



WAAE Board Spring Retreat Agenda
CWES • Amherst Junction, Wisconsin
March 13-15, 2009

Sunday March 15

8:00am

Call to Order – 8:10am Tom called the meeting to order.
Agenda had changed since it was sent out so the new one was passed out.
Review of Past Minutes – Tory made a motion to approve the minutes.
Glen seconded. Motion passed. Minutes approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Liasonships

Betsy reminded the Board on why these connections were good/needed; quoted from the book “Forces for Good” as to the rationale of liasonships. A year ago the Board came up with a list of organizations that we needed to be very connected to (Tier One), organizations that we wanted to just be checking in with (Tier Two) and then organizations that we wanted to make contact with (Tier Three). Whole list of liasonships is on the WAAE Google Site. Tom read the list of the top tier organizations and asked Board members to “adopt” two or three organizations that you would be responsible for keeping in contact with.

Tier One –

DNR - Betsy

WEEB – Betsy and Tom

WEEF - Betsy

WI Conservation Hall of Fame – Tom

Tom thinks that League of Conservation Voters should be added to this tier. Betsy is going to be the contact for this one.

Tier Two –

DPI – Glen and Betsy

EE in WI (Sunshine)- Karla

EENA – Molly

Leave no Child Inside Coalition - Glen

National EE Week – Amanda; Betsy asked if we were on this as a collaborator. Abbie said that she was pretty sure that we were, but she would check.

Action Item – Abbie will check to make sure that we are listed on the National EE Week website.

NatureNet – Betsy

PLT, WET, WILD – Ruth Ann

Spring Adventure Workshop – Glen and Joan

UWSP Extension – Tom

WCEE – Karla

WEAC – Glen

WI Wildlife Federation – Ruth Ann

WI Women Forward – Betsy

WSST – Karla

WI Legislature – Betsy; Glen suggested that different Board members should be responsible for contacting their own home district member. He said that it would be more powerful if we contacted the person that is responsible for your district.

Action Item – Each board member needs to find out who their representative is and report the contact name/information to Abbie.

Tom asked the Board if they felt there was anyone missing from this list. Ruth Ann asked if the liasionships should be getting mailings? Board agreed that they should be getting something from us; newsletter.

Action Item – Betsy is going to update the liasionship list with the new names and assignments and then email Board for them to add the contact information.

Action Item – Each Board member needs to update the contact information on the liasionship list, most important is email, on the google site.

Action Item- Abbie will create a email mailing list of the liasionships so that they can start receiving the newsletter.

Karla suggested MEEC and NAAEE being added to tier two. Abbie asked about other state EE orgs. Betsy stated that MN, Indiana, IL, Iowa and Michigan are listed as tier three.

Action Item – Abbie to find contact information for state and national EE orgs.

Tom asked if we could move to Spring Adventure.

Spring Adventure Workshop (Glen/Joan)

Glen is planning on attending the event. Glen is attending as a representative for WAEE. Joan is planning on going and is willing to present or help out. Glen is planning on doing the presentation at the Friday night dinner and again on Saturday to all of the participants. Betsy said that having the display, brochures and membership forms there would be great. Molly is also planning on attending. David Eagan is attending and presenting, Dean Sauers is also going. Tom stated that this is something the Board needs to think about if we have the resources to run this in the future. Karla asked if this should be in the WSST newsletter? Ruth Ann asked who ran the finances. Glen reported that John Munson runs the whole thing very informally. Glen reported that this is a huge event for teachers; that more teachers probably attend this than our Fall Conference.

Revisiting the operating budget (in light of Fall Conf. shortcomings)

Tom asked Ruth Ann to comment on this. Ruth Ann stated that we are in the black but we don't have a current profit/loss statement to really be able to look at the current fiscal year. Betsy pulled the last profit loss statement that said we were in the black

Action Item – Abbie needs to run current fiscal year to date and last fiscal year to date and send to the finance committee (Betsy, Ruth Ann and Tom).

Abbie reported that membership numbers are declining and the CommunitEE memberships are coming due this spring. Ruth Ann asked about doing a special membership appeal to all expired members? Abbie stated that the contact information changes so it is hard to do that going far back but it is possible. Betsy asked if we should look closer at

doing some kind of membership drive to help with the next fiscal year. Because of the shortcomings from fall conference and winter workshop we should consider doing something to pull in new members. Tom said that we already have a big push for conference sponsors so we would need to do something after that has been done so that we don't double dip. Ruth Ann asked how far back we can go on Access for expired members? Abbie stated that early 2000s. Further discussion followed about the possibility of doing a mailing to expired members.

