



**ARIZONA MUNICIPAL CLERKS' ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP/MENTORING AND REGION
LEADERS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, September 14, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members: Kara DeArrastia, Chair and Region 5 Leader; Fatima Fernandez, Co-Chair and Region 1 Leader; Annie Meredith, Region 2 Leader; Michelle Stanley, Region 3 Leader; Sherry Aguilar, Region 4 Leader; Vanessa Bueras, Region 6 Leader; Cherry Lawson, Region 7 Leader; Crystal Hadfield, Regions 8 and 9 Leader; and Carla Reece, Board Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER – Roll Call with Introduction of Attendees

Meeting was called to order by Chair Kara DeArrastia at 9:03 a.m.

Present via Microsoft Teams or Teleconference: Kara DeArrastia, Chair and Region 5 Leader; Annie Meredith, Region 2 Leader; Sherry Aguilar, Region 4 Leader; Vanessa Bueras, Region 6 Leader; Cherry Lawson, Region 7 Leader; and Carla Reece, Board Liaison.

Absent: Fatima Fernandez, Co-Chair and Region 1 Leader; Michelle Stanley, Region 3 Leader; and Crystal Hadfield, Regions 8 and 9 Leader.

The attendees introduced themselves. Chair Kara DeArrastia welcomed everyone and said she looks forward to a productive 2021-22 fiscal year.

2. MINUTES

Region 4 Leader Sherry Aguilar moved to approve the May 13, 2021 Membership / Mentoring Committee and Region Leaders Meeting Minutes; Region 6 Leader Vanessa Bueras seconded the motion. Motion carried to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2021 meeting.

3. REPORTS/ACTIVITIES FROM EACH REGION LEADER/REPRESENTATIVE

Region 1

Region 1 Leader Fatima Fernandez was not in attendance.

Region 2

Region 2 Leader Annie Meredith reported that her region held a virtual meeting on September 7th, which was their first meeting for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Meeting attendees discussed the 2021 AMCA Annual Virtual Elections Training and provided positive feedback although they noted they missed face-to-face interaction among the participants and hoped to return to an in-person format for next year's elections training. Region 2 members also discussed updates to the Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records (ASLAPR) General Retention Schedule

and shared their experiences regarding upcoming elections and candidate packet preparation in their respective municipalities. The following cities have all started the process of implementing the E-Qual online petition system: Yuma, Bullhead City, Lake Havasu City, and Kingman. Annie indicated she had shared a group screenshot and recap of the meeting for the fall issue of the AMCA newsletter. In response to an inquiry from Chair Kara DeArrastia, Annie explained her region meeting agendas include standing discussion items, but she also asked for topics from the regional members to help build the agenda.

Region 3

Region 3 Leader Michelle Stanley was not in attendance.

Region 4

Region 4 Leader Sherry Aguilar reported that her region plans to hold an in-person meeting on September 29th, hosted by the City of Goodyear. Planned agenda topics include the E-Qual system, recent flooding in Gila Bend, and the recent online AMCA scholarship fundraiser. Sherry noted that whoever is hosting the regional meeting typically asked for agenda topics from the members.

Region 5

Chair Kara DeArrastia reported that the Town of Queen Creek planned to host a Region 5 meeting in October, which would likely be held virtually. She noted that the last time her region met in person was in the Town of Carefree back in January 2020, which also included an outdoor tour of the grounds and buildings outside of Carefree Town Hall. All regional meetings since that time have been held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Region 6

Region 6 Leader Vanessa Bueras reported that in October, the City of Maricopa is planning to host an in-person meeting with a Zoom virtual option. Planned agenda topics include the E-Qual system, which Maricopa is using; records management and the ASLAPR changes; and parliamentary procedure.

Region 7

Region 7 Leader Cherry Lawson noted she was planning on holding a regional meeting in November. She said recent staff changes in the Town of Marana Clerk Office are keeping her busy, noting the retirement of her Executive Assistant and recruitment for the Deputy Town Clerk opening.

Region 8

On behalf of Regions 8 and 9 Leader Crystal Hadfield who was absent from the meeting, Chair Kara DeArrastia noted that Crystal informed her that she was planning on holding a meeting for both regions in the beginning of October.

