

WILPF US Board Meeting 3/31/20

Participants:

- President: Darien DeLu
- Secretary: Eileen Kurkoski
- Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair: Jan Corderman
- Program Committee Chair: Joan Goddard
- Membership Development Committee Chair: Shilpa Pandey
- At-large Board Member & Chair of Earth Democracy Issue Committee: Nancy Price
- Acting Development Committee Chair & Chair of Women, Money & Democracy Issue Committee: Marybeth Gardam
- Americas Region Alternate Delegate: Janet Slagter
- US Liaison to the Americas Region Representative: Jane Doyle
- Acting Nominating Committee Chair & Member of Pre-Congress Committee: Laura Dewey

Decisions made are **underlined and in bold font.**

Agenda:

1. Check-in & Agenda Review- Briefly share experiences on virtual communication.

2. The 2020 Budget was approved unanimously by the board via e-mail, earlier in March 2020.

3. January 28, 2020 minutes were approved unanimously

4. Adapting to Covid19 - Sacramento Branch was initially reluctant to have a virtual meeting. Boston branch is having a Maestro call. Des Moines has been having Zoom meeting calls; they are having a coloring book competition for a T shirt. Darien has worked with Dawn Nelson to set up webinars for her UN Sustainable Development Goals work. Darien is planning a virtual 2020 *mini*-Congress, but she needs volunteers to step up. At Laura's suggestion, planning is underway to have a *Screwnomics* book group for reading with discussion; Rickey Gard Diamond will work with Marybeth on it, with the intention of having a power point presentations.

5. WILPF Congress – Much time is being used to consider various options. It's likely we will have a 2021 Congress in Sacramento, though it will be very hot in late summer. We can protest the Bayer Company and Monsanto while in Sacramento, since these companies are very involved in defining the direction of research and courses at nearby U.C. Davis. There is still a concern that the corona virus will keep some older people away.

6. eNews and Wendy McDowell, editor– Wendy has found it takes much longer for her to edit the eNews, and she is not getting the commensurate money. She thinks

having articles peer reviewed will help *some*, but more is needed. She suggested some additional ways to reduce unreasonable hours needed for editing, so WILPF doesn't have to pay more money. 1. Only have eight articles per eNews; 2. Each issue committee send in only one article, 3. If the topic was covered in the previous six months, link to that article and have only a brief update; 4. Branches keep up their postings about activities to their Facebook page and send in only write-ups about successful and/or inspiring events – or important learning experiences – to eNews.

Board discussion raised these suggestions and points:

- We need good peer reviewers for submitted articles.
- Let's get statistical analyses to see what articles people are reading on eNews.
- We could pay Wendy by the hour, instead of the job.
- We could increase Wendy's pay by \$100/month.
- It is awkward that we told members to write messages and now we tell them not to!
- It is impressive that Wendy's last eNews with ten items "only" taking thirty-five hours
- It is valuable to link to previous articles!
- We need a group of good writers willing to edit. Ask someone in your branch to help.
- Issue committee chairs want more contact with branches; the branches may want to read some notes of what branches are doing.
- Let's add a "branch round-up" at the end of the eNews
- We can have short issue committee updates as the first item in eNews
- A question was asked about Wendy's background as an editor. For five years she has been working on the Harvard Divinity School journal.

Plan: We agreed to try out some of the suggestions to see how they work over the next two months. We'll bring the subject up for review at the next board meeting.

6. Sign-ons, endorsements, co-sponsorships by/for WILPF US –

To respond faster to five or more endorsement requests per month she receives, Darien requests issue committee chairs help her by answering some key questions about what they want signed on to: who? what? why? *how*? She will circulate a document for guidance. The Program Chair may be able to help clear the path for signing.

Issue committee chairs frequently sign-on on behalf of the committee and ask the president to also sign. To help keep closer track so WILPF does not sign on twice, it was suggested when issue committees sign on, they should let the Secretary know.

Branches can also endorse initiatives but keeping track of them was not discussed, since that is not a national WILPF matter.

A request: send all issue committee endorsements and sign-ons to Secretary.

