REPORT OF THE 2004 PERMANENT ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

In 2003-2004 we continue to work out the issues confronting the committee last year, the main issue being the organization of the Executive Office upon the retirement of Dr. Tom Hood from the University of Tennessee. He has agreed to continue on in the position of Executive Officer of SSSP for the next several years.

We conducted a site visit to the University of Tennessee in April; a copy of that report is attached. We remain very happy with the work of the Executive Officer Tom Hood, the Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager, Michele Koontz, and the Graduate Assistant Nancy Brannon. We discussed transition issues that may be involved in the retirement of Dr Hood.

Continuing the work of 2003 our committee proposes the following:

We take steps to ensure a smooth transition that maintains as much as possible our good relationship with the University of Tennessee.

We make plans for the future of the Executive Office so that wherever it is located it is fully staffed and continually operating.

We rewrite the job description of the Executive Officer, the Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager with the help of the current officers to reflect the effective way the positions have evolved.

We develop a plan for hiring a new Executive Officer when Dr. Hood is ready to move on.

We make changes to the by-laws (as proposed by the Budget, Finance and Audit Committee 2004) to include the participation of the BFA and the Treasurer in the process of hiring the Executive Office, Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer.

We make the graduate assistantship more attractive by converting it to half time year round and allowing time for participation in the sessions at the annual meeting.

We make the Administrative Officer's pay for meeting management a regular salary compensation package that includes social security and taxes and fringe benefits through the university rather than just contractual pay. Consistent salary increases with cost of living or merit or in line with other university positions.

We compensate the host department, reduce the Executive Officer's salary and change the graduate assistants position to a twelve-month half time position.

We have been fortunate to have excellent people serving in the Executive Office and the support of the University of Tennessee. We expect to continue at the University of Tennessee in 2005 and as long as Dr. Tom Hood wishes to continue in that position. Dr. Hood’s retirement has prompted us to commence preparation for the transition that must eventually come. Please refer to the “Report on the Executive Office Site Visit” below for further details.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl A. Boudreaux, Chair of the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee
To: SSSP Board of Directors
From: Cheryl A. Boudreaux, Chair, Carolyn Perrucci, and Elizabeth Demos, members of the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee and David Rudy, representative of the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee
Re: Report on Executive Office Site Visit on April 2, 2004
Date: May 4, 2004

INTRODUCTION
We had four items of business at our meeting,

1. Evaluation of the Executive Office, Executive Officer, Administrative Officer, Meeting Manager, and the Graduate Research Assistant
2. Review and update the operations handbook
3. Discuss the 2005 contract with the University of Tennessee
4. Prepare the 2005 salary recommendations for the Executive Officer, Administrative Officer, Meeting Manager, and the Graduate Research Assistant

Meeting time was arranged with Tom Hood, Executive Officer, Nancy Brannon, Graduate Research Assistant, Michele Koontz, Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager, Dr. Chip Hastings, Acting Department Head, Sociology, Dr. Bill Dunne, Associate Dean of Research, Graduate Studies and Facilities and Ms. Ann Robinson-Craig, Director of Budget & Administrative Affairs, and Dr. Billie J. Collier, Acting Associate Vice President, Office of Research and Chief Research Officer. We were well received and welcomed by everyone at the university.

INTERVIEW WITH TOM HOOD, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Dr. Hood will retire on June 30 from the university and request emeritus status. He is planning to continue with SSSP for 2005 and willing to stay on additional years.

Acting Department Head Chip Hastings indicates that Tom will continue to be able to maintain a SSSP office as well as a personal office on the 9th floor of McClung Tower. Tom will remain active in the university through continuing research and ongoing writing projects.

The department head position is under negotiation so that could bring about some change.

Dr. Hood will not be teaching in the fall but trying to get research money to evaluate the impact of UTK’s interdisciplinary environmental semester. His plan is to work for SSSP as long as they are satisfied with his job performance. He also believes that the organization would be well served by developing a plan for hiring an executive officer.