Kara asked if Board Liaison Carla Reece had any updates from the AMCA Executive Board and noted she would add Board updates to this standing agenda item. Carla informed the group that the Board would be meeting this Thursday, September 16th, and the Board would continue working on cleaning up the Board bylaws. She also briefly discussed the City of Tempe's experience using the E-Qual system, noting that the filing period for the 2022 City Council candidates takes place October 9th through November 8th. Additionally, the required minimum nomination petition signature count would be lowered to 1,000 signatures or five percent of the vote in the City, whichever is less, due to the recent adoption of a City ordinance that would take effect October 9, 2021.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discuss and consider approval of a bi-monthly Committee meeting schedule.

The Region Leaders agreed to the following meeting dates and times, as outlined on the tentative meeting schedule provided in the agenda materials:

- Wednesday, November 3, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 11, 2022, from 9 to 11 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 22, 2022, from 9 to 11 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 10, 2022, from 9 to 11 a.m.

Chair Kara DeArrastia noted that the Committee meetings would be held via Microsoft Teams with an option for members to call in if they are unable to access Teams. She said she would send out the final meeting schedule and Outlook invites to the Region Leaders.

b. Request for volunteers to take minutes at Committee meetings.

Individual members volunteered to take the minutes at an upcoming Committee meeting, as follows:

- Wednesday, November 3, 2021 – Annie Meredith
- Tuesday, January 11, 2022 – Cherry Lawson
- Tuesday, March 22, 2022 – Sherry Aguilar
- Tuesday, May 10, 2022 – Vanessa Bueras

Chair Kara DeArrastia noted that Region 3 Leader Michelle Stanley had offered to serve as a backup minutes-taker in case the assigned taker was not available. Kara said she would provide the minutes template to the assigned taker closer to the meeting date.

c. Brief overview of the duties and expectations of Committee members and Region Leaders.

Chair Kara DeArrastia noted that the Succession Plans outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Membership/Mentoring Committee and the Region Leaders were included in the agenda

materials and had also been previously emailed out to the group. She explained the Succession Plans provide a breakdown of what to expect as a Committee member and a Region Leader in a month-by-month outline similar to what the Executive Board does for their annual schedule and tasks. Kara asked the Region Leaders to provide her with any questions, concerns, or other feedback regarding the Succession Plans. She also mentioned that she used the Region 4 Meeting Guide to assist her in preparing the Region Leaders Succession Plan and said she would share the guide with the Region Leaders.

- d. Discuss and consider a process to solicit input from region members related to ways to help increase participation in region meetings, ideas for agenda topics, and if there is a need to modify the AMCA region boundaries.

Chair Kara DeArrastia stated that the AMCA Region Map and data providing a breakdown of the regions by their cities, towns, counties, and populations, were included in the agenda materials. The Region Map was last revised in 2017, so Kara inquired whether this might be an appropriate time to consider modifying any of the region boundaries.

Region 7 Leader Cherry Lawson noted her past struggles with arranging regional meetings and lack of participation in meetings, particularly due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, although holding meetings virtually can be helpful. Region 7 is not a large area, but the cities and towns are spread out from each other in terms of geography.

Region 2 Leader Annie Meredith said it was helpful to have a list of various topics to use when drafting a regional meeting agenda. Region 2 is very spread out geographically, so the regional meetings are typically not held in person. She noted her goal was to hold an in-person regional meeting this year, perhaps in a municipality located in the middle of the region. Annie also reviewed her suggestion to consider using prompting questions to help facilitate conversation in the regional meetings. She also noted that switching over from a telephone-only format to a virtual one was helpful so members could see each other via video and be more engaged in the discussions.

In response to an inquiry from Kara, Annie discussed her experience as the Region 2 Co-Leader last fiscal year and said she believed that co-leaders are a good idea for succession planning so the co-leader could transition to the leader position after some time. It was also helpful to identify another regional member who can help facilitate conversations and increase participation at the meetings. In response to another inquiry from Kara, Cherry noted she could reach out to certain members in her region to assist with scheduling and planning for her regional meetings.

Kara mentioned that the Region Leaders Succession Plan included a list of ideas for agenda topics to assist in preparing the regional meeting agendas. She also suggested referring to the questions being posted to the AMCA Listserv for additional topic ideas and noted that an archive

of the Listserv questions and responses were posted on the AMCA website. She explained since the Region 9 Leader position was vacant and no one had volunteered to fill that role, Region 8 Leader Crystal Hadfield had offered to invite Region 9 members to her regional meetings, so those members felt welcomed. She suggested combining neighboring Regions 8 and 9 into one region as a possible idea. Kara also reviewed how certain municipalities could encompass two neighboring counties, such as in the case of the City of Apache Junction, which is located in Region 5, but the majority of the city residents lived in Pinal County and not Maricopa County like the other Region 5 municipalities. Because the Region 6 municipalities are located within Pinal County, Apache Junction City Clerk Jennifer Pena would attend the Region 6 meetings to discuss topics that were of more relevance to her city.

