

WAEF Board Meeting Minutes  
May 23, 2004

Board members in attendance: Mary Vymetal-Taylor, Gail Epping, Michelle Hartwig, Carrie Hembree, Betsy Parker

Board member arriving after meeting was called to order: Nancy Saulsbury, Angela Vlies

Board members not in attendance: Rebecca Clarke, Jeremy Higgins, Mary Holleback

Guests: Deborah Engel-DiMauro, Pat Marinac, Sterling Strathe

The WAEF Board meeting was called to order by Chair Mary Vymetal-Taylor at 10:13am on a rainy May 23, 2004. The minutes from the last meeting were amended. Gail Epping moved to approve with a correction; Carrie Hembree seconded. The motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting passed unanimously.

The call went out for public input. Mary VT reminded the Board that guests would be arriving later in the day. Gail asked that time for BUDGET APPROVAL be added to unfinished business.

Within these minutes, please note that an \* indicates that a written document exists to support and supplement the information provided. Upon reviewing the minutes, each Board member should confirm whether or not they possess these documents. If not, contact the Chair-Elect.

Committee Reports

\*Management: Mary VT made some comments about the last Board meeting experience and how the Board can come together as a volunteer entity so that all members feel appreciated and supported. There were two Management Committee Reports to review. The Management Committee meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup> explored committee priorities and Board organization. Mary VT handed out copies of the \*Management Committee priorities tick sheet. The Management Committee meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup> explored the WAEF Administrative Assistant position description. Copies of the final \*AA position description were made available.

\*News from the Chair: Mary VT has instituted this new monthly report in order to share comprehensive information about the WAEF Chair's activities. The report was very well-received. Yay for Mary VT!

\*Finance: Gail went over the current cash flow budget sheet. She pointed out assets listed, including checking account balance, investment savings, and the money market fund. She raised a question about accounting for organizational assets beyond capital, such as computers, office supplies, etc. Mary VT stated that AA Shirley Christianson has a listing of these assets. Nancy Saulsbury suggested that this listing exist somewhere outside the WAEF office in case of an accident. Gail went over comments on the cash

flow pages. Nancy mentioned that a new bookkeeping employee at Rutabaga has very good accounting skills and might be willing to work with the Finance Committee. This would be nice!

\*Conference: Mary Holleback's written report was reviewed. A question about carpooling for the 2004 Fall Conference was answered with the distribution of an \*email from 2004 Fall Conference Chair Sterling Strathe. All board members should have received this email on Thursday, May 20. Sterling's suggestion to encourage/support carpooling by adding carpooling discussion boards to the WAEE Conference website was endorsed by the Board. All Board members are encouraged to let interested parties know about the discussion boards. Gail asked to amend the Conference Committee report to reflect that Dan Sivek is NOT YET working on a WAEE history compilation for the 2005 Fall Conference. A \*supplemental report about the 2004 Fall Conference from Sterling was distributed by Mary VT.

\*Membership: The membership totals in this report are not correct; however, the correct numbers were emailed to all Board members before the Board meeting. The Retired Conference Rate Discussion, the Membership Survey Discussion, and the Electronic Communications Policy Discussion were highlighted and will be examined further during Unfinished Business. Mary VT asked at this time that the website committee be involved in the development of the Electronic Communications Policy.

\*Networking: The Networking Committee would like more direction from the Board on the topics of the WAEE Marketing Plan and representation of WAEE at conferences.

**ACTION ITEM:** The Networking Committee will email the Board with a request for direction on these topics and compile results.

\*Advocacy: The current goal of this committee is to gain enthusiastic members. Gail mentioned that she would be interested in 2005 after her term of service as a Board member. The Board discussed the sad fate of support for environmental education within the DNR. The 2004 Fall Conference "session" on EE advocacy in Wisconsin was considered. The Board felt that sessions requested by the Board as association business should be mandated as part of any conference.

**ACTION ITEM:** Advocacy Committee will follow through with the Conference Committee to ensure that WAEE sessions are included in conferences as deemed appropriate by the Board.