Action Item – Ruth Ann create a letter to mail out to expired members as a special appeal to get members to rejoin. Post letter to Google for review.

Ruth Ann brought up the idea of doing a special appeal to current members for additional donations, above and beyond their dues. Glen asked about creating some kind of item that said WAEE as a "gift" to members. Tom said we would need to get the money or at least the "order" first and then send the "gift" out after that. Ruth Ann asked the Board how they would feel about getting a letter from the organization asking for an additional donation. Tom said that he would be okay with it if there was something new and exciting that he was going to get out of it. Karla brought up the idea of sending out something free (packet of seeds, nature photo, mailing labels) and then asking for a donation with that. Betsy said that we can look into buying a mailing list with certain criteria to reach out beyond our membership. Glen said that he has the students that could do the actual mailing (the piece work of putting together a mass mailing) so that Abbie would not be responsible for all the work. Joan asked about doing something educational/useful that had good information so that they saw us as a good resource. Tory asked about doing a stronger push for GoodSearch. Joan said that it should be in the newsletter. Abbie said that it has been in several newsletters and is on the website. Betsy and Joan feel the link should be more prominent on the website. Betsy stated that maybe it should be in every newsletter just to remind members to use it; something on the front page "Are you GoodSearching?"

Board took a break at 9:00 for Breakfast.

Returned to discussion of membership drive/fundraising efforts.

Tom asked if it might work to present the new Board goals in the letter and then ask for support for what the Board wanted to do.

Action Item – Betsy to create a letter to current members highlighting some of the goals and actions of the board and asking for additional funding.

Glen asked if it should be a hard copy mailing with an envelope and postage. Karla stated that we should include the photo idea or some kind of gift. The idea for window clings came up.

Action Item – Tom to price out and order the window clings.

Karla reminded that the window clings need to be small enough to fit in the envelope.

Action Item – Abbie to price out envelopes to include in the mailing to members.

Tom asked what the deadline should be for getting this mailing out to the members. Karla suggested April 15th. Karla stated that this is the best time because people just got their tax returns. Ruth Ann suggested May 1st for both appeals, past members and current members. Betsy thinks sooner is better. Tom asked who would be willing to assist with mailing. Molly, Amanda, Karla and Tom volunteered to help with mailing. Board settled on April 15th as the deadline for both mailings.

Action Item – Abbie to email mailing volunteers with a stuffing date for getting together.

Board and Conf. Committee payments for Conferences

This is a document that was created to discuss what WAEE would cover for Board and committee members. Tom recapped this issue. This item was tabled until the next board meeting.

Money for WEEF from Fall 2008 conference

Tom reported that last year we gave a donation to the WEEF from fall conference funds. Tom recommended that because of our financial situation we should not donate to WEEF this year. Betsy stated that she totally disagrees. She reported that after talking with Randy Champeau about WEEF she feels that it is important that we continue to support the WEEF in any way that we can. She says that the donation is just really good PR for us and makes good connections with this foundation. This type of networking and liaisonship is just a good way to promote the cause. Tom said that we should not do a fundraising drive from our members and then be giving away money. Tom stated that WEEF's new brochure and their published goals do not seem to support WAEE but is more just support for WEEB's goals and programs. Ruth Ann asked for clarity on how WEEF can spend their money. Tom clarified the difference between WEEF and WEEB. Betsy stated that maybe there is a need for a meeting with Janet Brandt about what WEEF is planning on doing with their money and their overall goals. Ruth Ann is concerned that the same way we never can get a guarantee from WEEB for funding that this same thing will happen with WEEF. Betsy believes this is why we need to continue to support WEEF because the decisions about how to spend the money is not totally finalized. Tom said that a meeting with the finance committee is necessary before a decision can be made. Karla stated that the meeting with Janet Brandt is a good idea to get a clear understanding of what the partnership can look like in the future. Tom said that it is something that was not in the budget for this year but we could add it to the budget for next year and try to find more money for this year.

Action Item - Betsy to set up a meeting with Janet and report back to the Board about WEEF's goals and the partnership with WEEF.

Ruth Ann took a look at the budget and stated that there is a line item in the budget for a donation to WEEF but no money was designated to that line item. Tom suggested looking at the MEEC money account to see if there is money in there to use for the WEEF donation. Betsy stated that we did not use the advocacy advisor funds for this year and the donation to WEEF would fall under the advocacy category. A discussion followed to clarify the MEEC projects and funds.

Tom asked how everyone felt about moving money from MEEC account to make a donation to WEEF.

Karla made a motion. Joan seconded. Motion passed.

