

ICEAA Board of Director's Meeting
11:00 – 1300 | Friday, January 24, 2025
Zoom Virtual Meeting
OFFICIAL MINUTES approved February 21, 2025

Voting Attendees

Tim Anderson (via Pullen proxy), Kellie Benefiel, Dave Brown, Carol Dekkers, Rich Hartley, Bob Hunt, Brent Johnstone, Jennifer Kirchhoffer (via Cincotta proxy), Mike Lionais (via Minkiewicz proxy), Arlene Minkiewicz, Cari Pullen, Sanath Rajagopal, Wendy Robello (via Bosmans proxy), Christina Snyder, Madeleine Teller

Non-voting Attendees:

Aaron Bingham, Tom Bosmans, Sandy Burney, Kevin Cincotta, Steve Glogoza, Chris Massey, Karen Mourikas, Tom Shanahan Sharon Burger, Megan Jones

Welcome, quorum count, introductions: Christina Snyder

Christina thanks everyone who stepped up to serve as a proxy for a voting member this meeting, which will help us stay on track for a busy meeting. The quorum is established, and the meeting begins at 11:02 am.

Secretary Report: Arlene Minkiewicz

No comments or edits were suggested for the November 2024 minutes either in advance of the meeting or during.

Vote: Motion is raised to approve the November 2024 minutes. No further discussion is requested. Seconded and passed.

Professional Development Update Kevin Cincotta

Jennifer K. is absent but Kevin has a short report: the feedback surveys from exam participants indicated they felt the current list of formulas that they would be expected to know for the exam was too long, out of date, or irrelevant because one could reference them in real life, etc. While Kevin disagrees with some of the examinees' comments, he did agree the list was outdated and long, so he worked with Kellie to create a more concise formula

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sheet that was representative of the current exam that has been posted to the CEBoK Wiki and website.

Kellie has been working to incorporate the edits to Module 6 that have been made over the past year, including updating images and reformatting for the wiki. She added a few sections to round out the material and sent them to the team that worked on the original wiki project to help with the updates. She shows off the new and improved content and explains a few of the updates and additions to the module, including information on how methods are applied and new example scenarios. Kellie has also updated some of the visuals to make them more relevant to cost estimating.

Kellie would like a few more eyes to review the updated Module 6 before it is released, but the board must also determine how the updated material will be released now that we have our first major update to the wiki, and when we will be testing on the new material vs. the previous. She suggests we provide advance warning of several months to exam candidates to make sure they have enough time to prepare with the new material. Kevin volunteers to review the new Module 6.

She thanks everyone who contributed to the Module 6 update, has enjoyed the project and is looking forward to updating another module. Christina adds her thanks, and suggests making a presentation to the membership for free (maybe \$30 for non-members) to announce the new content for Module 6 and explain the exam update timeline, which would demonstrate to the membership how we keep our content current and maybe attract some new members. Dave agrees, and suggests holding a special training session for the new Module 6 at the Workshop. Megan and Christina think it's a great idea, thanks and congratulations all around for a job well done. Kellie suggests this will also be a great opportunity to update the training material (as well as hasten preparation for the presentation to the membership).

Action: Kellie to propose a timeline to get the new Module 6 updated and to prepare slides for a webinar and live presentation in Atlanta. She will forward the timeline to Christina, Kevin, Dave, and Megan and include the timeline in this meeting's minutes.

Update from Kellie Benefiel: Incorporate final comments by end of March. Promote new material April and May at conference.

Go live after the conference.

New material will appear on exams starting Jan 1, 2026.

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BOE Training Course for CEBoK

Sandy Burney

Sandy presents slides. In summary, ProjStream has received several requests for training specific to creating a basis of estimate (BOE) for less-experienced estimators at contractor organizations. ProjStream would like to build a standalone training course that incorporates all of the information on BOEs within CEBoK in one multi-part course. This course would not contain any references to ProjStream or their product; it would be a generic course on BOEs that ICEAA can sell, promote, and distribute (including to our international partners who have requested more entry-level training). In exchange, ProjStream would like to use and adapt that course for their own training that would be specific to their company. ICEAA benefits from being able to offer the generic course without development expense; ProjStream gets to use the accepted and respected CEBoK material in their training efforts.

