

**WAEF Board Meeting
December 9, 2006
El Puente High School, Milwaukee, WI**

Board Members Present: Jeremy Higgins, Amy Workman, Betsy Parker, Joey Zoecher, Rebecca Westpahl, Tanya Zastrow

Meeting called to order at 9:44am

Minutes taken by Tanya Zastrow

Review of the Agenda

No changes to the agenda

Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

On 2nd page where it talks about the WEMA meeting, Betsy suggested changing the wording about WEMA to show that using the hired lobbyist would be conditional.

On the 3rd page, there is an extra “were” in Membership Committee paragraph.

On the 4th page, in the WEEB Liaison report, last sentence “loser format” should be looser format.

Amy motioned to approve the minutes, Betsy seconded. All approved.

Public Input

No public present, but opinions from WAEF members were expressed by board members

Joey expressed concern from a former WAEF member that expressed her reasons why she no longer attends fall conferences due to lack of training for veteran EE professionals. Instead she attend NAEF conferences where she finds more professional development opportunities.

Amy received member input about member benefits by hosting member outings/networking opportunities. The WAEF member suggested advertising these events through school districts.

Jeremy said Dan Sivek suggested to change the wording on the elections ballot to say “up to 3” instead of “vote for 3”.

Administrative Report

Written report received and distributed to all board members before the meeting. See official report for more details. Randy Champeau and Jeremy will meet with Carol for her performance review. Discussion was held about Carol’s position, hourly rate, and job description. The management committee is working on discussing with Carol these items and how to proceed. Jeremy stated the items should be resolved by the next

meeting. They are looking into changing her pay into a salary pay structure versus an hourly pay. Joey suggested letting the management committee make the necessary changes.

Carol updated the by-laws and Jeremy reviewed them and distributed them to all board members.

Insurance for the board was more expensive than expected, it has not been secured. It would have cost \$600 annually to insure the board. Management committee is reviewing the other insurance policies. AON has board insurance that we are planning on getting.

Brochure - WAEE general brochures are down to 20. Carol looked into printing additional brochures through the University's print shop. Prices are as stated:

\$0.14/each for black and white

\$0.70/each for color

Betsy suggested looking into our printing companies to find cheaper fees. She suggested Badger State Industries. Board agreed black and white brochure are fine for now.

ACTION ITEM

Carol to look into Badger State Industries and other print companies for a quote on printing black and white brochures for a cheaper price.

Budget Report

Budget reports were submitted for July 1-December 6 Profit & Loss, Fall Conference Budget, and Balance sheet.

Question was brought up about the \$120 expense under webpage. It was the fee paid for the set-up of Paypal.

Management Committee

Committee submitted written report to all board members before meeting. See report for details.

Betsy brought up the need for a policy for working with other organizations. The question was brought up what committee should work on this policy. Membership committee recommends not sharing membership information with other organizations. Betsy recommends we need to come up with a policy for working with organizations so that we can possibly increase WAEE membership through more open doors. Joey suggested asking members whether or not they want to be on a list that allows WAEE to share their personal information with other related organizations. Joey suggested it might benefit WAEE to reciprocate memberships with other organizations because they will help promote WAEE. Betsy suggested that if we proceed with the re-branding of WAEE the professionals may be able to help out with these questions. Amy reinstated the fact that our current fees are very low compared to other organizations and for that same reason we can't afford to give away any memberships. She said that the membership committee is on the right track to create member benefits that will hopefully create a stir

to draw more members in. It was agreed upon that a policy needs to be set, but no agreement on what the policy should state was made.

ACTION ITEM

- Networking and membership committee to draft up a policy on organizational partnerships which will be distributed via email for board member review for possible discussion and vote at next meeting.
 - membership reciprocation
 - sharing membership lists
 - supporting legislative policy

Membership Committee

Membership Committee written report submitted to board members via email along with email detailing upcoming membership outing at Cave of the Mounds.

Membership Outing: A membership outing has been set up with Cave of the Mounds for the South Central WAEE region. Betsy agrees that the outing is great, but suggested that WAEE set flat rates for all membership outings. Discussion was held whether or not this is possible with some believing that this is not possible. Betsy stressed that membership outings should be standardized and that they be set up and advertised on a yearly basis. She believes the membership committee should pick locations to host membership outings. Jeremy believes that the membership committee should go ahead with their plans and do what is possible at this time. Jeremy stated that today's discussion about membership outings should be continued by either the membership committee or as a conference call at a later date.