Michele is the third person that Tom has worked with as an administrative officer and she has increased her competence to the point that she has taken on a good share of the responsibilities of the Executive Officer. According to Tom “Michele is a very valuable employee to the society and does a good job as meeting manager and as administrative officer. Her salary is a good salary by most standards but Tom would give her a raise in line with inflation or better because she has done many good things for the organization and continues to grow. She honestly cares about the organization.”

The university continues to recognize Tom as the project leader and as the person responsible for representing SSSP to the department and administration.

Changes in the environment, e.g., the availability of journals electronically will probably have an (unknown) effect on our journal and consequently SSSP’s income. We have approximately 2100 library subscriptions and only 6 electronic only subscriptions, which is slightly cheaper than the paper subscriptions. It may be difficult to generate new subscriptions in this new era where the
universities are strapped, but Tom hopes to keep the 2100 subscriptions that we have. A substantial portion of our income comes from the journal.

Membership is also affected by the fact that one can read the journal online, especially if you are not presenting at the annual meeting that year. Tom would like to stay and help solve problems.

Most of Tom’s work involves contact with SSSP committees and Special Problems Divisions. (See attached job descriptions). Because the job is primarily one of oversight, making sure that these things get done, Tom recommends that the salary of the executive officer be reduced to reflect the amount of time spent in oversight. He suggested $500/month for 12 months for 2005. Last year, the executive officer was paid a summer stipend of $10,000 and $11,000 for replacement courses and $2,500 for fringe benefits. Tom is not recommending that the executive officer job become a volunteer position. If the next person feels that their time is worth more he would want it to remain negotiable.

He also recommends that we change the way that we compensate the graduate assistant.

INTERVIEW WITH NANCY BRANNON, GRADUATE ASSISTANT
Nancy indicated the myriad tasks she has, including maintaining two databases, processing credit cards, maintaining the website, answering phone calls, assisting people looking for papers, opening the mail, compiling bank deposits, handling email, filing, mail-outs, annual meeting preparation assistance, whatever needs to be done. She is required to work 20 hours a week but indicates that she often worked more.

Nancy is in the office most of the day Monday - Friday, and works some weeks 30 hours. She felt that as the job gets more complicated and takes more time, it sometimes puts stress on her graduate studies. She said that she didn't get sufficient instruction in the beginning on how to do all the things that she has to do, so it took a little time to figure things out. WEB issues were difficult at first since she was figuring it out as she went, but web tasks and job tasks are done more efficiently as she has gained more experience.

Also, Nancy indicated that it would be nice to have an opportunity to attend some of the sessions at the annual meetings - she was needed at the registration desk last summer because she was the only one authorized (besides Michele) to access the database. On the other hand, SSSP offers the amenities of office space, a computer that she can use as a graduate student and she sees that as a real plus. She feels she works well with Dr. Hood and Michele. She does want to stay on another year.

Michele does two jobs for SSSP and prefers that we treat the two jobs of administrative officer and meeting manager separately. Disadvantage of doing them separate is cost. She continues to work almost exclusively from her home office a satisfactory arrangement. She is happy with her position; meeting management is her favorite of the two jobs. She told the committee that her greatest reward is seeing people participate in the annual meeting and things running smoothly.

Michele feels she has proven herself to Tom and has a lot of autonomy; working from home she gets more work done. She meets weekly with Tom, which works very well - so that is no longer an issue. She indicated that something should be put in place for the transition, when Tom eventually fully retires. Relocation of the SSSP office would not be a problem for Michele because she can telecommute from anywhere.

A concern was expressed that she has worked with 8 different student assistants over the last 12 years. It takes the graduate assistant a full year to learn the position so the concern that Michele has is that we need to have the Society pay for the graduate assistant so we can hire someone with a two-year commitment. What appealed to graduate students in the past was the $6,300
summer stipend. However, the office does not require the full 40 hours of work in the summer for the graduate assistant that is the reasoning behind our recommendation (see below) that in 2005, the graduate assistant position would be a 50% time year round. Michele expects to start interviewing students this month, with, Nancy’s tenure in the position ending at this year’s annual meeting. In 2005, SSSP would be paying for the entire graduate assistantship, which clarifies who they work for. Michele and Tom work well together and with the graduate assistant Nancy.