Action Item - Abbie to move \$1200 from MEEC to checking to make the donation to WEEF. \$1000 to go towards WEEF and \$200 to go into operating budget.

Tom asked when this should happen and will it conflict with the member fundraising letters. A discussion of this timing followed. Glen stated that the letter is more about the board's goals and projects so it might not conflict or people may not notice. Betsy stated that our donation to WEEF does promote our ultimate goal for WAEE. Amanda gave her opinion that she did not see a conflict as long as we state in the letter specific projects or goals in the appeal to the members, but she feels that the letters asking for money need to be specific. Betsy asked for clarification in how specific the letter should be, do we mention WEEF in the letter? Joan stated that the letter needs to focus on the Board goals and focus on how one of them is partnerships because then the WEEF donation is one step to help WAEE build partnerships. Ruth Ann asked when the check would be given and who was going to write the press release. Betsy stated that last year she had her picture in the paper giving the check to WEEF. Glen stated that it is all about being specific about what we want to do. Karla suggested specifically stating in the letter who we were trying to build partnerships with. Ruth Ann feels that we should not be that specific because all of the partnerships will not involve a monetary donation.

Action Item – Betsy to set up a time to give Janet the donation after she has met with her about the goals for WEEF for this information and has been passed along to the Board and the donation is approved by the board.

Action Item – Abbie to create an email mailing list of WI newspapers and PR contacts.

Karla sidetracked to make WAEE look more professional we should get polo shirts or name tags for the Board. Discussion followed.

Action Item – Abbie to check into pricing for WAEE Board member nametags. Tom wants magnetic backing not a pin.

Student Timeline for elections

Betsy reminded Tom that we do have the student elections in the bylaws, so any changes to the timeline needs to fit within the bylaws. Molly stated that she doesn't think the dates are that big of a deal because they are not that off. The important part is just getting started earlier on the process. A review of the new schedule followed. Amanda explained why the students felt it was important to change the timeline to better fit the schedule of students that would be looking at being a student Board member. A comparison of the bylaws and the new policy followed.

Action Item – Amanda and Molly to create a call for candidates and a mailing list of potential students.

Action Item – Abbie to send student position information to Molly and Amanda.

Deadline for the nominations to be in is May 1st.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget: modifications prior to approval

Budget was discussed during the Saturday portion of the retreat. Tom asked how everyone was feeling about the budget. There are some small changes that needed to be made to the budget due to projects that were brought up today. Finance committee will have budget posted on Google with the new changes for Board approval.

Action Item – Tom sending out email to Board when the budget is posted and include a deadline for approval.

Fall Conference 2009

Contact and price out entertainment suggestions – Board discussed entertainment options on Saturday.

Action Item – Amanda is going to price out entertainment options and availability.

Creation of new sponsor list and contact numbers – Board brainstormed new list of sponsor options.

Action Item – Karla and Ruth Ann are filling in sponsor database as a Google document.

Tom is working on the sponsor form and levels of sponsorship.

Discussion of the sponsor letter and timing of how to get these letters out followed. Deadline for getting the sponsor letters out is April 30th.

Tom suggested that we have one generic letter, one letter for the local sponsors and then one for MEEC sponsors. Once letters are written they will get posted to the Google conference page.

Action Item – Karla will work on the local sponsor letter.

Action Item – Ruth Ann is working on MEEC and generic letter.

Action Item – Tom, Ruth Ann and Abbie will sign and send out the sponsor letters once they are all posted to the Google site.

Registration costs for attendees – Tom is working on this; discussed on Saturday.

Auction: Solicitation of items – Board to solicit donations.

Abbie asked that someone from the Board make a personal contact with Dean Sauers thanking him for his support and asking him to make something again for this year. Karla volunteered to contact him via phone.

Fall Conference 2010

Location/Site Theme – Madison has been brought up as an option.

There is no set committee or chair for this event yet. Betsy expressed her concerns about doing another conference in an urban setting.

Discussion followed of holding the conference in Madison. Tom asked for other location suggestions. Door County/Sturgeon Bay was suggested as an option. Board seemed positive about the far north option. Tom asked for someone to commit to being on the committee. Karla and Molly stated that they would be willing to be a part 2010 conference committee.

Action Item – Abbie to send mailing list with addresses and counties to Glen for a student project to put together a map of members.

Pluses and minuses were discussed for having the conference in Sturgeon Bay; new bridge project, other festivals going on up there at the same time, need to book hotel very early and reserve block of rooms, etc.

Topic tabled until June board meeting.