If the board approves the project in the next 30 days, it could be promoted and presented at the Workshop in Atlanta.

Christina asks if the course will be intended just for the people who have to create BOEs or could it also serve as a common language between those who need to write BOEs and those who need to review them. Sandy likes the suggestion and says ICEAA doesn't need to be limited to promoting the new course to just contractors.

Kellie supports the idea of targeted training. She likes that it gives ICEAA the opportunity to offer some content that isn't as government-focused as most of ours is, making our material more accessible to a wider audience.

Kevin agrees that CEBoK is written from/for the government perspective and likes that this would address a gap in our curriculum. He is concerned that the course would be too tied or branded to ProjStream to be an ICEAA product; Sandy clarifies that ProjStream would provide a generic, tool-agnostic version for ICEAA's use and from it make their own that's specific for them. Kevin is assured and supports the project.

Rich agrees, having noticed how significantly government-focused our content is now that he has been working in the private sector for a few years. He believes a course like this will help us bridge the gap.

Dave agrees and adds his support. He likes that even the ProjStream-focused version will have some callback to ICEAA, which could help us expand. He enjoyed Sandy's *BS in BOEs* presentation in 2022 and thinks a lot of what was in it could be applicable.

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Carol thinks it's a great idea and that we could also look at how this could be used for CEBoK-S. Sandy's concern that software estimating is usually done by experienced estimators or software engineers, which would be higher level than the intention of the BOE course.

Christina asks what Sandy is hoping to get from the Board today. He would like approval to move forward with development of the course (providing a status report upon request) and to then use the course to create a ProjStream-specific course for their use. He leaves the marketing, pricing, and other decisions about using the course to ICEAA.

Vote: A motion is raised to approve the presented initiative for ProjStream to develop an introductory course on Basis of Estimate and Contract Proposals for ICEAA's use and permission to later develop a specific course for ProjStream customers from it. No further discussion is requested, seconded and passed.

Christina says we will invite Sandy to provide updates at the next board meetings and Megan will communicate with him as necessary. Sandy says they don't believe the development will take too long and he's encouraged to present it in May at the Workshop as a 3-4 hour course.

Megan congratulates the board on the decision, saying that creative approaches to crowdsourcing our projects is how we are going to overcome our limited time and resources. It's a great first step to trying out new relationships or approaches to serving our members and thanks everyone for giving it a shot.

Certification and Certification Outreach

Arlene Minkiewicz

At the last meeting, we discussed how to encourage certification to the cost community at length, and about whether we should reduce the amount of experience required for the PCEA. Arlene was tasked for ensuring the topic was on this agenda, and opens the floor for discussion.

Cari believes the CCEA is not recognized by the government, and does not think her CCEA has helped her career at all, so she's not sure how we're going to get the government to support our certification program. She doesn't think the government will fully recognize our training unless it's coordinated with the DAU or similar group.

Christina asks Chris if the value of the CCEA has come up in recent FCELA discussions. He says they haven't discussed certification specifically, but it is clear to him that the federal

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cost organizations see ICEAA as the foundational provider of training and development. They see this through membership and the Workshop, but certification was not specifically called out. Rich asks if they value certification as a designation of experience or desired qualification rather than a required qualification. Do they see the certification as an asset that is worth rewarding? Chris thinks yes, but he qualifies that answer with a more detailed comment. They're more concerned about low staff and high workload, and while they would like to be more involved with ICEAA, they don't have the time or people.

Christina thinks we need to figure out what we do and do not have control over and how to crack into the things that we do. How can we crack the nut of convincing government leaders to include our certification as a requirement or a benefit, or how do we align more with the DAU that they will start to recognize our training and certification. Chris says that the government leaders he has met do seem to regard ICEAA's training very highly, but we would need to somehow streamline the process from training to certification to attract more certification. Christina agrees, saying that at her company the certification training is incorporated into onboarding, making it a requirement for the juniors. Support from the leadership level is crucial.