As Michele indicated in her administrative role each month is different. Some of her duties include put together the annual meeting program, mail program packets to program participants, plan the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee site visit, plan the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee mid-year meeting, assist the auditors with the annual audit, reception and budget request, prepare financial information for the BFA. May is the last attempt to get membership renewals, work with the Membership Committee, prepare divisional elections, process between 50 - 60 emails a day. June, July, and August are devoted to the annual meeting. In addition, she will verify the qualifications of the people receiving awards, gather information and prepare it for the board, prepare quarterly financial reports, and prepare items for the Society newsletter.

Nancy maintains the website and the database. Michele indicated that there is a need to discuss making newsletters online and not hard copy. She provides constant communication between committee chairs and members, accessing the data, and responding. She is the point of contact for vendors. She does accounts payable and receivable on a regular basis.¹

INTERVIEW WITH CHIP HASTINGS, ACTING DEPARTMENT HEAD, SOCIOLOGY
With numerous changes in the upper administration as well as an incomplete (as yet) search for a department head, Professor Hastings feels that the department of sociology is vulnerable. However, assuming the department is still around our office can stay as long as the expenses are covered. Space is at a premium so as long as we cover our expenses and the graduate assistant position then he sees no problem.

Tom is suggesting we put in a $5,000 stipend to the department of sociology and take on the stipend for the graduate assistant at 18,000 for a 12-month half time assistantship, since the department will no longer be getting the buy out for Tom’s courses. This will be more attractive to the graduate students as well as the department hosting SSSP.

INTERVIEW WITH BILL DUNNE, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF RESEARCH GRADUATE STUDIES AND FACILITIES AND ANN ROBINSON-CRAIG, DIRECTOR OF BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS
This meeting went well, Dr. Dunne assured us that our contract is fine for another year. Of course he doesn’t know what will be happening down the road in 4 or 5 years. He recognizes that it is also good for the university that our organization is here. Significantly, he appears willing to continue to waive the indirect costs.

INTERVIEW WITH BILLIE COLLIER, ACTING ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER. GRANTS CONTRACTS AND COMPLIANCE ARE HER AREAS OF CONCERN.
She seems to have a good relationship with Tom and as a result of past conversations with him and wishes to continue the relationship, which she values with SSSP. We assume that this means the overhead will continue to be covered by the university.

We discussed how the SSSP organization fits with the UTK research mission, and how our

¹ Attached job descriptions
activities could lead to funding. In addition, we discussed how SSSP supports research and development especially at our annual meeting and peer-reviewed journal, Social Problems.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Compensation Issues
Michele’s pay for meeting management should become a regular salary compensation package that includes social security and taxes and fringe benefits through the university rather than just contractual pay. Consistent salary increases with cost of living or merit or in line with other university positions.

$18,000 rate for the graduate assistantship for half time year round

Develop a plan for hiring an executive officer. With retirement of the Executive Officer (EO) there will be a shifting of duties from EO to Administrative Officer (AO). EO suggests and committee agrees that a salary reduction for EO is acceptable. Dr. Hood suggests salary of $500 per month.

The duties of the “meeting manager” have historically been treated under a personal service contract as a stipend (no benefits/fringes) for services. For the past 10 years, the AO has expertly handled these duties and has had to pay taxes on the stipend. The committee believes that these duties should be treated as supplemental work with supplemental pay at the UTK fringe rate of 18.72%. The funds to cover the supplemental pay should originate from the Annual Meeting budget and not from the budget associated with the Executive Office in its relationship to UTK.

Graduate Assistant Position
The executive officer and the administrative officer should have some modest coverage so that the graduate assistant can attend some of the annual meeting sessions. Maybe we could train student registration workers to take paperwork and check for membership until the officers or the graduate assistant is able to return to the desk.

