Steve Jones
2016 International President
We are approaching some exciting times as an association. By now, everyone has heard that IAEI is embarking on developing a new strategic plan and governance structure for our association. The IAEI Board of Directors has worked very hard this past year and has agreed to investigate the way we conduct business as an association. We all realize that the journey we are embarking on may require changes—changes that may be needed to keep our association relevant well into the 21st century.

In order for us to reach our goals, a recommendation was made to the executive committee to retain the services of a consulting firm with expertise in the areas of non/not-for-profit organizations and governance models. After interviewing three firms, the IAEI international board of directors (IBOD) agreed with the recommendation and had our CEO, president, and committee chair enter into agreements with Concinnity Network in August 2015. The IBOD agreed that Concinnity Network would conduct a focus group at five of the section meetings and gather information from association members on the state of IAEI. Hopefully, each of you had a chance to meet Bobbi Bilnoski, CEO of Concinnity Network, and to attend the focus group meetings which were scheduled during our recent round of section meetings. Concinnity Network will also be conducting a member survey to get feedback from those members that were not able to be at the focus group meetings.

Each section’s board of directors will receive an analysis of the outcome of the focus group meetings and members survey. The information gathered will also be shared with the full international board of directors. It will be the responsibility of each IBOD member to then filter the information and distribute it to their respective section BOD. Each step of the process will be completely open and transparent.

From the applications that have been submitted to the governance and structure task group, a strategic planning committee is in the process of being assembled. The committee will be made up from a cross section of our members, with no international board members holding a voting position on that committee. The governance and structure task group will not be involved in implementing any changes to the association and will only recommend a plan to the executive committee when the strategic planning committee has completed its work.

The international board of directors and CEO are committed to stabilizing and growing membership and to putting IAEI in the center of the electrical industry again by being the premier provider of electrical training, certifications, electrical safety, and competency worldwide.

Much has changed since the incorporation of the International Association of Electrical Inspectors 85 years ago. We are witnessing the fastest changes in communications and technology than any other generation before us. Not much more than 20 years ago, you probably didn’t have an email address and now it’s probably hard to imagine a day without email. Ten years ago, Facebook didn’t exist and now, 1.25 billion people and millions of businesses use it to communicate on a daily basis.

Even if you have not been directly involved in the electrical industry, there’s no doubt that technology has played a major role in the changes we now face as a society. Technology is changing at a rapid pace, and it is keeping up with these changes that present our current challenges.

We need to remember our association began as a
and books to include digital formats, look at new ways to deliver training not only to include on-site training but through other media channels. Furthermore, there is the need to develop more IAEI apps such as the recently deployed digital interactive magazine app available on Google Play store or Apple Store.

“An organization’s ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage.” — Jack Welch

Being relevant brings us back to the reason we need to hire a consultant, to help us see our weaknesses, strengths, and opportunities. Those of us who are in the Traditionalist and Baby Boomer generations may not necessarily care for or feel the need for change. Recent studies on generational differences show this to be true. Change is difficult. However, for the good of the association, we all need to be open-minded and embrace change. Each of us is responsible, individually and collectively, for the successes and failures of the IAEI. We all need to understand that making change is not necessarily going to be easy and that mistakes will happen, however, we will not make the same mistakes that have been made before and can be encouraged that change is happening that affects the association for its betterment.

As a member of the international board of directors, I have been honored to sit on some exciting
committees this past year. I witnessed the work the codes and standards committee made in developing the new code proposal submitting process. The committee has designed and put into place a way for all IAEI members to participate in the code development process. I have watched the future section meeting committee work diligently on what future section meetings will look like. Hopefully, each of you participated in the future section meeting survey that went out to all members and it is your input that will guide the meeting committee. It has also been very exciting for me to chair the facilities committee, and I am happy to say the international office building at 901 Waterfall Way is now up for sale. We are now in the process of defining the needs for our next building and the new opportunities it will afford us all.

I want to encourage each of you to get involved with the exciting challenges and changes facing IAEI. Contact your section’s representative on the strategic planning committee. Please let your voice be heard. The future success or failure of the IAEI is the responsibility of each of us as members.

In closing, I need to thank each of you for letting me serve as your next international president. I am committed to the goals of this association. I am proud to be a member of IAEI. I can honestly say today that IAEI has helped me secure a job with a municipality and has prepared me for advancement and promotions in that municipality. I currently hold the position of assistant building official for the city of Oceanside California today because of the support and training provided to me by the International Association of Electrical Inspectors.

The City of Oceanside’s leaders are committed to electrical safety in our community and have supported my participation with IAEI for the past 16 years so I would be remiss if I did not publicly thank the mayor, city council, city manager, and the development services director of the city of Oceanside for their continued support.

Last, but not least, I especially recognize that nothing in my life has been possible without the endless support and encouragement from my loving wife, Victoria, and daughter Arielle.