



WAAE Board Meeting Minutes

MacKenzie EE Center • Poynette, Wisconsin

December 6, 2008

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Present: Ruthann Lee, Tom Quinn, Betsy Parker, John Heusinkveld, Amy Workman, Glen Reindl, Amanda Pohlod, Molly McKay, Kathy Sill (via phone), Joey Zoicher

Meeting was called to order at 10:18 am.

I. REVIEW of past MINUTES

Betsy made changes to the Nov. 1 meeting minutes. Ruthann moved to approve the minutes, seconded by John. Motion passed unanimously.

II. NO PUBLIC INPUT

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Management

Board Elections – Betsy reported that we are a month behind in the process. The deadline was extended to allow for more nominations. There are three 3-yr. term positions open and we have 2 candidates to fill them (Joan Voigt and Tory Bahe). Karla Lockman agreed to a 1-yr. fill-in term. Discussion followed on whether Karla needs to appear on the ballot (according to the Bylaws, fill-in terms can be approved by the Board without members voting). The ballot will now include Joan, Tory and a write-in candidate. Betsy encouraged Board members to continue recruiting candidates. Amanda and Betsy have been in communication with Harvey Hayden, who had expressed interest in running.

Action Item: Abbie will email the ballot to the membership on Monday (Dec. 8th).

Action Item: Tom will ask Pat Arndt if he is interested in running for the Board.

Betsy read Karla's bio (currently teaching Biology at Stevens Point Area Senior High School and a graduate student at UW-Stevens Point; Karla worked the auction table with Abbie at the Fall Conference; Member of WAAE for 4 years and former student Board member 2005-06.)

Tom motioned to accept Karla Lockman as the 1-year fill in term Board member; seconded by Amy. Motion passed unanimously.

Conference & Workshops

Winter Workshop 2009 – John reported that he had put out 2 calls for presenters for the Winter Workshop and received no responses. Glen has one student interested in presenting and Tom knows of 2 graduate students who want to present. He also said historically it is fairly common for presentations and registrations to come in late, but this year is definitely later than usual. Last year there were 15 presenters total and no presentation proposal was turned down. Betsy and John have both communicated with Bruce [last name unknown] with NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) via Sarah Lancaster for the keynote (\$250 stipend available, but Bruce did not request it). Topic to be: "How do you inspire young people to environmental leadership?"

John discussed having a panel discussion of what constitutes environmental leadership with a diverse group of speakers. Glen suggested Jim Joque of Stevens Point (disabilities Advisor for the campus) is a potential panel presenter (currently serving on the Governor's Trail Council "Leave No Trace" initiative for Wisconsin). Ruthann suggested George Meyer but didn't think he would register for the whole weekend. Discussion followed on how long presenters have to stay, whether they have to officially register (pay) or if we can use the \$250 unclaimed stipend to cover registration, meals, and/or travel cost. Tom asked if any of the UEC staff are presenting. Amanda suggested Rick Wilke, Chris Cold and Dick Fiel to serve on the panel discussion. Betsy suggested Randy Champeau, John Bates, Deb McCrae, Libby Burmaster and/or [first name unknown] Evans (deputy administrator of DPI). Joey suggested Ken Leinbach. John suggested Clayton Russell, and to offer the panel speakers lunch at no cost and invite them to register for the whole weekend.

There are four strands: Env. Leadership Activities/Success Stories, Grants, Student Env. Leadership and Env. Leadership Curriculum. John suggested two possibilities to reduce the cost: limiting WW to Sat/Sun, and/or a silent auction or selling raffle tickets. Joey wants to contact MGE (contact Jackelyn Haas) to sponsor a bus and registration for Milwaukee teachers to WW, as long as energy education is part of it (which means KEEP (Sarah Windjou) or other energy education speakers should present. Betsy said we need personal phone calls for presenters, panel speakers and sponsors. Betsy asked if Joey could help John with at least one sustainable meal.

Action Item: Tom will contact Tory Bahe about presenting at Winter Workshop.

Action Item: John will contact Sarah Windjou to present.

Action Item: Amy will contact Jessie Lerner of Sustain Dane (Mpowering Madison program) and Tessa Jilot of the Green and Healthy Schools initiative (WDNR) to present on energy education and/or the grant strand.

Action Item: Tom will contact Nick Hylla (John contacted once all ready) and UWSP graduate students to present.

Action Item: Joey will present at WW and will contact Scott Winklebach to take professional photos for use in any marketing materials.

Action Item: Amanda will contact Cindy Damrow of DC Everest School Forest for Env. Leadership strand.