\*Student: Angela Vlies shared information about the developing WAEE PowerPoint presentation to be used to promote WAEE to college students. Perhaps this PowerPoint presentation could be available on the website? The Student Committee plans to promote student membership in WAEE through presentations in fall 2004 when school begins.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mary VT will check with Sunshine about available server space for the WAEE website to ensure that there is enough room for PowerPoint presentations.

**ACTION ITEM:** Angela needs WAEE brochures.

#### Additional Reports

\*Administrative Assistant: See report for details.

Website: Mary VT shared a verbal report. There is a meeting of this committee on May 24 at 2:30pm in the WAEE office in Stevens Point. They will be looking at website structure and committee priorities.

#### Liaison Reports

\*Spring Adventure Workshop (SAW): Although WAEE is listed as a sponsor, the SAW planners have not used the WAEE logo in materials. Next year's SAW is the 25<sup>th</sup> annual event. WAEE Board members are encouraged to get involved in planning and support.

\*Governor's High School Conference: Planning is going very well for this event. Share information with any interested parties. All is available on the WCEE website at <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/youthconference/index.htm>.

\*Project Learning Tree (PLT): The Advisory Committee for PLT is not meeting this year. It is disappointing that the PLT position within the DNR is not being replaced after the departure of Al Stenstrup. The WAEE Board can expect a more thorough update on PLT after June when Al comes back to town for some workshops.

EE News: Carrie displayed a few copies of the final issue of EE News. It is available on the DNR website at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/bureau/education/eenews.htm>. It is unclear at this time as to whether printed copies of this issue will be distributed, but hopefully they will. The WAEE listing in this EE News issue was discussed.

WI Conservation Hall of Fame: Joe Passineau was invited to attend the Board meeting but did not respond to the request. It will cost WAEE \$50 to be a member of this organization. The pros and cons of this expenditure were discussed. WAEE is currently listed as a member on the website (<http://www.wchf.org>) even though we haven't paid dues.

\*Nature and Environmental Center Section: Kathe Conn, as representative of this section, is awaiting a list of email addresses from WAEE of those members who marked interested in this section on their registration forms. These emails will be used to share relevant information to these members.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mary VT will supply Kathe with the requested database.

\*WEEB: See written report.

NAAEE: Mary VT gave a verbal report. The affiliates' survey was completed based on comments shared by Board members. A \*request has been sent for EE stories to feature

in the NAAEE Communicator. This request was handed over to the Networking Committee for consideration.

**ACTION ITEM:** The Networking Committee will follow up with the NAAEE Communicator scenario.

LEAF: No report was submitted. Carrie supplied the informal report that LEAF was “rocking and rolling” and doing very well indeed.

Ice Age Trail and Trail Foundation Education Committee: The report was not attached to the Board meeting email.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mary VT will distribute this report.

Review of Action Items from previous Board meeting. Most of the Action Items were accomplished! Hooray for this hard-working Board!

#### Unfinished Business

History Project: Mary VT confirmed that this project was going nowhere, as was indicated earlier during the Conference Committee report.

\*Electronic Communications Policy: Much discussion ensued as to the appropriate format for a policy of this type. It was considered that items 1. and the first sentence of item 3. of the existing document constituted the actual policy. The remarks at the bottom of the existing document seem to refer to a newsletter proposal more than an electronic communications policy. Should information about a specific type of newsletter be reflected in the electronic communications policy?

Nancy moved that WAEE adopt items 1. and the first sentence of 3. of the existing document as the basis for our electronic communications policy. Angela seconded. During discussion, it was decided that item 2. from the existing document could be used as a purpose statement in the policy text. Motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM:** The Networking and Membership Committees shall draft a simplified electronic communication policy. The website committee will provide input into this process. A final reading and vote on this policy will occur at the August Board meeting.

WAEE Newsletter: Newsletter format, whether print or electronic, was extensively discussed. (This minute-taker apologizes for the paucity of details on this discussion. It is difficult to separate what was said at this Board meeting on the topic and what was said at the many, many other Board meetings and in the many, many other WAEE emails where this topic has surfaced.) It was concluded that the Membership and Networking Committees will provide a newsletter proposal to the Board, based on meeting comments and remarks contained in the existing electronic communications policy document.

