GLPA Executive Committee Meeting
Adler Planetarium Skyline Board Room
Chicago, IL
March 28, 2026

To publish

Present
Mike Smail (President), Jean Creighton (President-Elect), Mark Percy (Past President), Sally Brummel (Secretary), Katy Downing (Treasurer), Sara Schultz (Inclusion and Outreach Officer), Steve Crawford (Technology Chair), Heidi Westrick (Development Chair), Steve Burkland (Publications Chair), Renae Kerrigan (Conference Planning Chair), Charissa Sedor (Membership Chair), Melinda O'Malley (Education Chair)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:07 am CDT on Saturday March 28th, 2026, Mike Smail presiding.

Approval of Minutes: Steve Crawford moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the October 7, 2025 GLPA Executive Committee meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Sara Schultz moved to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2025 GLPA Executive Committee meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Offices and Chairs Reports

Treasurer's Financial Report - Katy Downing

FY 26 (April 1 2025-March 31 2026)

As of March 28, 2026

Total Revenue $110,172.39
Total Expenses $122,666.39

Account Balances

Checking $61,668.21
PayPal $5706.03
Savings $0.93
Endowment Savings $7,148.01

President's Report - Mike Smail
Mike called for the committee to work on updates to their sections of the handbook and their assigned tasks on the Executive Committee website.

President's Report - Mike Smail for Jean Creighton
The State Chair election process will commence in April using a Google Form ballot vote.

Past President's Report - Mark Percy
Garry Beckstrom is willing and happy to continue to serve as our historian. Mark plans to discuss storage of physical artifacts with him. He has been digitizing additional items with his available time. Many of the documents already absorbed into google workspace have not been vetted nor made accessible.

Mark discussed the various tasks he is leading regarding documentation for the Executive Committee and GLPA website: policies and procedures and restructuring source documents of the handbook.

The GLPA Endowment Fund (GLPAEF) has received approval for the solicitation license from Michigan. GLPA can now actively seek additional contributions.
The GLPAEF board met on Feb 2, 2026 with the intent of deciding on an investment strategy.
A sub-committee of Michael Schian, Jon Elvert and Gregg Williams met to research and decide upon specific funds to utilize. They reported back with the motion by Schian that the Board approve the investment allocation plan totaling $74,000 as recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee, allocated as follows:

- $30,000 (40.54%) to VOO – Vanguard S&P 500 ETF
- $20,000 (27.03%) to VTIAX – Vanguard Total International Stock Index Fund
- $19,000 (25.68%) to a 12 month Certificate of Deposit through Morgan Stanley / E*TRADE
- $5,000 (6.76%) to remain in the checking account for liquidity and annual expenses

Furthermore, this motion will authorize:

1. The opening of an E*TRADE investment account to execute the ETF and mutual fund allocations.

2. The opening of a Morgan Stanley / E*TRADE account to purchase and hold the approved CD.
3. The designated officers to complete all required administrative steps to establish, fund, and implement these allocations in accordance with this approval.

The motion was approved unanimously by the GLPAEF board. Katy Downing will open accounts, but has requested advice on how to proceed from the sub-committee members.

Secretary's Report - Sally Brummel
Minutes from the 2025 Fall Executive Committee meeting were published in the 2025 Winter Solstice Edition of the GLPA Newsletter.
Minutes from the 2025 Annual Business meeting were published in the 2026 Vernal Equinox Edition of the GLPA Newsletter.

The following votes took place since the fall 2025 Executive Committee meeting

Annual Business Meeting votes, 10/9/2025

- Membership Vote: The membership voted to change Art. III, Sec. 2 of the bylaws from "October 1st through September 30th" to "June 1st through May 31st."
- Election Results: Jean Creighton elected President-Elect, Sally Brummel elected Secretary, Katy Downing elected Treasurer, Sara Schultz elected Inclusion and Outreach Officer.

