meeting access (including voting processes) to ensure maximum member input and report back to the membership for a vote...and have a system in place for the 2011 Conference.”

Please note: You are strongly encouraged to print out this memo, and have it handy when you vote for the options presented below.

Summary Comments and Financial Implications

There is no doubt that incorporating any of the options below would advance the role of technology in RID processes. These changes would create a positive impact throughout the membership – not the least of which would be increased member input and an increase in member satisfaction in regards to both benefits and the member role in the governance of the association.

The options with technology today are enticing, but unfortunately, many are costly. Funds have yet to be allocated for any of these programs. However, there is ongoing discussion about a variety of funding options. If these items are approved by the membership, it is guaranteed that conference registration for 2011 will increase substantially, in addition to the standard conference-to-conference increase at RID, and common in the association community as a whole.

No matter which option is decided upon, this topic will be reviewed after the 2011 RID National Conference for validity of purpose, as well as expenditures and a future funding review. For example, to conduct voting in the Business Meeting via Audience Response Systems (ARS), and on-line, as well as the webcasting, would cost, at a minimum, approximately \$100,000, and could exceed \$150,000, depending on options utilized. This money would be generated through a strikingly increased conference registration fee. It is not a feasible option to only charge those utilizing the on-line service, as they would be viewing the business meeting of their professional organization.

Opinion Statements

Statement: RID Board of Directors: We strongly support implementing systems that allow for maximum member input in the business of RID. However, at this time, we believe that these options warrant further investigation and are not financially feasible for the upcoming 2011 conference. We have directed the national office to continue research that will implement appropriate technological systems for the 2013 conference.

Statement: RID National Office: We agree that these options would be positive additions to the conference and membership programs. However, the fiscal implications are too great, and we are unable to support them at this time. We would like planning to begin now to incorporate these items, in whole or part, for the 2013 National Conference.



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ITEM 1 - Audience Response System (ARS)

Each person attending the Business Meeting would utilize an audience response system (ARS) – a handheld voting device that is similar to a small calculator – to vote during the business meetings.

Cost Analysis: Seven companies were solicited. Bids ranged from \$17,000 - \$48,221. This cost is for rental and use of equipment. It would be much more expensive in the long run to purchase the equipment and software due to maintenance fees. In addition, purchasing equipment would not allow for the use of the most up-to-date technology year after year.

Comment: The professionalism, accuracy, speed, and ease of use of ARS would be a benefit to the RID business meetings. In just a few seconds, with the press of a button, results would be tabulated and displayed at the front of the room, enhancing the member experience at conference. RID is disappointed in the cost of this system. While industry trends speculate these costs will notably drop in the future, the systems are still relatively expensive.

ITEM 2 - Live webcasting of business meetings

Cost Analysis: Three companies were solicited. Bids ranged from \$7,000 - \$50,000. This estimate does not include the estimated \$2,500 per month to store the videos on the RID Web site, post-meeting; for six months, that would be an added cost of \$15,000.00. While this estimate includes an additional camera and technician during conference, the primary cost is for the service.

Summary: Webcasts of the business meetings would allow more members the ability to remotely view the business meetings. While it is an inherent need of associations today to utilize the various technologies, balance must be obtained between budget and desires.

ITEM 3 - Live webcasting of business meetings with the ability for off-site viewers to vote on-line in real-time

Cost Analysis: Two companies were solicited. The lowest bid was \$61,215. This estimate does not include the estimated \$2,500 per month to store the videos on the RID Web site, post-meeting.

Summary: As with the aforementioned options, this would enhance the membership experience through accessibility.

Technological notation: This is not mentioned as a negative, but facts we must consider as these options are discussed. The variety of computer equipment, capabilities, and availability would vary member to member. Additional concerns include the technological issues that could arise during production, or post-production. For example:

- Possible technological problems during meeting (slow rate of transmission and connection failure)
- Bandwidth limitations (some participants may not have access to the necessary bandwidth needed to support streaming video)

The variety of computer equipment, capabilities, and availability would vary member to member.

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