**ACTION ITEM:** The Networking and Membership Committees will submit an email questionnaire to the Board regarding a WAEE newsletter. This questionnaire will contain a summary of the multitude of previous observations about a WAEE newsletter. These observations will be gleaned from previous Board meeting minutes and Board Retreat notes. The questionnaire will be submitted with ample time for Board members to consider and reply by a deadline of June 30.

**ACTION ITEM:** The Networking and Membership Committees will compile Board questionnaire replies and produce a newsletter procedure and format draft proposal by July 31. This will be distributed to the Board for review and consideration BEFORE the August Board meeting. A first reading of the newsletter procedure and format draft proposal will occur at the August Board meeting.

Guest: Deborah Engel-DiMauro

Topic: EE Communication Meeting and EPA state capacity building money  
Deborah shared with the Board an overview of the history and current activities surrounding this topic. The summarizing discussion included the opportunity for a team from WI to participate in a NEEAP Leadership Clinic to facilitate the process of planning a statewide EE Summit. Mary VT provided copies of the NEEAP Leadership Clinic Design Workshop Application. These minutes reflect the Board's approval of WAEE's participation in and support of a WI EE Summit and the NEEAP Clinic to plan this summit.

Guests: Pat Marinac and Sterling Strathe

Topic: Complimentary registration to 2004 Fall Conference for invited speakers  
Sterling explained that the 2004 Fall Conference Committee had budgeted \$3000 for travel support for the 30+ invited speakers. These speakers represent experts in the field of forestry, DNR staff, US Forest Service professionals, etc. Very few of the speakers have taken the committee up on the offer to support travel expenses. Therefore, Sterling is proposing to use the remainder of the \$3000 budgeted amount to offer complimentary registrations for these speakers. This does not include meals or lodging. The hope is that some of these forestry professionals will be encouraged to stay for the conference and network with environmental educators. As the \$3000 has already been provided by the fundraising efforts of the 2004 Fall Conference Committee, no expenditure is being asked of WAEE. In fact, the registration dollars will come from the \$3000 directly to WAEE as conference profit. Pat Marinac added that this one-time provision of complimentary registrations for invited speakers is NOT intended to set a WAEE conference precedent. The Conference Committee should be made aware of this. The Board agreed to Sterling's proposal and made note of Pat's comments.

Sterling next offered the support of the LEAF staff and 2004 Fall Conference Committee members in handling registrations for the conference, should WAEE not have an Administrative Assistant who can facilitate this process by the time registrations begin arriving at the WAEE office.

The Board shared concerns with Sterling that the three WAEE Board-recommended sessions for the 2004 Fall Conference were not given adequate emphasis. These three WAEE Board-recommended sessions are: EE in Politics: Election 2004, EE Advocacy in WI, and How to be Involved in WAEE/Board Member Recruitment. The current idea is to have each of these topics featured at one meal during the conference. The Board requested further details as to how these sessions will be handled.

**ACTION ITEM:** Carrie will meet with Sterling to work out the particulars of these sessions/topics. These details will be shared with the Board. This action will need to occur by June 15, as July 1 is the deadline for content that will become part of the conference support materials.

Retired Conference Rate: Further discussion is needed and action was semi-tabled pending input from the [Management Committee](#). See Membership Committee report and previous Board minutes from January and March for more.

**ACTION ITEM:** (Revived from previous meeting's minutes)  
The [Management Committee](#) will confer with the [Membership Committee](#) as to the impact of a decision on retired rates for conferences.

\*Budget Approval: Gail presented the 2004-2005 Budget Draft. Mary VT noted a few items that she neglected to include, such as insurance costs. A line item needs to be added for WAEE membership possibilities, such as WI Conservation Hall of Fame (\$50 for WAEE to be a member) or NAAEE (\$300 for WAEE to be a member). This was added in with a budget of \$500. Considerable discussion ensued about printing costs and the UWSP-contracted amount for services. Line items for printing appear throughout the budget, but there is no way to determine how much of this printing will go through UWSP and therefore impact the \$5000 contracted services amount with WAEE. The current process does not allow for this distinction to be made. All committees shall be encouraged to keep close track of all printing costs during 2004-2005 and note which printing goes through UWSP. Additionally, all committees shall use the \*Printing Request Form for UWSP printing.