Electronic votes

- 1/14/2026 The executive committee voted to meet in person at the Adler Planetarium on Saturday, March 28, 2026. GLPA will pay for lodging and food expenses at the meeting site, and will reimburse travel expenses according to the previously-approved travel reimbursement policy.
- 2/23/2026 The executive committee voted to contract ClubExpress to provide association management software, replacing Personify's MC Professional.

Treasurer's Report non-financial - Katy Downing

Copies of the insurance documents are now on the shared drive.
Seeking software to manage finances instead of using google sheets which is put on hold while working on the member management software change.

The committee took a break at 10:19 am until 10:30 am CDT.

Conference Planning Report - Renae Kerrigan

The committee heard proposals from three institutions for the 2028 GLPA conference.

The committee adjourned for lunch from 12:06 pm until 12:49 pm CDT.

The committee voted on the 2028 GLPA Conference proposal. The selected institution will be announced later.

The net income of the 2025 conference was calculated to $13,859.56, which Renae will cross-check with Katy.

The GLPA-PPA 2026 will be at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Oct. 20-24, 2026. The conference hotel is the Courtyard by Marriott Grand Rapids Downtown (with a room cost $189 per night) plus a few overflow options.

The committee discussed selections for and voted on the Spitz Lecture and voted on who to invite. The selected individual will be announced later.

The committee discussed the invitation to join the national conference in Huntsville, AL, October 17-23, 2027, “Astro Domus.”

Heidi Westrick moved to join the national conference in Huntsville, AL, October 17-23, 2027. The motion was carried unanimously.

Inclusion & Outreach Officer’s Report - Sara Schultz

There will be a pre-conference online information session targeted to new members, with the date determined by the time registration opens.

Steve B. and Sara will work on curating GLPA news to submit to the quarterly issues of the IPS journal, The Planetarian.

There will be a trial run on the Planetarian Exchange program this summer, with the US Space and Rocket Center hosting Minnesota State University Moorhead students.

I&O Officer and Membership Chair are working on outreach to non-mememberdomes and GLPA Mixer events.

Membership Report - Charissa Sedor

The new membership software, Club Express will be rolled out at the end of April.

The committee voted on awards to be announced at the 2026 conference.

The committee took a break at 2:51 pm until 3:00 pm CDT.

Technology Report - Steve Crawford

The switch to Club Express will happen by April 27, when we lose access to MC Pro.

Development Report - Heidi Westrick

Sponsor revenue was up, with the same number of sponsors the past two years, but six sponsors were new this year. There will be small sponsorships available for shared booths, and other new opportunities at the 2026 conference.

Publications Report - Steve Burkland

Newsletter and Proceedings statistics

- There have been 241 published issues of the newsletter.
- 70% of members open the email that contains the newsletter, and about half of the members download each issue.
- 30% of the pages are advertisement, and the revenue is ~$1,750 per newsletter.
- There have been 41 published proceedings. These have high value to GLPA members, as it serves as a way to reference professional development from conferences and legitimizes paper and poster contributions as published works.

Evolving the Publications Committee

- A survey was sent out to gauge the value of GLPA and the newsletter to members.
- The chair is exploring improvements to the publications including production changes, committee training, and paid authors.
- Bart Benjamin has published half of the newsletters, and is looking to transition away from being the editor.

Education Report - Melinda O'Malley

- The Planetarium Pointers section of the website has been updated, which includes professional development resources for both planetarians and educators.
- The *Astronomy Core Teaching: Interactive Modules for Middle School Classrooms* developed by GLPA members are now available on the cloud for Digistar users.

- Ongoing projects are accessibility resources for planetarians, solar eclipse resources, and standards e-handbook dissemination.
- A committee is working on the TIPS updates, and discussing how to embed within them the Next Generation Science Standards.
- Melinda will work with Sara to record the Live Presentations in the Planetarium workshop at GLPA 2026 for the website's video-audio catalog.

Old business

Sally introduced the upcoming Governance Review process and identified goals and members. Mark's charge of leading handbook updates will be part of it.

New Business

The FY27 budget is in development for executive committee review and approval in April 2026.