2005 Budget
We recommend the acceptance of the proposed 2005 budget with amendments.

Whatever alternatives SSSP decides to move toward (if any), the SSSP Board and members owe a great deal to the current SSSP Executive Office for its long-standing successful operation of the SSSP organization. Thanks Tom, Michele, and Nancy!!!

cc: SSSP Executive Office
    Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee
    Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee
I. D. Selecting the Executive Office, Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer

Every two years, commensurate with the site visit of the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee, the SSSP Board of Directors will evaluate the effectiveness and general desirability of maintaining current arrangements relative to the Executive Office, Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer. This evaluation will take into consideration the site report from the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee, and any other information the Board is able to attain. Should the Board decide a change is needed in any or all of the above office entities, or should there be a vacancy(ies) for other reasons, the following procedure will be followed.

1. It will be assumed that the Executive Office will be at the location of the Executive Officer. Hence, the selection of the Executive Officer will simultaneously involve the selection of the Executive Office.

2. Once it is determined that the Executive Office is to be vacated, and that a replacement is desirable, the President of the Board will solicit nominations and applications for the Executive Officer. An invitation will go out to all members and all Sociology Departments. Advertisements will be run in all SSSP information documents, and an advertisement will also be run in the ASA Footnotes. Interested SSSP members in good standing may apply by submitting a letter of interest, CV, and a letter of support from the applicant's Department Chair and corresponding Dean of the prospective host institution. The names and complete contact information of three other references must also be provided. The letter of interest should include what support the host institution is willing to provide if selected for the SSSP Executive Office site. Institutional support information should be corroborated by the letters from the Dean and/or Department Chair.

3. The Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee (POSPC), working in consultation with the Board and the Treasurer, will develop a screening procedure for evaluating the applications. The procedure will be sure to take into consideration the protection/promotion of affirmative action and cultural diversity interests.

4. Once the screening process has been approved by the POSPC and Board, the POSPC will implement that process to identify the three most promising applications in consultation with the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee and the Treasurer. Those applications will then be submitted to the Board for review and approval. If the Board does not approve the three applicants, the POSPC will repeat the process until three applicants have been approved by the Board. The process up to this point must be completed no later than one month prior to the next SSSP annual meeting.

5. Arrangements will be made by the Administrative Officer and Annual Meeting Manager so that during the SSSP annual meeting, the POSPC and Board will separately interview the three finalists. (The Administrative Officer may be called upon throughout the entire process for assistance in coordinating the various activities.) The POSPC will make its recommendation to the Board and the Board will use that information, as well as the information attained from its own interviews, to make a final selection.

6. Once the selection is made, two members of the POSPC and two members of the Board will visit the site to assure that everything is as expected.
7. Final deliberations will be made by the Board and, assuming the site was acceptable, the Board will make the appointment. If the site was not acceptable, the process will be repeated with remaining finalists until an acceptable site is identified.

8. The President of the Board, Chair of the POSPC, and newly appointed Executive Officer will then commence making arrangements to have the Executive Office moved to its new location.

Selecting the Administrative Officer

In the past it has been assumed that the Administrative Officer would be located at the same site as the Executive Officer. Hence, the Administrative Officer would, in effect, be selected at the same time as the Executive Officer. Maintaining that assumption is no longer necessary given modern communication capabilities and corresponding working arrangements. Hence, the process for selecting an Administrative Officer will be the same as the process for selecting the Executive Officer. If there is an Executive Officer in place, that person will serve as a temporary non-voting member of the POSPC in order to be able to participate in the search process. These selection processes may be run simultaneously in the case of both positions (Executive Officer and Administrative Officer) being vacated at the same time or they may be run completely independently. In the event that both positions are vacated at the same time, Executive Officer applications may be coupled with Administrative Officer applications to possibly present a more attractive package. Such coupling is, however, not necessary in order to apply for either position.

**Bold and italicized verbage being considered.**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**Direct Service to Volunteers and Social Problems:**
A. Assists and advises President, Board of Directors, Committee Members and the SSSP Membership.

B. Reports current developments affecting the association, assists in preparing and revising budget for Treasurer and the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee; manages and monitors budget and SSSP assets on a monthly basis.