Arlene raises the question of whether we should reduce the experience requirement for the PCEA. Madeleine says she's not sure if reducing the experience requirement from two years to one would necessarily make them more excited to take the test, but that their test taking skills may be more current the closer they are to college.

Rich asks about the possibility of letting them take the exam earlier but not award them the PCEA until they have a number of years of experience. Christina says this idea was strongly supported by Sanath and Cheryl from the UK, saying that it would allow them to put their juniors on a training path immediately with the exam soon after. Sanath agrees, he has conducted internal training for 5 or 6 junior estimators for the PCEA while they have easier workloads and still need the training.

Rich doesn't have a problem with someone taking a test on their first day, but he thinks awarding the certification should require some experience. He would support a process similar to the PCEA-CCEA Eligible status, given to those with fewer than five years of experience but have passed the exam. Sanath agrees that getting the knowledge is different than getting the experience, one has to apply their knowledge to increase their skillset.

Christina and Rich agree that it sounds like the board is in general consensus that deferring awarding the designation but allowing earlier testing is a good idea. Kevin thinks that

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Christina's comment that the act of sitting for the exam will help the junior become more qualified is a strong argument in favor.

Action: Megan and Arlene will compose a short slide for the next board meeting that outlines the change to allow individuals to take the exam earlier but not award the PCEA until their two years of experience is met. Proposed plan should be vetted with Jennifer, Kellie and Kevin prior to presentation to the board. Christina wants the board to vote on the issue at our next meeting.

Sharon says this will be an easy change to incorporate into the certification process.

2025-2027 Board Nomination and Petition Procedure

Megan Jones

Megan shows slides that list the names of the candidates who submitted their nomination and were reviewed by the Nominating Committee. The next step of the election process is the petition nomination period, where members have a month to collect 25 signatures from fellow members in order to be placed on the ballot automatically with no input from the Nominating Committee. Megan reminds the board that we discussed amending this process during the 2023 election and intended to revisit the petition process prior to starting the 2025 election, but it was not done. She suggests the board review the petition process for the next election.

The bylaws require the polls to be open from March 15-April 15, but Megan will be opening them on March 14 since the 15th is a Saturday.

She also reminds everyone to send in their nominations for ICEAA Awards.

ICEAA 2030 Comments and Feedback

Christina Snyder

Christina distributed the new strategic plan after the last meeting but did not get many comments on it. Christina incorporates the edits (mostly wordsmithing) onscreen.

Vote: A motion is raised to approve the ICEAA 2030 Strategic Plan and post it on the website for the membership. No further discussion is requested, seconded and passed.

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Treasurer Report:

Madeleine Teller

Madeleine presents slides. Our checking account and liquidity are at the usual levels for the beginning of the year.

2024 ended up with a deficit of about \$19,000 which is primarily the result of the London workshop. Madeleine is working with the treasurer of SCAF to finalize the amount owed and the payment plan, a calculation that has been difficult to make due to bank fees and variable exchange rates. The 2025 Workshop is looking like it will be a success.

Megan adds that while in January 2024 we estimated we would about break even for the year, we were expecting to receive over \$30,000 of our covid grant and thought we would make \$10,000 on the London workshop. Even with that \$40,000 not received, we still only ended up \$19,000 down. She assures the board that the financial situation does not seem as dire as it did back in October. Madeleine agrees.

Kevin asks what changes we expect for 2025 that will make it a more profitable year than 2024? Madeleine says the Workshop is looking more profitable, but for most of the line items, the estimate for 2025 was increasing the 2024 total by 7%, whether expense or revenue.

Christina says that if we want to hit an increase of 7% for membership, we may want to do a membership drive, an idea that Kevin had brought up before.

Megan says that the estimates provided are very simple percentage increases because we have not done anything like a membership drive or marketing campaign that we can use as a metric when making an estimate. As long as our strategy for growth is to hope something happens, we can only hope that we grow.

Madeleine suggests also that when we increased the dues in 2022, many people purchased two-year renewals, so hopefully those will start coming due soon and we'll get an increase.

Action: Kevin to find plans and suggestions received over time for ideas to increase membership – revisit the ideas that have been suggested and develop a proposed plan for timeline and milestones to be discussed with the board at the next board meeting.