Two pilot membership outings will occur this winter and spring, Cave of the Mounds and Urban Ecology. They will be done by Amy, Tanya, and Joey. They will not follow a standardized format and will be a learning outing for the membership committee as how to proceed and improve the process. These pilots will hopefully generate an outline on how to host/run outings in the future by other WAEE members. Cave of the Mounds will be held in late February. The trip will cost \$9 for WAEE members and \$11 for non-WAEE members. The outing to the Urban Ecology Center will be held in spring.

Discussion was held about a form that can be filled out by those interested in hosting a WAEE member outing. There was a form at one time, but has not been found. Membership committee will look into developing a new form and standardization process for outings.

Betsy reported on introducing herself to WI Natural Resources Foundation and will pursue the idea of connecting with them and the possibility of working with them and their activities. It might be possible to connect with them and offer WAEE discounts for their programs. This would serve as another WAEE member benefit.

Membership committee recommends to the board that WAEE remain a member of the Conservation Hall of Fame and that WAEE should dissolve the need for a member to be

on their committee. Joey questioned whether or not we should support them if they are not supporting us. It was agreed that we should support the hall of fame and their mission. Joey said that we should include a letter in our renewal to them stating we would like them to be a WAEE member. Jeremy reviewed the by-laws and made a list of organizations such as the hall of fame

Motion: Will wait to dissolve the WAEE representation to the WI Conservation Hall of Fame committee until confirmation of the committee's existence has been established. Amy motioned, Joey 2nd, all in favor – approved.

Membership committee suggested meeting to discuss grant writing. However no meeting is possible before the holidays, so board members are encouraged to write grants on their own. Grants must be submitted to board for review before being sent in. Grants needed include for the brochure, re-branding of WAEE, member outings, and more.

Three different volunteers from the membership committee are calling WAEE members whose memberships have expired since July. One more volunteer is needed to call people whose memberships expired in November and December.

ACTION ITEM

- Jeremy will renew the membership with the WI Conservation Hall of Fame.
- Amy and Tanya will set date and details for the Cave of the Mounds membership outing.
- Joey will set up a spring membership outing at the Urban Ecology center.

Networking Committee

Committee submitted a written report and submitted it to board members via email before the meeting.

A last minute quote came in for the services of Michael Blumenfeld, a public affairs counselor. Board agreed that there is no need to shop around for other quotes. Joey thought his services might qualify for a WEEB grant under the EE Advocacy area. There is a possibility of him working with WAEE to better meet our budget constraints. Amy expressed concerns over whether or not his actions would be considered “lobbying” which could put our non-profit status in danger. Joey suggested the possibility of him working on an on/off basis during the busy times of legislature, to avoid paying him during times when things are slow. Jeremy said Randy suggested writing letters to legislature just to get our name out there. Jeremy questioned whether or not he would be willing to work on an as needed basis rather than monthly. The next step is to set another meeting with him to determine how his services can be tailored to meet WAEE's needs and budget restrictions. Joey, Rebecca, and Betsy will try to meet with him asap, so Joey can put together a WEEB grant by January 13, 2007.

ACTION ITEM

- Betsy to set up an appointment with Michael Blumenfeld to discuss in more depth how his services can be tailored to fit WAEE's needs.
- Joey to write a draft WEEB grant to cover the services of Michael Blumenfeld.

Cath Conn and Betsy agree to continue working on regional networks. Betsy questioned what other groups need to be included beyond nature centers. Cath suggested that possibly WAEE buy out/sponsor/take over Nature Net's searchable nature center database. Jeremy suggested talking with Sunshine about this since her new position might incorporate this type of activity. He suggested that the website she is developing might be a better option. Amy agrees that it makes more sense to include it with the new WCEE website, rather than WAEE. Betsy suggested putting a link to the searchable database from the WAEE website.

ACTION ITEM

- Betsy will contact Sunshine to have a link included to Nature Net's searchable nature center database from the WAEE webpage.

Re-Branding

Betsy included the report from Good For Business detailing the re-branding process. Betsy stated she wants to find a grant to support this re-branding process. Joey stated a corporate sponsorship would be better. The Belden Foundation was also suggested as a possibility to fund this re-branding of WAEE. Question was brought up whether the whole re-branding costs \$25,000 or if items such as naming, web site design, brochure, and more are additional. Betsy commented on how we select what members should be included in this process. Amy suggested receiving feedback from Good For Business for this selection process. Rebecca stated that most likely we will only end up with less than half of the people we start the re-branding process with. Joey suggests we shoot for \$100,000 grant to cover all expenses. Jeremy feels that Belden will most likely fund organizations that need help severely that will target the audience they are targeting. Joey suggested going for more money to include the salary to cover an employee to maintain the project. The possibility of trying to include money to cover part of Carol's salary came up as well, but runs into difficulties of her position being forever changed. Betsy suggested including in the grant an executive director position to administer the grant open to all who want to apply. Joey suggested \$35,000/year plus benefits. Amy suggested changing the title to project director to better match the salary. Betsy said that position might be more than just administering the grant. She also expressed concern that WAEE has no key person to represent the organization. Rebecca stressed the concerns over the amount of work, time, and commitment that will be needed to get through this process. It was recommended that possibly a director should be hired after the re-branding is started, maybe finished so that person can then promote the new organization and manage it. Jeremy stressed this is a key time to get things moving as leaders in EE are retiring and leaving. Joey stressed that we need to jump in and get things moving, so that we can start before it's too late.