C. Oversees production of SSSP Newsletter, division newsletters/elections, membership renewal campaign.

D. Oversees Nominations and Elections Committee by sending notifications of candidacy, obtains biographies, assists Administrative Officer when preparing general election ballot.

E. Serves Program Committee and problem-solves; works closely with the Meeting Manager before and at the Annual Meeting. Assists the Administrative Officer/Meeting Manager when laying out the preliminary and final program.

F. Staffs Board of Directors and Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee Meetings.

G. Facilitates projects assigned to the Administrative Officer and Graduate Research Assistant.

H. Serves Social Problems: monitors publication including finances, circulation, advertising, promotion, works closely with the publisher. Works with the Editorial and Publications Committee
in negotiating a contract for publishing *Social Problems*.

I. Develops and maintains the operations handbook for officers and committee members. Works with the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee on updating operations handbook.

J. Annually acknowledges volunteer work of all SSSP officers and committee members through thank you letters and appropriate gifts.

K. Works with the Council of Special Problems Divisions to support and monitor the activity levels of the Divisions, and reports to the Board pursuant to SSSP bylaws.

**Organizational Work:**

A. Manages Executive Office and supervises staff ensuring that all appropriate University and SSSP Business office and personnel reviews are conducted and reported to the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee.

B. Assists Administrative Officer when writing and revising membership brochures, annual meeting registration forms, and contracts with the journal publisher, vendors, suppliers, and the host institution. This responsibility entails regular, uninterrupted meetings (i.e., at least one meeting per week) with Administrative Officer.

C. Proposes revisions of bylaws to Bylaws Committee.

D. Writes newsletter column for the SSSP Newsletter.

E. Problem-solves and innovates: assists in developing ideas for promotional campaigns for Society and for *Social Problems* and works with the appropriate partners and vendors to execute them, develop ideas and structures for non-membership dues revenue generation and works with appropriate partners to initiate them.

**Work with Outside Organizational Environment:**

A. Selects business partners and vendors on basis of competitive bids and monitors their work.

B. Assists Meeting Manager while negotiating and working with hotels and airlines, registration staff at Annual Meeting, Convention Bureau personnel to obtain materials for registration packets. Enters into agreements with hotels on behalf of the Society.

C. Writes public relations material for Society and Annual Meeting; represents Society to host Department, campus University system, and to others.

D. Seeks information about developments in external environment which affect SSSP. Works with lawyers, auditors, and other professionals who serve the Society.

E. Networks with other association executives and vendors in the American Sociological Association (ASA); Association of Black Sociologists (ABS); regional societies and other related societies. Attends workshops and conferences in association management to keep current.

F. Deposits funds in various accounts of the Society.

G. Signs checks to disburse funds for payment of Society bills. (Checks over $1,000 require two approved signatures--see bylaws)

**JOB DESCRIPTION**
1. Reconciles University system ledgers and converts information to functional accrual accounting system of SSSP. Prepare monthly budgets in budget-to-date format for income and expenses, balance sheet and financial statement for quarterly distribution to the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee and the Board of Directors using the Open Systems Accounting software.

2. Maintains ledgers, journals, vouchers, prepares checks, accounts receivable and payable for SSSP internal accounting. Prepares all forms and maintains the University accounting system.

3. Prepares bank deposits on all monies received by SSSP. Maintains files for checks presented to the bank for collection on foreign checks. In conjunction with the Executive Officer, manages and monitors the Society's reserve monies and operating accounts in checking, savings, money market accounts, certificate of deposit, bonds, and other accounts. Deals with counterparts in financial institutions of deposit.

4. Meets regularly with the Executive Officer – a minimum of one meeting per week.

5. In conjunction with the Executive Officer, works with the SSSP Newsletter Editor, the Editor of Social Problems and the publisher of the journal in promotion, maintaining and financial matters related to these two publications.

6. Consults with the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee and to the Board of Directors and relates to Division and Committee Chairs in financial matters relating to SSSP. Suggests budgeting strategies for expected expenses.

7. Organizes and maintains files and documentation pertaining to the Society's business and obtains appropriate insurance and bonding.

