

Association for Research in Otolaryngology
ARO Council Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2005

- I. Call to order.** The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time by Lloyd Minor. Present were: Lloyd Minor, President; Robert Shannon, President-Elect; William Brownell, Past President; Peter Santi, Editor; David Lim, Historian; Doug Cotanche, Ashley Wackym, Council Members; John Middlebrooks, Program Chair; Lisa Astorga, Darla Dobson, Talley Management Group, Inc.
- II. Settlement.** After 14 hours of mediation, the ARO vs. Pyramid Advisors case was settled. It was clear that the Council approved offer of \$250,000 was not going to be enough to settle the case. The effects of prolonging the legal process were considered, and ARO representatives agreed to a settlement of \$400,000 to Pyramid with no commitment for future meetings at the Daytona property. According to the settlement agreement, a \$250,000 payment is required within one week of settlement and \$150,000 12 months after the first payment. The second payment is secured by ARO's agreement that judgment may be entered against it for the full amount Pyramid alleged was due (\$1,200,000) plus interest if this payment is not made in full and on time.

We are not able to make any comments to the press regarding this dispute. However, we are able to inform ARO members of the outcome. Per the agreement, the litigation will be dismissed promptly. Also, a statement from ARO and Gregg Talley indicating that we maintain a good relationship with the Hilton Daytona will be distributed to all Talley Management Group employees. The settlement terms are legally binding.

Council approved a motion to accept the negotiated settlement.

Lisa Astorga and Bill Brownell were commended for doing an exceptional job in representing the ARO.

- III. Dues Increase/Special Assessment.** ARO will need to raise membership dues or have a mandatory special assessment to cover settlement costs. Dues notices for the 2005-2006 membership year have already been mailed, so cannot be raised at this time. Darla Dobson reported that instituting a special assessment of \$50 for all Regular members would generate \$84,600. Ashley Wackym recommended as system similar to DRF Centurions, where members could make voluntary contributions. Lloyd Minor will draft a letter to membership for Council review regarding the settlement and need for increased revenue. The letter will also indicate 2006 MWM dates.
- IV. 2006 MWM.** The Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, and Fairmont in New Orleans all have availability for the ARO MWM, February 9-16, 2006. The Fairmont has the lowest room rate. Lisa Astorga will confirm the terms and work with the Fairmont to correct a problem with the room block they assigned to ARO for 2006. A one-year contract with the Fairmont will be signed if the room block can be corrected.
- V. Adjourn.** A motion to adjourn was approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Eastern time.