

**Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, U.S. Section
National Board Meeting via conference call May 21, 2013**

Decisions:

Marie-Louise was chosen to be the Membership Development committee chair.

Marie-Louise and Cheryl will work with the Transition Team to devise a member survey that will be sent out before the retreat and will come up with a list of names that should be invited.

The Board consensed on extending the trial period for 75% decision rule to June 1, 2015.

Executive session:

We approved the annual review and a bonus for our Director of Operations.

We agreed on appointing Sabreena Brit, Sacramento branch, to the nominating committee.

We agreed to appoint Kristen Alder from Texas, Barbara West from Maine and Deb Garretson from Bloomington to the Membership Development committee.

And finally, Mary Hansen Harrison and Barbara Reed who have agreed to be on the Interim Congress Committee were approved by the board.

Minutes

Members present: Sandy Silver, Renee Prespare, Barbara Reed, Edith Bell, Libby Frank, Deb Garretson, Odile H. Haber , Nancy Ramsden, Marta DeLaRosa.

Board members present: Laura Roskos, Catia Confortini, Cheryl Diersch, Eva Havilisek(vibes watcher), Marie-Louise Jackson-Bradley, Joan Bazar, Rita Jankowska Bradley, Ellen Schwartz, Darien DeLu, Sydney Gliserman, Robin Lloyd.

Staff present: Ria Kulenovic

Catia read the welcoming statement and reviewed the agenda.

Nominating Committee Report: Darien reported that the Nominating Committee conducted vote of the board by secret ballot to fill the vacant Membership Development committee chair position. There was only one applicant. We are happy to announce that Marie-Louise is our new Membership Development Committee Chair. This leaves one vacant "at large" position on the board.

We have approved a timeline for the board elections. We moved up the date on which info will be provided to the office and the board, to make sure everyone has plenty of time to get to know the nominees. We have a form for nominating someone to be a candidate to be a member of the board. This is available on the branch list serve. People are welcome to make their own nominations and can send their nominees and application by January first to nominations@wilpf.org. We are also concerned with leadership development. An item not on the agenda is the question when and under what circumstances members can sign up to be on the board call. This has been a matter of some concern.

Discussion of Nominating Committee report:

Deb Garretson: Regarding the possible relocation of our nation office: it's going to be necessary next year for the office to leave its location. Is a committee being formed...?

Ria: We signed a lease at our current office space until June of next year. There was talk on the board of forming a committee and notice will be sent out when a decision has been made.

Branch vitality and rebate program report: Ria reported that we are making progress with the rebates. We are contacting all branches to make sure their membership lists are correct and we have updated information. We are also confirming that branches have bank accounts through which they can cash their rebate checks because last year some unredeemed checks came back. We've completed 60 % of the work. It seems that we have some increase of membership. The records are getting improved. We have gaps in communications. Some branches are withholding dues and rebates, and we need to address this. We're trying to assemble packets and send out marketing material for the 100 years. We are also planning to send up-to-date membership brochures, a Women, War and Peace DVD set and screening toolkit, and possibly a banner. By June, the rebate program will be completed.

Discussion of Branch Rebate and Membership Vitality Program Report:

Renee Prespare: I am very happy to hear that material will be going to the branches. I must say that our branch thought that the requests made for information was similar to what had been demanded of us over and over since 2007 and it tied our hands. We're concerned that this might turn into the same kind of fishing expedition so we have not completed the report yet. In 2007 WILPF Metro received a large bequest and had to prove our existence by performing all sorts of bureaucratic tasks. Nothing was ever sufficient.

Ria: Your branch has not updated its records for the last few years. We're trying to help you out and we need to know what you do.

Renee: We did not receive a check. We have documentation. We are only concerned because of our past experience.

Eva Havlicsek: Vibes. Metro should be in touch with Marie-Louise. She is our Membership Development Chair and can explain why US WILPF needs to know who a branch is made up of and what they are doing.

Robin Lloyd: I go to the NY Metro website and I don't see what's happening or any updates. It's always the same.

Renee Prespare: The website is for outreach. It is meant to give an overview of our work. It is an organizing tool. It's not meant to keep us busy.

Laura Roskos: Ria, can you give us a count for numbers of actual members and life members?

Ria: Yes, I will.

