



**Coal & Energy Division
Executive Committee**

2025 SME Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 23, 2025
Hyatt Regency at Colorado Convention Center
Denver, CO
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM MT

In attendance:

Steve Schafrik, Chair	Ed Zeglen, Vice Chair
Sam Baker, Secretary/Treasurer	Jim Haughey
Mike Keener	Paul Goranson
Brett Ashley	Eric Howe
Jon Bobbera	Brent Berg
Adam Patterson	George Luxbacher
Barb Arnold	Rohit Pandey
Joshua Brady	Ashish Kumar
Guang Xu	Rich Wagner
Karen Rose	Kevin Pan
Eric Shereda	Festus Animam
Karin Harrington, Staff Liaison	

Agenda:

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:01 Mountain Time
2. SME Executive Visit-SME President Mark Herpfer, Executive Director Dave Kanagy and President Elect Bill Hancock

Mark Herpfer summarized that it has been a good year for SME. AI continues to be a leading focus and topic of discussion both within SME and the industry more broadly. SME continues to work with NMA and others on the USBM/Minerals Council proposal outlined at the mid-year meeting.

Bill Hancock updated the group on the search committee's work for a replacement for Dave Kanagy who is retiring. They have identified several solid candidates and will continue to update the association as the process continues. A key issue that he sees is how SME can support the industry moving forward. One proposal has been for SME to engage directly into the education space through a

“SME University”. This program could help professionals currently employed or educated in other fields gain the skills required by the mining industry to be employable.

Dave Kanagy updated the group that SME’s overall membership is up. George Luxbacher questioned whether the USBM proposal is gaining any traction; Kanagy responded that NMA and AEMA have taken the lead on the issue and that meetings have been held with Senator Hickenlooper.

Steve Schafrick let the executives know that C&E has been trying to reach out to more uranium companies and professionals to get them involved as AI and power centers become a bigger national issue.

3. Safety Share- Given that the meeting is in downtown Denver and there is a lot of construction going on, please remember to watch your step on uneven, slippery ground.
4. Review and approval of the minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held during the 2024 Mid-year Meeting

The 2024 mid-year meeting minutes were reviewed, no changes were proposed.

Motion to approve the Minutes: Rich Wagner

Second: Mike Keener

Minutes Unanimously Approved

5. Review of Coal & Energy Division Finances (Baker)

Sam Baker reviewed the attached C&E Division financials. He highlighted that the C&E general fund had increased from \$77,000 to 88,000, a large portion of which was the AIME Eavenson contribution (\$14,000). Strong luncheon sponsorship raised ~\$13,000.

The C&E scholarship fund increased from ~\$961,000 to ~\$1,100,000 with an Eavenson contribution of \$8,300.

There was discussion about whether C&E has, or should have, oversight over the UVC scholarship fund.

Sam brought up that the UVF fund is decreasing but isn’t very familiar with that fund; Steve has been trying to work with the UVC to increase their fundraising but there isn’t much to report on the effort. If the UVC doesn’t do more fundraising the account will continue to deplete until awards must be reduced or stopped.

Sam questioned whether the extra tables purchased for the luncheon had been filled; Karin clarified that the extra tables were for on-site registrations. Steve felt strongly the tables would sell out and suggested the move be evaluated at mid-year once the results are known.

Action Item: Review “At Risk” Table sales at mid-year

6. Report from the Scholarship Committee (Bobbera)

Jon reviewed the changes that were implemented as a result of the executive committee's discussions on the international scholarship issues over the last few years.

- School must be ABET accredited
- Clarified grad students ineligible
- Freshman and sophomores allowed to apply
- Multiple students from same university allowed to be awarded
- Top candidate from WVU, VT or PSU will be designated Chris Bise scholarship

The process was far smoother this year with 46/64 applicants being eliminated due to ineligibility before review began. There were no instances of plagiarism after this screening took place. Low numbers of applicants from traditional "coal" schools continues to be a concern; VT had no applicants.

\$43,000 was awarded with \$8,000 going to the John Sidney Marshall Scholarship; the C&E awardees were ranked according to the judges scores and funds were distributed accordingly. John Sidney Marshall Scholarship should be based on financial need. That area should be more heavily weighted.

George questioned how the Marshall scholarship was funded; it was funded directly from AIME. He recommended that this be shown in the C&E Financials and that C&E be involved in the AIME's Lexington, KY meeting. He was also happy to see the inaugural Chris Bise Scholarship being awarded this year.

Action item: Karin will look into adding to the Financials

Steve pointed out that unlike in years past the scholarship portion of the meeting has gone far smoother with less argument and congratulated Jon on successfully implementing the changes to the criteria.

Jon questioned whether the system could filter out the 46/64 ineligible candidates before they reach the judges; Barb agreed with the idea.

Action Item: Barb will make a list of changes to system screening process and Steve will work with SME to see what can be done

Brett questioned how C&E's scholarship amounts compared with other divisions; Steve says they are very competitive from a university point of view.

7. Report from the Awards Committees (Schafrik)

Steve reported that we are now two years into the new award rules and reiterated the need to have 3 award nominees in the pool in order to give an award. Steve stressed the need to solicit more nominees. C&E will be giving the following awards:

- Distinguished Service – Eric Shereda

- Ramsey- Bob Kudlawiec
- McConnell- Dan Connell
- Aplan- Jack Gropo
- Woomey- Rohit Pandey
- Best Paper- Daniel Wen Su and Peter Zhang
- Eavenson- Jaquie Fidler
- Nicholls- Not enough nominees
- Rock Mechanics- Murali Gadde
- Hartman- Cheryl Allen

Action Item: Steve and George to reach out to AIME to change the focus of the Percy Nicholls award and broaden the focus. George Luxbacher to provide an expanded definition to use.