Kevin asks why Megan chose 7% increase for membership revenue when we don't intend to raise dues, is this an assumed increase in the number of members? Megan says yes. Christina

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thinks that 7% increase year over year is a good goal, if lofty, and we need to determine what the right percentage of increase should be for us.

Kevin notices there's a large variation in how much we make at the Workshop, and that the majority of our revenue comes from the Workshop, while the other revenue sources are less significant. Megan and Christina wholeheartedly agree.

Cari asks how many nonmembers attend the Workshop vs. members, and Megan says it's very few. When we raised the registration rates last year, Megan raised the non-member rates more significantly to further incentivize membership. Since she started at ICEAA, the prices for the Workshop have been greater than the cost of the Workshop + membership to encourage individuals to get both.

Chris asks if it was a business decision to make the Workshop our primary revenue source, and that we could change what the source is if we adjusted the prices of the Workshop down and other products up. But if we decide that the Workshop is the most important, what do we do to increase Workshop attendance?

Megan believes the certification program is the engine that keeps ICEAA running. Certified members are our best customers because they need to attend our Workshop to stay certified and getting membership helps their recertification. Membership results from certification and the Workshop, which is fine because our revenue margin on membership is slim to none. Our price tolerance for membership is about what the dues are now, so we need to pursue non-dues revenue sources.

Christina recalls what Chris said earlier that the FCELA thinks ICEAA is synonymous with training and a Workshop. Unless we have a very good reason to change that, we should continue to work to our strength. We may want to consider reducing Workshop attendance for government employees, but would have to figure out where to make up that revenue elsewhere.

Kevin asks why Megan says a membership costs us more than \$150/year. Megan says prior to the most recent dues increase, she totaled the non-Workshop expenses and divided them by the number of members, which was greater than \$150/member. Kevin says that since some of our expenses are fixed, then by that theory, we should not have members at all. Megan says it should be thought of more as a loss leader, as membership is something every member organization has to have.

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The board agrees that there should be some inflection point of the ideal number of members vs. fixed costs and considers analyzing data on this topic; they further agree that membership on the whole does not cover our costs, even if each member does bring revenue.

Megan agrees that focusing on getting a few more members would get us a little more money, but focusing on getting one more sponsor for the Workshop would get us a lot more money. She suggests that everything we do needs to support the Workshop, certification, and membership, in that order. Supporting certification will result in increased membership, as will supporting the Workshop. Membership almost becomes a byproduct of certification and Workshop attendance due to how we've priced it and incorporated it into recertification. Most of our marketing is for the Workshop; we have tried for years to create marketing to promote membership, CEBoK, and certification but haven't been able to produce it. We know from the FCELA feedback that we are already known for putting on a great Workshop (many think of ICEAA as just the Workshop) so we know what our strength is and who our customers are. ICEAA has limited resources and can only work on so many things at once, so we need to figure out what effort we spend will give us the most value and most collateral benefit, which Megan believes is the Workshop and certification.

Vote: Motion is raised to approve the January 2025 treasurers report. No further discussion is requested. Seconded and passed.

Awards Nomination Process and Tiebreakers

Courtney Gray

Courtney presents an outline of the Awards judging process.

Cari asks if the maximum years of experience for Junior Estimator of the Year includes the years at all companies the individual has been employed by; Courtney confirms. The spirit of the Junior Award was always to recognize someone young with potential, which was why the maximum was decreased from 5 to 3 years.

She plans to introduce a process to reduce the perception of bias in judging by replacing the nominee's name and employer with a pseudonym. While some judges may still be able to determine who is who, this process is a step in the right direction towards reducing bias. She asks if the board agrees, their only concern is that anonymizing the entries will be a difficult task. Courtney is undeterred and will try it for 2025. Maddie offers to recuse herself from judging to do the redacting of nominations.

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Regarding conflict of interest, the committee had requested judges abstain from scoring anyone who they had nominated, in categories they already nominated someone, had a personal relationship with, or worked at the same company. The same-company restriction ended up leaving us short on judges, so Courtney proposes keeping the first three criteria but amending the 4th. She asks the board if they object to the first three conflicts of interest, no objections are raised.