Goals for 2009: WAEE Awareness theme

Review of Saturday brainstorm and assign action items. Tom recapped what the Board discussed on Saturday to update Glen and Abbie who were not at the meeting. Tom went through the list of ideas.

Action Item - Tom is going to meet with Scott Johnson (CWES) about Winter Workshop.

Tom asked if there was someone on the Board that would be willing to run the awards for 2009. No one responded. Glen asked for clarification on what is involved with running the awards program. Abbie asked that the deadline be kept and not have an extension this year because that messed things up for the School Forest Awards and made it difficult to get the plaques done in time. Several Board members expressed their concern for why they cannot commit to serving on this committee. Joan said that she would be willing to help if she could work underneath someone else because she doesn't have the contacts and background information to feel comfortable doing it on her own.

Action Item – Tory is going to create a google document of principals from the DPI website with contact information so they can be informed about the awards program.

Action Item – Betsy to give awards committee list of nature center directors to contact about awards program.

Action Item – Tom to contact Nick Hylla to see if the WEEB leadership committee wants to partner with WAEE for the WEEB Award.

Tom brought up the fall conferences for 2009 and which ones that WAEE would be presenting/attending at.

MEEC – Tory had a contact from Urban Ecology Center doing Citizen Science stuff that she thought would be a good presenter. We will be donating a basket to their auction. Tory is going to talk to Joey about attending. Abbie reminded the Board about the high level of involvement of the Illinois EE Association at the 2007 MEEC. Deadline for presentation proposals is April 1st.

Potential MEEC presenters -

Action Item – Tom to contact Sunshine.

Action Item - Karla to contact Randy Colton, Susan Ermer and Sam Thayer.

NAAEE – Abbie is planning on presenting and attending representing WAEE.

WEAC – Ruth Ann is attending and is willing to represent WAEE. Glen is also going to look into being involved.

Brochure – making a change to corporate membership fee to \$350 a year. Delete the corporate life option.

Ruth Ann made a motion to approve change. Glen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Action Item – Tom to get the brochure original copy from the designer.
Action Item - Joan, Amanda and Tom will work to revise brochure.
Action Item – Abbie to send a stack of brochures to Betsy.

Action Item – Abbie to make a facebook group for WAEE.

Action Item – Ruth Ann looking into the liability insurance to see what it actually covers.

Action Item – Abbie to post new letterhead to Google docs.

Discussion of putting a date on the WAEE Brochure and a list of the organizational members on the brochure followed. Discussion tabled until next meeting.

Newsletter changes

A discussion of the list of changes followed (Newsletter Potential changes document on WAEE Google Site). Karla suggested putting a permanent link on the newsletter of where to find resources and grants (EE in Wisconsin) so that members could still have easy access to that information when those sections of the newsletters are removed. Betsy feels that the Tier One and Tier Two partners can still advertise in the newsletter for free. Amanda questioned why some of the groups that use us for advertising can't be organizational members since they have an advertising budget.

Tom suggested extending the meeting 10 minutes.
Glen made a motion to extend the meeting. Karla seconded.

Board agreed to the welcome new members section, member highlight section and board update section. Board agreed to removing the grants section, only allowing members and liaison organizations to advertise in the newsletter, and placing the WCEE section within the member news section. Abbie should send monthly emails to the Board to get updates about what they did that month.

Review of Committee Assignments

Tom went over the list of assignments to double check with Board members that they were okay with the list.

Action Item – Betsy to post committee list with new updates to Google docs.

Review of Past Action Items –

Action Item – Tom to invite Ruth Ann and Glen to the Google site.
Action Item – Tory to send Tom contact information for Todd Brennan to be a possible board member.
Action Item – Abbie to send change in June 27th meeting location to Menona Terrace in Madison to Sunshine.
Action Item – Tom will set up a conference call with Kathe Conn, Nature Net Director (and perhaps Sunshine Buchholz, EE IN WI Coordinator) to offer to take the CommunitEE off her hands. NOT DONE, Need to do.
Action Item – Betsy will take on the project of gathering information from the WAEE Membership on their impact on society. IN PROGRESS.

Action Item – Tom to develop a sponsor level brochure that will be sent with the sponsor letters. IN PROGRESS.

Action Item- Abbie to develop sponsorship letters, print and send to Tom to sign. IN PROGRESS.

Action Item – Abbie to gather options for online registration, coordinate with Sunshine on which would work best with University server and then report back to the Board. IN PROGRESS.

Ruth Ann made a motion to adjourn. Tory seconded.

Karla thanked CWES for hosting. The Board applauded CWES!

Meeting adjourned at 12:16.