Region 4 Leader Sherry Aguilar indicated she had researched past AMCA Executive Board minutes to determine how the Region Map boundaries were drawn. She suggested a way to increase participation in the regional meetings by attaching a larger city to each region. She said she believed that nine regions were too many and that the smaller regions are unable to get together due to their staff size. Sherry proposed presenting options to the AMCA Executive Board, based on the feedback received from the regional members, for formal action by the Board.

Sherry left the meeting at 9:57 a.m., to attend the AMCA Campaign Finance Committee meeting, which was scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

Region 6 Leader Vanessa Bueras noted the large size of her region and her regional meetings were always held in-person but only a few members attended. The Region 6 meetings have recently began being held virtually over Zoom with a call-in option available to participants. She proposed adding more regions to the map but making them smaller in size so that they were combined with another municipality in the immediate area. Some of the Region 6 municipalities were a three-hour drive away from another even though they were located within the same county. Vanessa reported that the City of Maricopa was the largest city in Region 6. In the smaller towns that only have one staff member in the clerk's office, that person could not leave to attend an in-person meeting.

Kara reviewed the organization of the region data provided in the agenda materials and noted that the population figures may need to be updated to reflect the most recent census. Annie said she believed the regions would be more active if they were comprised of cities that were located closer together, noting the long drive between some of the cities in Region 2. Vanessa mentioned possibly splitting Region 2 in half to create two regions due to the size and distance between municipalities. Annie agreed with this suggestion. Vanessa noted that not many Region 6 members accepted her regional meeting invitation even with a Zoom virtual option, which could be due to people being busy.

Kara received consensus from the group to draft questions for the Region Leaders to solicit input from the members in their respective regions and to compile the feedback received for consideration by the Committee.

- e. Discuss ways to increase participation in the AMCA Mentoring Program for both recruiting Mentors and reaching out to new members who are requesting a Mentor.

Chair Kara DeArrastia explained she was reaching out to the AMCA Mentors listed for the 2020-2021 fiscal year to confirm their interest in continuing to serve as a Mentor for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, to ensure that the Mentors list was up-to-date. She noted that Dee Ann Mickelsen, Mesa City Clerk, was retiring in January 2022 so she asked to be removed from the list for Region 5. She said Liz Klein, Fountain Hills Town Clerk, was also a Mentor for Region 5. Board Liaison Carla Reece indicated that Liz might be considering retirement as well.

Kara stated that an annual Mentoring Program article was included in the AMCA newsletter and a webpage dedicated to the Mentoring Program was posted on the AMCA website. She explained that it may be more appropriate to move the Mentoring Program webpage to directly under the Members Only section instead of the Education/Training section.

Region 2 Leader Annie Meredith discussed her experience reaching out to Bullhead City Clerk Sue Stein, who is the Mentor for her region, as well as other Mentors in the Association due to their expertise in certain areas. Carla mentioned that the AMCA Welcome Packet connects new members to the Mentoring group and also noted the importance of referring to informal mentors for advice and support as well as the AMCA Listserv as a valuable 'mentoring' tool. She suggested a standing article in the AMCA newsletter to promote the Mentoring Program. Kara agreed with this suggestion.

Kara noted that January is National Mentoring Month, and she would provide information about the AMCA Mentoring Program for posting to the AMCA Facebook group in January to coincide with that annual event. She discussed how a few weeks ago, a City Clerk Specialist had emailed her asking if a member had to be a clerk or deputy clerk in order to be a Mentor in the program. She noted the language on the Mentoring Program webpage and brochure/application referenced "clerks" as participants in this program. Kara said she believed the answer is "no" as long as the person is a current AMCA member and is experienced and willing to share what they know including skills, knowledge, professionalism, and accomplishments to a mentee. She noted that AMCA President Teresa Riza agreed with this assessment.