For judges that work at the same company, Courtney proposes not counting that judge's first place choice for the category, leaving their scores in place for the other entries.

Cari asks how difficult it would be to make sure we only have one judge from any organization. Courtney doesn't know if this has been tried. Christina says it's difficult to get judges, that some companies happen to have more engaged members than others, and we're often struggling for judges. Courtney echoes Christina's statement that it's difficult to find judges, especially ones that aren't from companies already engaged with the Awards process. She cites some complaints of unfairness that came out last year, so she's trying to be transparent with the process, but having more judges would make things easier.

Jennifer K. asks what the procedure for breaking ties is. Courtney says in time there was a tie for an International award, she cast the tiebreaking vote as Awards Chair. The International Awards did not have a tiebreaking procedure established, and the Washington Chapter uses the most-previous Chapter President as their tiebreaker, so she followed suit and included her score in that contest only. To clarify, Courtney scored the nominees along with the rest of the judges but her results were only included in the consensus if there was a tie between the other judges. Courtney also discussed a potential improvement to the judging process that does not include name or organization as part of the information that is provided to the judges.

In the case of a tie in 2024, Courtney included her own scores as Association Awards Chair for categories that require a tiebreaker only.

Courtney confirms that ICEAA is not required to give out every award every year. If a category only has one nomination that is unsatisfactory, the award can simply be skipped. Any judge may raise an issue with a nomination. If at least two members of the Executive Committee agree that the quality of the nomination is lacking, then the nominator will be given one week to amend and resubmit. After resubmission, if half of the Executive Committee agrees the nomination is still not up to standard, it will be removed.

Action: Courtney to send her awards judging proposal to Arlene to distribute to the board.

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Action: All board members: review the awards judging proposal and return comments to Arlene by February 3. Arlene will distribute to the board by February 5 for their review prior to the next board meeting. Christina would like the board to approve the judging process at the February meeting.

New Business, Plan Next Meeting & Adjourn

Christina Snyder

Running behind and with no other new business, a motion to adjourn is raised, seconded, and approved. The board agrees to hold their next meeting Friday, February 21 at 11am EST.

The meeting adjourns at 1:17.

Chat Log

00:07:40 Steve Glogoza: will join audio shortly

00:07:47 Megan Jones: kk

00:17:11 Tom Bosmans: I've lost audio, may need to re-enter.

00:17:54 Tom Bosmans: Audio has returned here.

00:18:00 Megan Jones: great!

00:23:40 Megan Jones: <https://wikidev.iceaaonline.com/wiki/Index.php/Mod6Edits>

00:46:13 Mr. Sanathanan Rajagopal: dropping off for 10mts. Got another call

01:05:40 Dave Brown: sorry I've had to step out for a little bit on phone

01:06:57 Karen Mourikas: From an OEM perspective, it's not necessarily promoted. However, if a person has the certification, it shows that 1) they are committed and took the extra step to do this and 2) they have some level of knowledge that we look for.

01:07:27 Tom Bosmans: Reacted to "From an OEM perspe..." with 👍

01:08:21 Karen Mourikas: I've got a college grad who attended annual workshop last year and was so excited that she wanted to take the cert exam right away. But she can't. Not sure how long that excitement will last, so let's catch them while we can!

01:31:30 Dave Brown: I'm 720# that just joined...

01:31:47 Christina Snyder: Reacted to "I've got a college..." with ❤️

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01:31:47 Megan Jones: Reacted to "I'm 720# that just j..." with 👍

02:00:31 Chris Massey: condor, eagle, last year!

02:12:05 Karen Mourikas: When I was Paper's Chair, I was able to get 15 or so folks spread across govt agencies, OEMs, tool providers, to avoid any perception of biases.

02:12:52 Karen Mourikas: And the best way to find these folks is to reach out individually, not group emails asking for volunteers

02:13:23 Chris Massey: I need to jump to prep for an upcoming meeting.

02:13:50 Tom Bosmans: Reacted to "And the best way t..." with 👍