8. Program Committee Report-Baker

Sam reported that coming out of the mid-year meeting C&E had 19 sessions and 112 presentations scheduled. NIOSH has fully withdrawn from the conference and that has now reduced C&E's program from 19 to 17 sessions and 112 to 95 presentations. The final number may end up being a bit lower than that. Sam informed everyone that given these changes the printed program will be inaccurate and to rely on the app for program information.

Sam appealed for volunteer session chairs to staff the rock mechanics session; Rohit volunteered to chair and Jim Haughey to co-chair.

Kevin Pan volunteered to co-chair the best of ground control session and no volunteers were received to co-chair the mine emergency session.

Sam recommended ensuring that for the 2026 conference NIOSH personnel don't fill the role of chair and co-chair for the same session given the uncertainty surrounding NIOSH and their participation moving forward. Steve pointed out that this was the second time in four years that we've had this issue.

Action Item: Steve will discuss this issue with the best of ground control organizing committee.

Sam pointed out that C&E has an average of 5.5 presentations/session after the withdrawal. Steve encouraged everyone to attend the unit committee meeting to help put together programming for next year's conference.

9. Committee Report Out-Schafrik

Steve clarified that this agenda item was added as a placeholder to ensure that it starts occurring each year. He asked how many people sit on a committee as a C&E representative elsewhere within SME and emphasized that they need to report back to the C&E executive committee on what's happening elsewhere within the organization.

In the future the executive committee will expect brief reports on the activities of other committees within SME.

10. Executive Committee Calander (Schafrik)

Steve is putting together a calendar to help the officers keep track of when tasks need done; it should be a living documents modified each year.

11. Volunteer Portal-Karin

SME's volunteer portal should go live in March 2025. It is intended to help new members locate opportunities to get involved with the division and society as a whole. She requested the division consider opportunities for members both at the annual conference and for those who can't make it.

Steve pointed out that he sees this as a supplement to the division's existing efforts to engage volunteers from its membership.

12. Nominating Committee Changes (Schafrik)

Steve discussed that this year the division will be trying a new method to solicit nominations to make the process quicker and simpler. A QR code was presented for the members to use that takes one to a nomination committee form where simple information is entered for nominees and nominators.

Once nominated the nominee gets an email where they can accept or reject the nomination. The division will review the performance of this system over the course of the year.

13. Bylaw Changes- Steve

Steve informed the committee that the bylaw changes approved at the mid-year meeting are still pending approval. The changes by C&E highlighted a broader issue that SME's Structure and Governance Committee wants to examine across all divisions. In light of this, Steve called for the formation of an ad-hoc fundraising committee.

This ad-hoc committee should be kept to three people with the purpose to "take over activities related to the auction, other C&E fundraising events, and luncheon sponsorship". Nominees will be solicited during the nomination process, including the online form.

14. SME Code of Conduct- Karin

Karin highlighted the SME code of conduct included in attendees meeting packet. Karin briefly reviewed the key items in the code of conduct, highlighting the prohibition on lobbying activities and alcohol responsibility.

15. Membership Committee Report- Shereda

Eric presented demographic information on the division and SME as a whole that was included in the meeting packet. C&E is on average older than the society as a whole. The virtual section is the largest "local" section within C&E, which has no chair or organization.

Eric is making efforts to track down info on these members to try to shift them into an active local section. Rich added that in the association growth committee they've done heatmapping that shows some of these clusters of members unaffiliated with a local section.

C&E is 80% domestic members and makes up 8% of the overall SME society. C&E membership grew 3% in the last year.

Eric is planning to conduct a membership survey to identify trends that can be acted on the division to drive retention and growth of membership. Steve noted that even small growth is improvement compared to the last several years of negative growth.

Steve appealed to the industry members in the room to talk to him about putting in place a streamlined process for employers to "batch" sign up multiple employees as SME members at a time. He has implemented this process successfully with Coronado Coal.

16. Luncheon- Steve

The planned luncheon speaker had to withdraw, however the CEO of Westmoreland Coal Martin Purvis stepped into the role. The program will not show this change; however, the topic of conversation will be the same.

Steve mentioned that this dovetails nicely with the efforts to get western coal operators more engaged with the division.

There are several great sponsors this year for the luncheon:

Oak Grove

CORE Resources

ACNR

There are number of good items donated for the auction and some are still rolling in. Karin asked that anyone who still had auction items bring them to the event early.

At the midyear meeting it was decided to discuss a \$5,000 donation to the foundation at the annual meeting. Steve requested a motion to make a \$5,000 donation:

Motion-Ed Zeglen

Second- Josh Brady

Motion Passed Unanimously

17. Strategic Planning- Steve

Steve highlighted the need to continue the strategic planning exercise that has been ongoing. This item should always be on the midyear meeting agenda. This meeting will be at the Denver Double Tree in Englewood this year.

18. Bylaw Changes- Steve

Steve requested a motion be made to keep the nominating committee as currently written in the bylaws but accept all other proposed changes made at the midyear meeting. This should allow all the other changes to move forward while SME studies the issue of nominating committee.

Motion- Sam Baker

Second- Brett Ashley

Motion Passed Unanimously

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 10:59

Motion- Rich Wagner

Second- Ed Zeglen

Motion Passed Unanimously