

## **WILPF Board Meeting, July 28, 2020**

### **Participants:**

- President: Darien De Lu
- 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
- US Liaison to the Americas Region Representative: Jane "Cricket" Doyle
- Acting Nominating Committee Chair & Member of Pre-Congress Committee: Laura Dewey

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

### **Agenda:**

**1. Check In:** What is your creative outlet?

**2. Virtual Meetings Platforms:** ad hoc Committee Report -Shilpa Pandey

After discussing the pros and cons of many platforms, including Maestro, the committee recommends Zoom as the best vehicle for our board and other meetings. We don't plan to stop using Maestro but prefer Zoom for visual interactions, chat, and other functions. They found zoom was as adequately encrypted to prevent security issues as other platforms with visual capabilities. Some care must be used to advertise calls and register attendees on Zoom while Maestro allows a safe invitation process and is very good for recordings/storage because it is only audio. Another advantage of Zoom is there is a call-in option as well as an internet option.

The person who will check the schedule for making reservations for use of the account will be decided after this meeting. Suggestions are welcomed. (Subsequent to the meeting, Secretary Eileen K. accepted that role. Also, Darien plans to set up the new WILPF US Zoom account in September.)

Because Robin Lloyd and Marybeth have pro zoom accounts there will be possible backups for scheduling. After a few months it may be possible for WILPF branches to use the account.

**Decision: WILPF will buy a one year Zoom Pro Account?** Cost: \$110.

**All Approved with no abstentions.**

**3. Branch Support Proposal:** ad hoc committee for the WWINGS program - Laura Dewey

The committee could not evaluate the WWINGS program because it was not fully implemented. It's proposing hiring one or two field workers to help shrinking branches to:

1. conduct an asset-mapping analysis as a basis to understand their branch's strengths/weaknesses, and then

2. set up a plan with one, two and three year goals, and how they want to implement them. Critiques will be done during the process. The committee was asking for feedback regarding the viability of the plan and board approval to proceed with the proposal.

Questions and discussion:

- The branches would come up with their own prescriptions, to avoid some previous criticism.
- A concern was voiced to not keep the project open-ended because \$30,000 to develop three to five branches over three years is reasonable but no longer than that. Financial details have not yet been worked out.
- Nancy P. asked why a strategic discussion of movement building is not a part of the approach, along with asset analysis and planning goals. Branches could better assess what political work and movements they choose to focus on by using an analytical tool, such as the “movement arc” assessment tool, also called “The Movement Action Plan” (presented here: <https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/moyermap.html>).

Branches could apply this analysis to several movements/issues they are interested in, in order to determine where their work might be most effective. This analysis is not very complicated and would offer branches insight into the value of strategic planning. Also, it could help connect the branch to the national context and with what local activist groups are working on

It was also noted that this movement analysis tool may not be appropriate for some groups which mainly want to build their membership.

- For clarification the committee’s mandate is to strengthen five struggling branches, to focus on branches wanting help for one year to prevent them from failing. At this time the proposal is not to establish new branches, but it hopes to do that in the future. Keeping existing branches going is easier than establishing new ones.
- Few details are included in this proposal regarding the qualifications of the field organizer, which will be up to the board, except s/he can’t be a member of the branch she is working with.
- Ideas on going forward: The committee presenting this proposal is not offering to work out the details of the plan. But they said they might be willing to draft other documents. They suggested another committee be established to develop the plan details, with one or two people in charge.
- It was also suggested we keep in touch with all the new groups we’ve worked with so far to establish branches with, particularly talking with them about some key activities WILPF is having.
- Darien asked if we were ready to vote on this proposal to move to the next step and draw up a more detailed draft?

**Decision Vote: All want to move to the next step on this WWINGS proposal to provide support for WILPF branches wanting support and to improve. No abstentions.**

Volunteers: Eileen and Jan agree to be on the new committee to develop (1) a field worker’s job description, (2) criteria for prioritizing challenged branches (Consider the number of members paying dues, the number who are active and how many events they had in the past year.) and (3) a draft proposal with details.

Mary HH has started to draft a more detailed proposal. Laura and her committee will meet soon after the board meeting to decide further on their future involvement.

#### **4. How shall we function as activists as COVID 19 continues to restrict activities? How will that affect WILPF?** -Darien

-Despite distancing we are very busy. Being older, many of us are cautious about attending events outside. With the feds attacking activists, particularly Blacks, in Milwaukee, Martha Collins suggested we start a Bail Fund, which may get our name out. This idea needs to be developed further but not in this discussion.

-We have to learn to adapt and cope long term if COVID lasts two to three years

-We see, and are a part of planning, innovative gatherings for the 75th anniversaries of the nuclear bombings. The CDC has been making helpful recommendations, which we follow.

-Car demonstrations are not gratifying but are a way to get a message out.

-Concerns: personal relationships are so important in our organizing. In personal meetings check-ins provide useful info and insights into other people. It helps connection. We need some way to make such connections in virtual meetings, such as creative use of break out rooms.

-Relationships: One member is making calls to people she hasn't talked with for a long time. A person in her community spots articles that are pertinent locally to them and posts them.

-Suggestion: When on a webinar and two people seem to be connecting, encourage them to talk via phone or another media.

#### **5. Global Peace Pledge and Process:** Joan Goddard asked us to begin thinking about working on this pledge and how we can involve others.

-Nancy expanded on the document. We already have a recommended Ceasefire from the UN. She thinks we may want to look at two time frames: one leading up to the election and one for after the election or inauguration. We need to prepare for whomever is elected president. For after the elections, we want to focus on supporting a peace making system in conflict areas, and we want women at the decision table.

