

**ARO Council Meeting**  
**Thursday, August 22, 2024, 2P-3P EST**

**Attendees:**

Sunil Puria	Katharine Fernandez	
Anna Lysakowski	Brandon Cox	
Mike Bowl	Kristin Johnson, Executive Office	
Ronna Hertzano		
Yuri Agrawal		
Radha Kalluri		
Lisa Olson		
Avril Gene Holt		

**Apologies:**


**Minutes:**

**2027 Conference Location Options**

Laura Reynolds, the new meetings manager for ARO, presented various hotel options for upcoming events in Denver, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and San Diego. In Denver, the options included the Hyatt Regency Convention Center, Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel, and The Broadmoor. The Los Angeles options featured the JW Marriott and Weston, both of which offer commissionable room rates and rebates. The Sheraton Hotel and Marina in San Diego was highlighted for its reduced food and beverage minimum, incentives, and availability of government-rated rooms. A suggestion was made to consider contracting cheaper rooms at a nearby hotel to manage costs effectively.

The discussion shifted to the financial feasibility of the different locations, particularly focusing on food and beverage minimums. The food and beverage minimum at the Orlando event was noted to be around \$150,000 before taxes and fees, while the total spent on food and beverages in 2024 was approximately \$207,000 which is inclusive of taxes and fees and significantly lower than the previous year's \$470,000. Concerns were raised about the high costs associated with food and beverage expenses venues require for meetings, emphasizing the need to balance these costs with the overall budget. Seattle and Denver emerged as financially feasible options for future meetings, with a comparison of weather and logistical considerations such as travel costs and length or travel time from different areas for both locations.

New Orleans was brought up but there are concerns about selecting a progressive city in a politically red state particularly due to member feedback. This mimics Orlando and Council agreed that we should not explore this option. Ultimately decided to eliminate San Diego from consideration due to affordability issues. Dr. Cox proposed a West Coast location for the 2027 meeting, with Seattle and Denver as top options. However, concerns were raised about long flights to Seattle for international participants, leading to Los Angeles being proposed as a more accessible location with better weather.

Laura Reynolds elaborated on the properties in Los Angeles and San Diego, noting that the San Diego property offers incentives and a meeting space takeover. The Sheraton San Diego was described as eager to host the event, with recent renovations and added amenities, including an indoor/outdoor hall, water views, pools, and restaurants. The group discussed the importance of government rate rooms and nearby hotel options, ultimately deciding to focus on a downtown LA property with government rate rooms as the first choice, while keeping San Diego and Seattle as back up options. Council wanted to see about hosting the 2027 meeting in San Francisco. The Executive Office had not gotten any

proposals back from this area but will reach out to some locations and present the findings to the Council for a vote via SurveyMonkey once available as this decision is time sensitive and should not be pushed to the next Council meeting.

### **Satellite Symposium Fee Discussion**

The meeting also covered a proposal for a Department of Defense Hearing Center of Excellence Pharmaceutical Interventions for Hearing Loss (DoD HCE PIHL) Satellite Symposium, with a consensus reached to accept the proposal. The Council majority voted to charge a \$15,000 fee as this matches the fee for the Meniere's Satellite Symposium also occurring at the upcoming meeting.

### **Partnerships and Future Initiatives**

Dr. Bowl presented an initiative for the Communications Committee aimed at public engagement and education, specifically mobilizing junior members to educate local schools about the dangers of excessive noise. The idea of an ARO outreach award was suggested to incentivize participation, with discussions on potential prizes and training resources. The Council also discussed a proposal from spARO and expressed broad support for a partnership with Equality Florida, Planned Parenthood, and the Social Offset campaign for the upcoming 2025 MidWinter Meeting. Members agreed to move forward with this partnership, emphasizing the importance of collaboration. Due to time constraints, the financial aspect of the proposal will be voted on at the next meeting in September.

### **Task List**

1. Laura Reynolds: Negotiate terms with the downtown LA property and request bids from San Francisco venues.
2. Executive Office to secure quotes for potential shuttle services for the 2025 meeting.
3. Dr. Radha Kalluri will gather example grant applications and create a shared drive. She will provide the drive to the Executive Office for easy coordination with the DMAC.
4. All Members: Prepare for a vote via SurveyMonkey on conference locations based on updated information to be sent out detailing 2027 location bids.