Action Item: Glen will contact Stevens Point Cooperative Store to sponsor WW.

Tom asked if EENA would be interested in doing the ice breaker activities (Molly said yes). Amanda said she would ask "Students for Sustainable Communities" if they are interested in leading activities. Joey volunteered to take photos at WW with John's super high quality Treehaven camera. Keynote will take Friday evening, panel discussion will take place Sat 11 am (lunch will be provided).

Fall 2008 Conference

Betsy noted the profit/loss statement for the conference (\$8,300 profit). This is less than the 2006 Manitowoc profit (\$11,000), but it was the first Urban EE conference. Betsy commented that we budgeted \$25,000 in profit for this conference.

Action Item: Ruthann will visit with Abbie to see prepare a report on how the lower profit affects the 2009 budget.

Action Item: Joey will contact Harley Davidson for financial support to WAEE (non-conference related).

Joey is working on the write-up for the conference, but was having difficulty on the wording given some of the comments on evaluations (too expensive, wanted it to take place downtown).

Action Item: Joey will finish the review of the Fall Conference for the Winter Newsletter, to be sent out by Abbie, talking about the steps taken to reduce the cost of the conference and find a balance between the logistical space and capacity needs and cost.

Ruthann said we need a "host job description" for the Fall Conference site and send out to members and residential centers that details exactly what the logistical and space needs are so all WAEE members understand why a "camp" setting is not necessarily practical for FC.

Joey asked how many new members joined during the conference. She mentioned that the flyer was produced by a conference committee member but in a program WAEE didn't have access to; she suggested WAEE purchase a publications program to streamline the process. Tom said WAEE could purchase the "Suite" package (In Design, Photoshop) for \$300 through UWSP.

Action Item: Betsy will check with Abbie on what publications software we already have, and check the records for what Carol Weston (previous WAEE AA) had requested.

Fall 2009 Conference

Tom said no hotel has been booked yet. Tom requested a copy of hotel bill through Trisha which was greatly reduced; WAEE was not charged for breakout rooms or the ballroom and gave us a reduced hotel rate (\$89/night). Tom requested a detailed budget from Joey on the conference.

Action Item: Tom will contact Trisha and Joey re: the two offers he's received from Eau Claire hotels to compare how reasonable they are. Tom will send an invite to the Google site to the conference committee members.

Amy, Joey, Ruthann and Glen will be on the 09 conference. He created a Google site specifically to the conference as a communication/update tool. Joey suggested getting LCD projectors, laptops and extension cords from Board members (saved several thousand dollars). Tom said the Chamber of Commerce would provide a conference registration person to work the table. The MEEC is the weekend before (Oct. 14-17) our conference (Oct. 21-24, 2009) and WEAC is the weekend after (Oct. 29-31).

Discussion followed on making all conference registrations through a fee-based online service (Acteva), which would save Abbie time and be a more efficient process. There's a \$100 activation fee for each registration event (membership, fall conference and WW). The membership fee would be a one-time fee; the WW and FC would be an annual activation fee. There are three fees: the activation (\$100), the per transaction processing fee (2-10% of purchase) and the credit card company fee (2.5-3.5% of purchase). Joey said a lot of companies do this so we should shop around for 3 options so we have a choice; NAAEE already does this; WAEE is an affiliate member so we may get a deal through the same company.

Action Item: Betsy will ask Abbie to do more research on other companies who provide this service and send the Board a write-up of 3 options by the Winter Workshop for the Board to email vote on for approval.

Conference Fee Policy For presenters, exhibitors and keynotes

Discussion ensued on the draft policy. Amy was in favor of making presenters register for the conference at a minimum on the day they present. Betsy gave the opposite opinion based on the WEAC model (if you present two sessions your booth exhibitor fee is waived). Joey said at the 08 conference only 20 of the 80 presenters actually registered for the conference. If we require registration and have fewer presenters as a result, that's actually a good thing (larger session attendance). John agreed with Joey. Tom also agreed, adding let's make a per day registration fee but require them to register. Joey also requested having one contact person (Abbie) for special requests or circumstances. Kathy suggested a per session fee (Amy said we already have this model in place). Betsy read the conference policies for the EE Association in Missouri, Illinois and the Wisconsin Charter School Association. Ruthann voiced support for a reduced presenter registration fee. Joey suggested the presenter fee be an at-cost fee and require that presenters be WAEE members. Betsy and Tom both voiced support for a simple policy. Glen said it seems like a lot of the same people attend the conferences over and over. Amanda voiced support for presenters registering because it is an avenue for them to get their name/program out. Joey said a lot of participants aren't even paying out of pocket; they are covered through their organizations professional development. Molly also said EE people should support the field their in (register). More discussion followed.