7. Solidarity Actions theme

We are looking for a key theme that will encompass most member/branch concerns. So far we have: "100 Years of Women Voting" with the saying, 'None of Us is Equal Until ALL of Us are Equal' Others include: Seeking equity for all, for equality for all! (Less favored alternate — Equality for all through equity for all.) It would be helpful if we can decide on a theme by May 14, for the One WILPF call.

Other ideas, questions, suggestions –

- consider *how* we can engage in actions, under the constraints of the pandemic. We have a banner.
- include the women's suffrage 100th anniversary, the right to vote, secure voting.
- include a link to bio-chemical warfare: The next war may be a bio-war. In India, they are pushing to ban bio-chemical weapons. We have a nuclear disarm initiative which we might want to expand to addressing bio-chemical weapons. This may need its own issue committee for more focus. We don't know all that is going on in bio-labs. Joan Goddard, Program Chair, will investigate it with Disarm.
- include issues of homelessness, hunger and poverty
- one new idea for Solidarity Action - People Care Not Warfare. Laura liked this idea.

8. Making all the ONE WILPF calls “public”

The next One WILPF call will be open to public. There are some privacy concerns.

Suggestions –

- The calls can't have much branch information; lead with the speaker.
- Since calls start at 4pm Pacific time, post the time the speaker will be on
- After the speaker many people drop off. Sometimes everyone wants *their* announcements to come first.
- Have headlines of the agenda at the beginning of the call and make them attractive. - Invite Code Pink and other “colleagues in action” to the calls.
- For those working outside the home on the West Coast, have the speakers a little later.
- We need to do more outreach: We have no one now who contacts other organizations and reminds members about the calls. Some members put it on Facebook. Michael Ippolito, our communication coordinator, posts topics in advance, and can tweet it out.
- Let's give it a try. We can deal with problems as they arise.

9. Questions on Board Reports – none

International Board Report - Janet invited everyone “to read her report, look at the International WILPF website” and highlighted the following:

‘During the last staff meeting it was decided upon how to formulate WILPF's response on Covid-19 and frame the approach in two branches: neo-liberalism and militarism. Articles have been published on the website, with a very positive response from donors.’ International is asking for more articles to be written and sent to them.

Other points included:

- Kerry McGovern will finish her 2nd term and must leave her treasurer's position; They are asking for US volunteers to be candidates.
- There will not be an in-person IB meeting this year.
- At the recent International Board meeting, they voted on three decisions, that included a proposal to change the International By-laws:

The IB approved in principle the proposal on the UNO [board] membership and to appoint one of the Vice-Presidents of the IB to the UNO board and requests the Secretary General to appoint the other two directors.

1. The IB approved in principle that the IB will have the power to remove a WILPF UNO director or officer upon recommendation of the SG.
2. The IB approved in principle that the Standing Finance Committee will have the authority to review and propose the UNO budget and the IB will have the power to approve it.

Janet abstained on these votes, because of her expressed concern about the details and difficulties to understand the issue.

10. Because of time other items and issues were raised but not discussed. They will be addressed by email or at the Steering meeting next month.

A. Jan asked if we want to take advantage of the Peace Development Fund (PDF) offer to do a three hour Strategic Planning webinar on-line after June or July? It will not cost us any money.

B. Nancy was talking with Marguerite Adelman and Pat Elder about planning a Military Contamination Exposure tour in New England. Eileen will send Nancy information regarding contamination in Massachusetts and who is working on it.

C. Should we use Zoom or Maestro – or some other virtual meeting platform? See report Darien provided, contrasting Zoom and Maestro. *The Guardian* noted there is a file transfer feature in Zoom that could allow spreading of mal ware. The New York attorney general's office is scrutinizing Zoom for its data privacy and security practices.

D. The Racial Justice Working group recommended we read a White Supremacy Culture document, which Marybeth found remarkable, because it clarified why WILPF appeared to be racist to some people.

11. Next Board Meeting: May 26 at 8:30 (possibly 8:15) PM ET

Respectfully submitted, Eileen Kurkoski