Tangential Discussion: How can WAEE become a member organization of other entities, such as the WI Conservation Hall of Fame? Answer: Bring any suggestions of this sort to the [Management Committee](#).

**ACTION ITEM:** Add this responsibility to the [Management Committee](#) description/duties.

**ACTION ITEM:** Nancy will finalize the revision of the Budget Process support document.

Nancy moved that we accept the 2004-2005 Budget as amended. Betsy seconded. A brief conversation about the representation of grants in the budget followed. The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM:** Send a note of thanks to Schmeackle for use of facilities for this Board meeting.

\*Membership Survey: The Board discussed the items on the current Membership Survey. Betsy Parker stated that the survey should be made available on the website for members who would prefer to reply electronically. The Board agreed. Perhaps categories for age ranges and formal/non-formal educator status could be included? It was suggested to add Bookkeeping or Accounting along with Budget under item 1.b. Items 3., 4., and 9. might be difficult for members to answer. Can item 8.f. Phone be removed from the survey? Overall, the Membership Survey in form and function was affirmed as outstanding.

**ACTION ITEM:** Because of the complicity of discussion surrounding the Membership Survey, Betsy will pull together comments for the Membership Committee. Carrie volunteered to help Betsy with this process.

MEEC MOU Steering Committee: All relevant states have finally signed this agreement. The document will be housed at the WAEE office. Several persons have stepped forward with interest in serving as members of the WI team. These include Jeremy Higgins as a Board member and Dolly Ledin as a member who has been involved in a MEEC previously.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mary VT will work with Mary Holleback and the Conference Committee to follow up with this.

\*Grant Proposal Process/Policy: This is the second “reading” of this document. The policy will come to a vote at the August meeting with minimal discussion.

**ACTION ITEM:** Nancy will supply Board members with this document.

**ACTION ITEM:** Board members will review and submit comments to Nancy by July 1.

#### New Business

Defined Management Roles: See the \*Notes from the Chair for more. Consensus is that these roles are logical and tidy.

New Liaison Positions: Discussion tabled until August.

\*Wisconsin Stewardship Network: Discussion tabled until August.

Resources on the Web Project: Mary VT shared \*documents detailing results of this project.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mary VT will work to reconcile this grant with the Finance Committee

\*Electronic Board Voting Policy: Carrie shared samples from NAAEE, TN, and IL. Board supported the use of a ten-day voting rule on electronic communications, modeled after IL.

**ACTION ITEM:** Carrie will draft an official electronic voting policy for first reading at the August Board meeting. This will be accompanied by an intra-Board communication policy.

\*Release of Award Winner Phone Numbers and Addresses: (This topic was included on the Awards Committee report. It is noted that the Awards Committee report was not included on the agenda or discussed.) A graduate student at Northern Illinois University is conducting research on award-winning K-12 environmental educators. He would like contact information of past WAEE winners. The Board concluded that to disclose such information would not be appropriate.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mary VT will follow up with this situation, ensuring that WAEE award winners are sufficiently contacted and respected.

Review the \*Parking Lot from the Spring Retreat: Discussion tabled until August.

WAEE Office without an AA: Carrie updated the Board as to the hiring of a new AA for WAEE. The university pool from which the candidates are coming is not spectacular. Gail suggested looking into other LTE positions that are available at the university so that a candidate could consider two part-time positions, thereby becoming full-time. Should the university pool not provide an appropriate candidate, the WAEE AA position will be advertised locally in central WI. Board members, especially Michelle Hartwig, are encouraged to ask peers to consider filling in at the WAEE office until an AA is found. The position was increased to 20 hours per week. This will entail increasing the AA fringe to \$4470 total and AA salary to \$10,400 total in the budget. Nancy moved to approve the increase of the WAEE AA position from 15 to 20 hours per week. Michelle seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Gail moved to amend the budget to reflect changes to the AA position to cover increased fringe and salary for increased hours. Carrie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### Announcements

\*Printing and Design costs from UWSP are available.

The next WAEE Board meeting will be in Rhinelander from 10am – 3pm. The location will be confirmed a later time.

Michelle moved to adjourn at 3:47pm. Gail seconded. Motion passed unanimously.