Keynote policy: no change from draft

Presenter new policy: presenters at Fall Conference are required to register for the conference (it can be for the day they present only) at the member rate and it includes an annual membership (if they are not already a member). WW presenters are also required to register, but can register at the member rate as a perk.

Exhibitor new policy: exhibitors pay an exhibitor fee but are not required to register for the conference (if attending conference sessions they are required to register). Non-attendees can pay for daily meals separate from the conference registration fee. (Organizational members have the exhibitor fee waived). Exhibitor fees are determined by the conference committee; non-profits pay a reduced exhibitor fee.

Ruthann motioned to accept the policy, John seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on the conference registration fees for Board members, conference committee members and the WAEE AA was tabled until the WW meeting.

Grant ideas for WEEB energy grants were discussed; WEEB grant to cover the cost of presenter gifts (CFL bulbs and Sigg bottles (\$6.75 in bulk)/ceramic mugs that say WAEE and KEEP). Each organization gets half the products. Joey suggested Stickerguide.com for waterproof, long-lasting stickers.

Membership

Amy summarized the WEEB grant reports and passed the Member Outing Planning Guide for comments. She also summarized and updated the Table Q & A from the Annual Member meeting at the Fall Conference.

Networking/Advocacy

No report

IV. ADDITIONAL REPORTS

Administrative Assistant Report

The Board decided Abbie can get approval for specific MEEC\$\$ transfers through Treasurer Ruthann. Abbie requested a write-up for Fall Conf. 09 and WW 09 so she knows what to tell members when they call; Tom said it's in progress. Winter Solstice greeting card design is complete and has been sent to the printer.

Betsy read Abbie's statement for WAEE participation in the SECC (the 09 booklets have already been sent to state employees, so decision making on participation is for 2010.) Ruthann said that the required annual audit is expensive, but it is consistent with Board stated goals on internal strength. The hope was the amount of SECC donations would cover the \$1,000 cost of the audit; this didn't happen (only about \$391 came in for 2008 and \$60 in 2007).

Action Item: Abbie will send an email to all WAEE members who are state employees to remind them of the opportunity to support WAEE through the SECC.

Joey brought up a question of what services is WEEF providing in administering SECC, and could Abbie handle the required services to participate in SECC if it would result in a more direct benefit to WAEE? (WEEF got \$20,000 through the SECC as opposed to WAEE's \$391.) Joey also questioned what is the likelihood WAEE will get financial support from WEEF by the time they reach their endowment goal of \$2 million? Joey suggested a different format for a reciprocal partnership. Tom also questioned how WAEE's chances will fare in getting WEEF money as opposed to other organizations and Ruthann asked what's the return on WAEE's initial start up investment in WEEF.

Action Item: Betsy will talk to Randy Champeau regarding the WAEE and WEEF partnership and ask for a clarification of the relationship in writing.

Amy motioned to continue WAEE participation in SECC for 2010; Glen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Betsy read an email from the MEEC contact for a request for a state basket auction item. Tom questioned where the money would come from since we already divided up the MEEC proceeds in the 09 budget (which was already passed).

Action Item: Ruthann will look at the 09 budget to find money to pay for a donation basket.

Action Item: Abbie will physically put together the basket.

Student Report

Amanda questioned how much student conference registration fees need additional scholarship money because the fee is so small anyway (\$5/day). Molly said the student fee is reasonable for most students, but those who applied for the scholarship really needed it so we should keep it.

Joey suggested capping off the total student conference cost at \$50 (meaning WAEE has to come up with the other \$150 to cover the cost of student participation somewhere else in the 2010 budget. Glen has two high school students interested in presenting, and should they participate for free? Joey said let's support high school presenters, and Ruthann said let's treat it as a special case (we don't get many high school presenters anyway). Ruthann said the main cost of student participation is the cost of the meals. Discussion followed on where money would come from to subsidize student cost vs. how many students actually attend WW and Fall Conference, and how much of a priority WAEE should make recruiting and retaining student members. Betsy interjected that for time's sake, this year's student policy for the 09 Fall conference is deferred to the conference committee.

Molly contacted all 08 conference participants who are not Stevens Point students and asked for names of professors who could serve as WAEE contact points for students. Betsy suggested that Molly and Amanda take on the task of getting WEEB financial support for student participation in the Fall Conference. John suggested working with Ginny Carlton on campus to walk through the WEEB grant process. Amanda also said they'd like to cement the student election process.