ACTION ITEM

- Joey will look into Belden Foundation as a possible funding source to fund the re-branding, board training, transportation, and more.

Betsy requested help in researching calendar of conferences. Rebecca received a list of conferences from Carol that was forwarded to her from Susan Ermer from the CNR. Betsy suggested researching whether or not booth fees can be avoided by presenting at the conference. Joey will average \$850 a conference to coverage booth fees in the re-branding grants.

ACTION ITEM

- Jeremy will ask Carol to ask Sunshine to see if there are count totals for the number of hits on the WAEE webpage.

Conference Committee

John submitted a conference committee written report to board members via email before the meeting.

The Waukesha Visitors and Convention Bureau contacted WAEE about hosting the 2008 WAEE conference. It is yet unknown whether or not the Retzer Nature Center is willing to organize the event.

Winter Workshop – It appears that no murder mystery or Hawaiian theme party will occur at Winter Workshop. Board discussed open mic night for entertainment – open mic, poetry, music, etc.

ACTION ITEM

- Jeremy will contact John and Steve as needed to confirm details about entertainment, presenters, and other items needed.

Awards Committee

Committee submitted a written report before the board meeting. No action taken until Michael returns from vacation.

Student Committee

Jeremy spoke with two students about serving as WAEE student board members. One student was no longer a student and now is ineligible. Rainey Kreis, a graduate student, is interested and submitted her resume for approval.

Joey made a motion to accept Rainey as a student board member. Betsy 2nd, All approved.

ACTION ITEM

- Jeremy will notify Rainey of her new student board acceptance.

Liaisons

Jeremy met with Randy. Pat Marinac is stepping down as the environmental education representative on the WEEB board. There are two representative positions available, environmental education and nature center. WAEE board should write letters recommending people for the positions. Cath Crowley Conn was a suggested person for one of the positions. Joey suggested Ken Leback from Urban Ecology. Betsy suggested George Archibald from the International Crane Foundation. Rebecca suggested Clayton Russell from Northland College.

ACTION ITEM

- Jeremy will send letter to Louie Molepski thanking him for serving on the WEEB board and notifying him about the WAEE board.
- Board need to identify people who will be a good representative on the WEEB board for environmental educators and WAEE.

WEEF – Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation is an off shoot off WEEB. It is mandated through the state legislature to create an outside funding. This is WEEB's way of searching for outside funding. It is an official 501(c) 3 foundation. They are contacting people, organizations, and businesses to raise funds. In the future, they may possibly be looking for a WAEE representative to be on their board.

ACTION ITEM

- Nominate one person from the WAEE board to be a representative on the WEEF board.

Spring Adventure Workshop

Munson agreed to promote WAEE and is looking for a presenter on Sunday night.

ACTION ITEM

- Betsy will get WAEE information to Munson for the Spring Adventure Workshop publications.

Old Business

Amy suggested writing a WEEB grant for member outings. The grant would cover advertising, program fees, printings, and more.

ACTION ITEM

- Amy will write a WEEB grant to cover member outings.

New Business

Betsy attended the discussion panel on December 7, 2007 on the state of the environment. Scott Hassett, Rod Nilsestun, Steve Babolitz, Jim Holprin (Secretary of Tourism) were present. They talked about many aspects of the environment from energy, tourism, and more. However, there was no mention of environmental education at all during the panel. There was limited time for questions and questions were limited to specific topics, not including environmental education.

ACTION ITEM

- Betsy will write a letter to panelists expressing concern that environmental education was not included in the panel.

Jeremy opened the discussion for nominations for chair elect. Joey, Amy, Betsy, and John are eligible for chair elect. Jeremy expressed the need for the board to have nominated treasurer and secretary board positions. He suggested having a treasurer and secretary on the board voting ballot next year with 6 board meetings a year. No board meetings will be held at the fall conference instead a meeting will be held at a different time and also a meeting held during the summer.

Meeting adjourned at 3:51pm.