Carla explained that according to Arizona Revised Statutes Title 48, Special Districts, the title of "Clerk" is an officer of the elected district body. She noted that she had held three different titles while she served in a special district in the past and although she performed all duties of a "Clerk", none of those titles included "clerk" due to this statutory restriction. Therefore, Carla said she believed an AMCA Mentor did not necessarily have to have "clerk" in their title.

Kara noted that AMCA President Riza would present the Mentoring Program materials to the Board at their meeting this Thursday, for discussion and possible action to clarify the material content. She said she would inform the Committee members regarding the outcome of that discussion.

Kara mentioned that the Mentor in Region 7 asked to be replaced, so she had emailed Region 7 Leader Cherry Lawson to see if someone would be interested in being a Mentor in that area. Cherry responded that she was interested in applying to serve as a Mentor for her region.

5. REMINDERS

- a. [AMCA Clerk Areas of Expertise](#) – Please click [here](#) to access the questionnaire and submit your areas of expertise. Please email any procedures and/or samples related to your selected topics to amcainfo@azleague.org and indicate “Resources spreadsheet” in the subject line.

Chair Kara DeArrastia reviewed the purpose of the Clerk Areas of Expertise spreadsheet for members to refer to so they could reach out directly to a ‘subject matter expert’ instead of posing questions through the AMCA Listserv. Region 2 Leader Annie Meredith noted that the Education Committee’s Fall Best Practices subcommittee had referred to this list when planning the topics and presenters for that training. Kara agreed that this resource could also help in identifying potential presenters or speakers on specific topics for upcoming training opportunities.

- b. Submissions for the Winter issue of The Clerk’s Insider newsletter are due by Wednesday, December 1st.

Chair Kara DeArrastia encouraged Region Leaders to solicit article ideas from members in their respective regions and to also write up a recap of their regional meetings, including a group photo or screenshot, for inclusion in the newsletter. She suggested this could be an effective marketing tool to encourage regional participation.

- c. Please notify the Committee Chair of new clerk arrivals, clerk departures/retirements, or promotions.

Chair Kara DeArrastia reminded everyone to please let her know of any new clerks in their regions, any members who are leaving or retiring, or any members who are being promoted, so she can make sure those announcements are highlighted in the AMCA newsletter and Facebook group.

- d. The 2021 IIMC Region VIII Conference is September 22-24 in Park City, Utah – who’s going?

Chair Kara DeArrastia reported that she was attending the IIMC Region 8 Conference in Utah next week and she looked forward to seeing other AMCA members there. She asked if anyone

in the group would be going or if they knew of other members who planned on attending the conference. Region 6 Leader Vanessa Bueras reported that Andy [Juarez, Records Administrator] in the Maricopa City Clerk's Office, IIMC Region 8 Director Lisa Garcia [Florence Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk], and the Goodyear City Clerk [Darcie McCracken] would be attending the conference. Kara said she knew Region 1 Leader Fatima Fernandez and Mesa Deputy City Clerk Holly Moseley would also be in attendance. She mentioned she would be writing a conference recap with some photos for the Winter issue of the AMCA newsletter.

6. GOOD OF THE ORDER/COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OR INPUT FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In response to an inquiry from Region 2 Leader Annie Meredith, Board Liaison Carla Reece stated that Tempe would allow both electronic petition submissions through the E-Qual system and paper nomination petitions in person from the City Council candidates, in addition to their other required paperwork, during the upcoming filing period. Region 6 Leader Vanessa Bueras indicated that in Maricopa, candidates had to print their E-Qual petitions and file them in person but could not submit them electronically. In response to another inquiry from Region 7 Leader Cherry Lawson, Carla reviewed her experience rolling out the E-Qual system in Tempe. Cherry said she anticipated rolling it out in Marana after the Deputy Town Clerk opening was filled.

Chair Kara DeArrastia thanked everyone for their input and asked them to let her know of any items they would like her to share at this Thursday's Board meeting as soon as possible so she can inform the AMCA President for the agenda.

7. NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

Wednesday, November 3, 2021, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., via Microsoft Teams (includes call-in option); Minutes-Taker is Annie Meredith.

POST-MEETING NOTE: The November 3rd meeting was later rescheduled to Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., via Microsoft Teams (includes call-in option); Minutes-Taker is Michelle Stanley.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Kara DeArrastia

Minutes Taker

Kara DeArrastia

Kara DeArrastia, Deputy City Clerk – City of Tempe
2021/2022 Membership/Mentoring Committee Chair

APPROVED ON DECEMBER 8, 2021