

**Southern Association for Institutional Research
Financial Advisory Committee
2018-2021 Review Report
March 14, 2023**

Committee Members:

Denise Gardner (chair), University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Allen Gale (incoming chair), Xavier University of Louisiana
Jim Purcell, Alabama Commission on Higher Education

SAIR Bylaws Article VIII Section 2 requires that a Financial Advisory Committee shall assist the Board with financial oversight of the organization. A review has not been conducted in several years. Therefore, the committee reviewed SAIR financial transactions for the time period of 2018-2021 (we did not look at any hotel contracts). The following documents were reviewed:

- Bank and investment statements
- Quarterly Profit & Loss statements and Balance sheets
- 2018-2021 General Ledger

An accounting firm reviewed the same documents, reconciled the bank accounts (no issues found), and found that only 1 transaction did not have supporting documentation (during 2018). The committee reviewed their report.

It should be noted that the overall financial health of the organization was impacted by COVID. Factors related to this included:

- Lack of revenue from an in-person conference in 2020, and a financial penalty for cancelling/moving that conference to the next open date
- Lower membership numbers and conference attendance since COVID, including a financial penalty for low attendance at the 2021 conference

Findings:

Addressing this period of financial stress was made easier by the efforts of prior SAIR boards who have sought to maintain a healthy reserve balance. The records were adequately maintained (the use of financial software was implemented per a prior recommendation) and we found no financial improprieties.

Recommendations:

The Financial Advisory Committee advises the current and future SAIR boards to continue to strive to maintain reserves to adequately absorb unforeseen issues, whether it be pandemic, weather or other events that may occur.

- 1) We recommend that SAIR endeavor to maintain reserves equal to that of 1.5 times the most recent annual budget.
- 2) We recommend that the SAIR board continue to seek professional development opportunities that would be of interest to the membership and that would yield additional revenue streams for the organization.
- 3) We propose continuing the practice of an accounting firm reviewing the records when a new Treasurer assumes office, and we recommend the Financial Advisory Committee conduct their review after that report is made.
- 4) We recommend a bylaws change so that the Committee always has a previous SAIR Treasurer as a member of the committee.