Action Item: Molly and Amanda will prepare a timeline of deadlines for the student election process and report at the Winter Workshop.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Terms Ending: Betsy gave out award certificates and thanked Amy, John and Joey for their three year service to WAEE.

Legislative Action Day: from the Annual Member meeting Table Q & A data, this is worth pursuing. Betsy is stepping down from Nature Net duties to pursue getting grants to fund this day. Ruthann suggested that Betsy attend Conservation Lobby Day (Feb. 25th, 2009) as a model. Betsy is still planning to meet with Ann Katz from Wisconsin Arts Action day as a model. Betsy is planning on writing a WEEB grant to create a database of Wisconsin naturalists who could serve as contractors for EE programming.

DNR Master Naturalist Program: Renamed the Wisconsin Volunteer Naturalist program. John is on the committee. John spoke on the background of the program (it's based on the several state's Extension Master Naturalist programs.) He commented on the contentious nature of the program because all state EE naturalists were laid off two years ago and will be replaced by volunteer naturalists, and the name was changed because it sounds like "Master" Naturalists are the best and most experienced even though the requirements are less than what is required for a standard undergraduate degree in EE. John said it would be significant if WAEE supported or didn't support this program. Betsy suggested that we survey our membership to see what their opinions are because the response she's gotten in informal discussions has been so mixed. Tom questioned if the Volunteer Naturalist program is public knowledge; do we need DNR permission to release the information to the membership?

Action Item: Betsy will contact Sherry Kliscke from WDNR to get permission to share the Volunteer Naturalist information with our membership.

Betsy and John will serve as liaisons to the WDNR Volunteer Naturalist program and will report to the Board, at which point we will revisit the issue of surveying the membership on WAEE's endorsement of the program. Molly commented that this program sounds the same as NAI's "CIG (Certified Interpretive Guide)" training.

Non-formals (The Loose Group) revival: The education committee of WEEB has broken into three committees: the K-12 education committee is huge and is focusing on the Green and Healthy Schools program. The second committee is the non-formal education committee, which was originally going to be Scott Johnson's thesis project. He decided that the CommunitEE initiative has taken over the role of networking amongst non-formal Env. educators (Betsy reported that CommunitEE is not being utilized to the extent that it should or could be). Ruthann said her understanding of the Loose Group was real nature center staff physically meeting, not meeting in cyberspace. Betsy reported that there used to be a nature centers meeting at the Fall conference

annually. Ruthann perhaps suggested a nature center breakout session at the Fall Conference. Glen suggested surveying the organizational members to see if they would value this experience. John suggested a fall conference session on using the CommunitEE, and Ruthann suggested an all participant presentation like what Sunshine did for EEinWisconsin.org at the 08 Fall Conference. Betsy said she had spoken with Sunshine about putting CommunitEE under the EEinWisconsin website, and co-presenting with Sunshine on the overlap. Glen suggested doing a primer presentation at the Winter Workshop; John said definitely on Saturday night getting Sunshine and Betsy to co-present.

No Child Left Inside Literacy Plan: Betsy got an email from Deb McCrae, Ginny Fanucchi and Jeremy Solin which said “according to the way the No Child Left Inside legislation is currently worded, an environmental literacy plan is needed in order to get funding under the legislation and must be developed in conjunction with natural resource agencies.” Jeremy thought that the EE2010 might serve as the closest thing the state has to a literacy plan.

Action Item: Glen will provide a synopsis at the Winter Workshop meeting of specifics of the NCLI legislation and where it stands in the passage process.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

New Board Chair Elect: Ruthann said she was thinking about it; Glen said he still feels behind and this is only his first year. Ruthann said she would serve as Chair Elect.

John motioned to accept Ruthann as the 2010 Chair Elect; Tom seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Website updates: The virtual office is up and functional.

Action Item: Joey will submit the 08 Fall conference write up to Sunshine.

Action Item: Abbie will submit the list of life members to Sunshine.

Action Item: Betsy will send the Nature Net grant to Sunshine and Joey’s unfunded 08 Fall Conference WEEB grant.

Liaisons: Betsy said there is good evidence that our liaisons are working because WAEE was in the loop about the Volunteer Naturalist program, the Loose Group, and the NCLI legislation. Liaisons are really important and we need to keep on top of these. Tom suggested that liaisons be more on top of contacting their respective organizations after WAEE Board meetings instead of before. Betsy suggested reassessing the liaison list at every Spring Retreat.

Action Item: Betsy will write up a liaison letter template to be discussed at the Winter Workshop meeting.

Review of past action items: Betsy reviewed these on the Google page – see the Google website.

Ruthann motioned to adjourn, Glen seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 3:09 pm.