Proposal to revise the welcoming statement to read:

This meeting is convened for the purpose of advancing WILPF's work toward total disarmament and peace, human rights for all, and care for our earth. This is a safe space, for building WILPF US policies and actions that support love for human kind, love for the Earth, and the best of this WILPF board.

This is a safe space, free from discrimination and dedicated to honoring the weaving together of our work in harmonious and respectful ways, in the best tradition of generations of compassionate, committed, and effective WILPFers.

Our interpersonal and working relationships are the basis for a just and peaceful world. It is the responsibility and ongoing challenge of each and all of us to maintain

- ✿ creativity in finding helpful responses to our challenges,*
- ✿ open hearts in relating to one another,*
- ✿ open minds in hearing the words and ideas of others, and*
- ✿ willingness to move productively forward the work of WILPF.*

If any participants feel these responsibilities have been seriously neglected, they may email dialogue@wilpf.org to raise their concerns.

The first priority of this group is to re-establish the success and lasting organizational health of US WILPF.

Darien presents the impetus for making this change, “I was concerned that the currently used statement - while it conveys a wonderful sentiment - it puts as our first priority a need to protect a sense of safety of the people attending the meeting. I cannot control a sense of safety. That alone should not be the first priority. Our meeting time is precious and our welcoming statement seems hypocritical.”

Discussion of proposal to revise the welcoming statement:

Libby Frank: I agree. I think this is a bad statement. What is its purpose? If someone has a problem they can say it and it can be handled. Who will decide if these things are being violated? I just find it patronizing. In addition, right now, the board members are hearing the members speaking. I hope it's not proforma. And that you really take into your heads and hearts what we are saying...

Ellen Schwartz: Yes, I agree the welcoming statement is proforma. I think it needs some work.

Sydney Gliserman: It should be as short as it is. Maybe the last sentence could be changed.

Eva Havlicsek: it is important that if a person feels attacked, they should feel free to bring it up immediately. A meeting will not progress satisfactorily if a person does not feel that they are being heard. If its not the first priority, it should be “a priority’ to reestablish it.

Catia Confortini: Can we defer this to a email discussion? Renee (?) has suggested that Libby and Eva could craft something we'd all like. Perhaps a board member could join them in reconsidering the statement... ?

Transition Team report on planning retreat, scheduled for September 13-16.
(The Transition Team is Cheryl, Robin, Sydney, Marie-Louise, and Rita)

Cheryl Diersch: We've prepared some points of interest because we want input from everyone. What do we want to learn from this retreat, what is our focus? Is it moving WILPF towards sustainability? Catia suggested inviting emerging leaders. The retreat is intended to move us forward towards long term planning. We would like to develop a survey, but we've got some contrary ideas about whether a survey would work. In any case, we'd like to collect a variety of ideas on the sustainability of WILPF.

Cheryl then talked about her take-aways from Theda Skocpol's book *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life*, which had been recommended by members at the January board meeting: Theda's Skocpol's perspective is pertinent to the sustainable planning for WILPF. Theda does a very good job identifying the rich civic American history of federated membership associations, and the successes of that period of healthy civic society. Yet she states there cannot be any going back to the civic world we have lost. More importantly we can use these lessons coupled

with inspiration from our own WILPF's civic history, and begin to find ways to transform WILPF again for our current times. We can learn lessons from our own WILPF history. We need to identify best practices. We can educate for diversity, engage with youth and empty nesters, and implement transparency, but as an activist organization, we should work on our program, and become more knowledgeable of program management. Sustainability means human capacity building for the long term."

The transition teams feels it is most important that everyone is involved maybe not necessarily in the room but there are many ways this can be achieved. WILPF US can achieve unification around WILPF visions to successfully adapt to the shifting economy and to continue as a sustainable non-profit women's peace organization that is committed to continue to benefit the individuals, families, communities, and systems that depend on our efforts.

Discussion of Transition Team Report:

Libby Frank: I got different results from this book aside from program being priority. I would like to look at it again. The description is accurate but in terms of the kind of changes you mention, it is not what I understood from what she said.

Deb Garretson: I was on the personnel committee and I want to give a cautionary note. In 2007, the board put together a strategic plan. But our financial situation changed. In trying to write job descriptions on the personnel committee, I often felt my hands were tied because the strategic plan didn't seem relevant. So we need to be willing to be flexible.

Cheryl: I agree that we have to adapt to a changing economy.