We know that 98 Democrats in Congress approved a 10% cut in the military budget. There is a multi-group website and campaign, called Move the Money, seeking to get resolutions passed on the local community level and then at the state level.

If we wanted to participate in this campaign, we can develop our own fact sheets, condensing good work a few other organizations have developed. In particular, we could highlight the money going to nuclear weapons and F-35 jets for now, before the election. Then, after the election, target the 98 democrats who voted for the 10% cut, asking them to sign the peace pledge campaign.

See Massachusetts Peace Action to see how they are rolling out their candidates peace pledge campaign.

#### **Concerns/Discussion/Ideas**

-Note: The August One WILPF Call is on elections. There is concern because now Mitch McConnell refuses to fund all mail-in voting, new voting machines, and staffing voting centers. If we don't have large majorities in the swing states, then Trump will claim fraud.

-The UN Security Council decision for the Global Ceasefire expires Sept. 30. This may be extended because COVID-19 is continuing. But what might we do to support extension?

- This Peace Pledge does not give a sense of what we can do, outside of signing it.
- The Advancing Human Rights Issue Committee have set up some voting ideas and other concrete things to do, but we need to look at other organizations to see what they are doing and work with them.
- Darien asked if we like the idea of working under this umbrella pledge, which pulls in many ideas. Cherrill Spencer is having trouble finding branches to work on similar things. Do we think, with more focus – like some of the things Nancy spoke about – and with fact sheets and other materials, this campaign can stimulate more members? Or is this too much to take on?
- Good idea, but if Cherrill is having difficulty finding support for the Global Ceasefire, it may be too much.
- There was considerable work required to do the 75th Commemoration and people are very involved with other initiatives that are taking up much time. The Ceasefire initiative to write letters is easier and more concrete than the pledge proposal.
- Getting questions to ask state and national candidates would be an easy short term action.
- In rapping up, it was suggested that this pledge be taken back to the Program committee to carefully look at its suggested pre- and post-election ideas, while looking at what issue committees are already working on. Ex. How will the Middle East Issue Committee engage with this? Nancy agreed to write a memo by Sunday to the Program Committee to explain what could be done with the pledge. Cricket and Marybeth will help.

#### **6. Board Commitment Proposal to expect donations from Board Members:**

Changes made by Jan and Cricket in the Board Commitments were approved except for one, regarding financial contributions. This remaining proposed commitment change is:  
*“To be collectively responsible, with the full board, for the fiscal health of the organization by keeping one’s membership current and by making additional monetary contributions to WILPF US.”*

This proposed wording removes *“and to work toward a goal of raising \$500 per year per board member, with the assistance of trainings, staff, and other board members.”*

#### Comments:

- We will also vote separately on Marybeth’s proposal, which did not spell out a dollar amount.
- Jan was told by members they wouldn’t be on the Board because of expected contributions.
- Eileen thinks the Board should help to raise money. She also likes the idea, in Marybeth’s proposal, of coming up with a project the Board likes and all the Board help raise money for it.
- Marybeth’s proposal to raise money is complicated and it need not be so.
- Grantors want to see the Board contributing.

#### Marybeth’s Proposal condensed

- 1. In the annual budget have a line item titled “Board Fundraising” with a goal of ANY amount the Board agrees to annually in the Fall.*
- 2. Days before every Board Meeting, board members agree to each make TWO quick phone calls, one to a donor and one to a new member. Via zoom two board members will report out their calling experience prior to the Board meeting.*
- 3. Annually, the Board would COMMIT to attend two Zoom calls for board development purposes...*

1) a visualization journey asking each member to envision a particular project that they personally would want to see WILPF pursue, if money was not a constraint. This is to form a wish list.

2) A meeting with a fundraising consultant that the Development Committee recommends.  
4. Over time, the annual Visualization meeting would be linked to the Board Fundraising goal in the line item on the annual budget.

**Votes:**

**The one remaining Board Commitment change was approved:**

In favor: Jan, Darien, Joan, Eileen    Opposed: None    Abstained: Shilpa, Nancy

**Marybeth's proposal passed:**

In favor: Eileen, Nancy, Shilpa    Opposed: Jan, Joan    Abstained: Darien

Based on Robert's Rules of order, the abstention is not counted in the total number, to calculate what constitutes a majority; so **the proposal passed.**

**7. The May Board Meeting Minutes were approved by all.**

Eileen asked all chairs to prepare their minutes from Board committee and Issue Committee meetings for submission to our Archivist, Swarthmore College, by early December. We will try to do this at the end of each year.

**8. Tone and language in eNews and eAlerts:**

Historically WILPF has used a more intellectual approach in its work rather than an emotional one. We discussed our current preferences.

-It's okay to use terms like racist and fascist. These terms are clear and appropriate.

-I don't think we can restrict or police tone too much. It depends on our audience and what is appropriate for a particular audience. We must look at who our audience is.

-Our audience consists of members, but the message may go to social media.

-I don't like to be policed and don't want to sound like others. The media is not voicing strong words.

--As a white intellectual organization we don't show much emotion. In these times showing our heart and truth, in strong language without going over the edge is important.

-When a description of what you find deplorable, hateful, disgusting is given, it is okay to use strong words. Showing where your feelings are coming from makes for appropriate sharing of feelings.

**Announcements:**

-On August 13th, One WILPF will host the exiting president of the National League of Women Voters and a Wisconsin lawyer from ACLU will be talking about voter suppression and actions we can do with the upcoming elections.

Next:

Steering Meeting, August 25, 2020, 8:15 PM ET

Board Meeting, September 29, 2020, 8:15PM ET

Respectfully submitted, Eileen Kurkoski