8. In conjunction with the Executive Officer, interviews, and hires the Graduate Research Assistant and organizes, delegates, supervises, and manages the work flow.

9. Involved in the site selection process of the Annual Meeting. Conducts site inspections of potential hotels and banquet sites.

10. Prepares the grant agreement between the Society and the host institution for each annual renewal. Works with the payroll, benefits, human resources management departments on a regular basis regarding university policies and procedures.

11. Receives and files biographical information and signed agreements from the candidates. Prepares the ballots and conduct Division elections. Send election results to the appropriate division chair.

12. Processes Visa/Mastercard payments from members for SSSP membership, Annual Meeting registration, banquet ticket sales, audio-visual equipment rental, and book sales.

13. Compiles various notices, announcements, reports for the SSSP Newsletter and Social Problems. Works very closely with SSSP Newsletter Editor, Social Problems Editor and various people from the publisher of the journal.

14. Works closely with the Board of Directors and the chairs of the Accessibility Committee,
Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee, By-Laws Committee, C. Wright Mills Committee, Committee on Committees, Council of Special Problems Divisions Chairpersons, Editorial and Publications Committee, Elections Committee, Erwin O. Smigel Award Committee, Justice 21 Committee, Lee Founders Award Committee, Lee Scholar-Activist Support Fund Committee, Lee Student Support Fund Committee, Local Arrangements Committee, Long Range Planning Committee, Membership Committee, Minority Scholarship Fund Committee, Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee, Program Committee, Reinvigoration Committee, Resolutions Committee, Social Action and Social Action Award Committee, and the Standards and Freedom of Research, Publication, and Teaching Committee to ensure the smoothness of the operation of these committees.

15. Provides office duties as necessary to the efficient performance of the Society's business. Strives to operate the Executive Office of SSSP in a professional manner.

16. Handles hotel and menu arrangements for the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee, Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee and other meetings when necessary.

17. Prepares invoices for the rental of the SSSP mailing list.

18. Works closely with the regional associations when promoting activities of the SSSP.

19. Works closely with an independent accounting firm when they are performing the annual audit.

20. Prepares the roster of the SSSP Officers and Committee Members annually.
DUTIES OF THE MEETING MANAGER

Hotel
- Arrange room set-ups for all sessions and catered events. Secure reservation information from the hotel.

- Plan menus and coordinate catered events for: Board of Directors Meetings, Board of Directors Dinner, Committee Meetings, Editorial Board Luncheon, Past Presidents Reception, President's Private Party, Business Meeting, Presidential Address, Graduate Student and New Members Reception, Awards Banquet, and any additional food service functions.

- Review the master account with the hotel Credit Manager and the Executive Officer to determine compliance with contract provisions, and make sure that all charges belong to the Society and secure adjustments when appropriate.

- Arrange with the Reservations Manager for hotel reservations for officers and VIP’s.

- Design and implement a Roommate Matching Service and Meeting Mentor Program.

Pre-Registration/On-Site Registration
- Recruit volunteers to work during on-site registration.

- Provide Executive Officer with copies of all requests to disburse funds. Executive Officer will authorize cash distribution of funds apart from petty cash.

- Compile the following materials that will appear in registration packets. (Final Program, Annual Meeting Evaluation, and Business Meeting Agenda)

Program
- Prepare the overall design for the program and front cover. Prepare front matter describing conference site, activities and special events for the preliminary and final program. Special events will include: book exhibit, film exhibit, banquet, child-care information, information on plane reservations and major driving routes, and special features of the meeting site.

Banquet
- Assist the Local Arrangements Chair in arranging music for the Reception Honoring Past Presidents and Awards Banquet, if needed.

- Secure plaques or certificates for award winners.

- Review the final bill for accuracy.

Other
- Work closely with the Local Arrangements Chair. Provide guidance and expertise when appropriate.

- Work closely with the program coordinator of a related organization approved by the Board of Directors. Arrange room set-up, audio-visual and catering for the events scheduled by the related organization.

- Report on the management of the meeting and assessment of the hotel performance to the Board of Directors.

- Provide on-site coordination of member requests and hotel services to insure a quality meeting.