

INVEST. ENGAGE. ELEVATE.

FPRA GAINESVILLE 2026/2027

2026-2027 FPRA Gainesville Chapter Board of Directors August 19, 2026 Board Retreat Minutes

ATTENDEES

Present:

Scott Schroeder, APR, CPRC	President
Kathy Richardson, APR, CPRC	Immediate-Past President
Amy Climenhage, APR	President-Elect
Emily Mavrakis	VP, Members Services
James Neville, APR	President-Elect
Kari Hamende, ACNP	Secretary
Laurel Ring, APR	Director, Accreditation
Alisha Katz, APR, MAMC	Director, Communications
Michelle “Shelley” Vickers	Director, Community Relations
Sasha Dookhoo	Director, Educational Services
Elizabeth “Liz” Reyes, APR, CPRC, CPM	Director, Programs
Styliana “Liana” Revanis	Director, Professional Development Seminar
Wendy Crites Wacker, APR, CPRC	Member At-Large

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. Call to Order

- The newly elected 2026-2027 FPRA Gainesville Chapter Board of Directors gathered for the first time for a board retreat at Clay Electronic in Gainesville on Aug. 19, 2026, 5:30-7:00pm.

II. Community-building activity

Scott Schroeder facilitated the community-building activity, inviting each board director to share information on when she/he first got into the field of PR/Communications; one message to pass on; his/her board role; a take-away from the training session with his/her predecessor; each person's "why" for serving on the board; 1-2 goals for this year.

Goals shared collectively:

- Membership growth (10%); Committee structure- building it up; Engaging previous members.
 - Complete board meeting minutes within 36 hours.
 - Bring 5 prospective new members to professional development meetings.
 - Extend our emergency fund to 6 months of expenses; currently, at about 4 months.
 - Re-doing the budget to reflect what the board is currently doing.
 - Increase networking.
 - Engaging current members who don't come often.
 - Engage former members.
 - Engage prospective and new members in better ways, e.g., events; being welcoming and helping new members understand roles and traditions of the chapter.
 - Collaboration with Ocala Chapter, UF, SF, and our chapter.
 - Consider reimagining how we select speakers; combine with community relations to get the word out and let people know what it's like to join FPRA.
 - Add new members.
 - 90%-member retention.
 - Sample job descriptions from other chapters – to have a job description that fits us.
 - To support the board.
 - To have a successful first year of the Member-At-Large role on the board.
- Background: No chapters had one until about 2020. More organizations are adopting the member-at-large model.
- We as a chapter need to rethink the value we provide and promote that value.
 - Our membership is currently 63-64 strong. At our highest level, our chapter was at 100.
 - Assess what has worked with speakers and what hasn't worked.
 - Have speakers lined up by December for the full year.
 - Explore ideas for a new venue. The current venue, Las Carretas Mexican Restaurant, 3501 SW 2nd Ave, Gainesville, FL 32607, is closing and relocating.
 - Bring fun into it; or do something active.
 - Enhance our chapter's Professional Development Seminar (PDS)
 - In 2025-2026, attendance at PDS was 40-50 people. Perhaps the goal could be 75 people in 2026-2027.
 - Do at least one session at PDS that engages different workstyles and that is collaborative - working on something together.
 - Think about sponsors.

III. Announcements/Comments

- The Chapter's upcoming September 2026 professional development meeting
 - About the program
 - The chapter's upcoming September 2026 meeting's keynote speaker will be Terry Van Nortwick. She has been a member of our Gainesville Chapter for 53 years, having joined in 1973. She ran a very prominent firm, PRO INK.
 - We have a big opportunity to bring in many guests and prospective new members with her presentation; she will be a big draw because many in PR/marketing/communications circles in the area will recognize her name.
 - Terry is being very gracious and giving of her time.
 - Terry has told many interesting stories as a guest speaker, including how her husband had to be interviewed separately during her candidacy for the executive position at Florida Farm Bureau. Terry went on to become the first female executive at that company.
 - To do
 - Liz Reyes will connect with her.
 - Board directors recommend that this event get posted to the Chapter's website immediately and for the news to be distributed quickly so people can register and get this on their calendars.
 - Note: This past year, Kathy Richardson and Laurel Ring took care of the communications, website, and socials.
 - Liz Reyes said she'd work with Alisha Katz, Shelley Vickers, and others on this. Although, the Chapter will likely need to identify the location for the September meeting, first, before it can get posted for registration.

CONCLUSION

Next Board meeting:

Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 12-1pm, via Zoom

Next Professional Development meeting:

Thursday, August 20, 2026

This will be the final meeting of 2025-2026 year, when the 2026-2027-chapter board of directors will be installed.

Submitted by: Kari Hamende, ACNP