Eva Havlicsek: I had trouble with the strategic plan and I have trouble with theory. Do we need to spend a lot of time at a retreat on theory? How does it translate to what should we be doing? It's a lot of expense to sit there batting around ethereal thinking....

Laura Roskos: The question is, will we give the Transition Team permission to plan a rigorous agenda? If they plot out a path for us to come up with some long range goals, are we willing to let them take that initiative? I wonder though, how many people are we going to involve? One person from each issue committee? Or emerging leaders? How do we decide?

Darien DeLu: Two questions: it appears that the Transition Team is an ad hoc committee, as such it should include general membership. Additionally, since we are looking to spend resources, is there any reason not to have a live board meeting at that time, after the retreat?

Cheryl: When Eva says we're just discussing theory, that's not my intention. We're looking at how to make this organization sustainable. We have to look at each committee. We need to look at data...what needs to be discussed? Should we do

trainings? We don't know. There's a lot of work that needs to take place before the retreat.

Laura Roskos: In January, the Transition Team gave us a grid listing goals and objectives. We need to fill it in with more bench marks.

Catia Confortini: So we have to invite people who can fill out the grid. Plan in advance for who can help us.

Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller: I like the idea of a survey.

Catia Confortini: Marie-Louise and Cheryl will work with the Transition Team to devise a member survey that will be sent out before the retreat and will come up with a list of names of individuals who should be invited.

Renee Presepare: the event should be open to members, not just by invitation only.

Evaluating the 75% Decision Rule: Laura summarizes, "We were all there in Pittsburgh when we made this decision. This board has been challenged to make and keep decisions. How can we make decisions when we can't come to full consensus? So we adopted a rule that gave us a year to try a new decision rule that was written in this way: A proposal is made to the board. Try for consensus in good faith with every voice heard. If unsuccessful, representatives from differing sides meet to try to agree a new proposal. The issue is brought back to the board within the allotted time frame, and if unanimity can't be reached a decision can be made with at least 75% of the members present. Can we reflect on when and how we made use of this decision rule?"

Eva Havlicsek: I really think we should extend this for two years. It took us a little time to get this in place. I think that it can work. We tried to limit it too much with the time frame. The concern of this is that one person should not be able to tie up the board. It gives them a veto power.

Darien DeLu: I agree with Eva, rather than making it permanent it should be extended for two years. The board has ignored proposals that have come forward. We have even ignored a block. We had our consensus training but we don't seem to have a shared understanding. Who can raise a block? There is insufficient discussion. On this board a proposal comes forward typically from one person, there is not the opportunity to discuss it and to consider various proposals at the beginning.

Upon a query about whether we are all on the same page as to how consensus works, Laura said that she will ask Paige of the Practicing Peace Committee whether she will redo her consensus training with us.

Catia Confortini: So we have consensed on extending the 75% decision rule to June 1, 2015.

This concludes the board meeting for non board members. Check out for non board members:

Sandy Silver: I appreciate being on the call.

Renee Prespare: I sent a report letter to Ria apologizing. I am concerned to whether branches have to have bank accounts. Our concerns have not been put to rest.

Barbara Reed: meeting was positive. Looking forward to help plan for the congress.

Edith Bell: I just came to listen. It was efficient.

Libby Frank: It was better than earlier meetings. Progress. I admire Catia's handling of the agenda. I wish there was time to discuss planning for the Congress.

Deb Garretson: I spoke up about the office because there was no place on the agenda to bring it up. The places for members to speak up is limited. There should be a time for general comments.

Odile H. Haber: I was not familiar with all the issues. I wanted to know more about the retreat (the date is Sept 13-16).

Nancy Ramsden: well planned. I hope you will discuss the 100th at the retreat.

Catia Confortini: Thank you everyone. I'm glad to see that the number of people participating has increased.

End of open board meeting.

Executive session (board members only)

Agenda Items:

Acceptance of performance review of our DO: Performance review accepted with reservations (Laura is concerned about the lack of goal setting in the review process). Approval of a \$1000 performance bonus.

Time line for hiring a Program and Development coordinator: We have had a time line for hiring, and a job announcement and job description. It hasn't been posted because there we haven't met the benchmarks we set for moving ahead with the hire; specifically, we have not established a legal fiscal sponsorship agreement and we are not meeting the fundraising goals established in our 2013 operating budget. As agreed in November, the Finance Committee has pursued negotiations with JAPA towards and MOU but has also been looking at other options. The most recent financial reports show that we are not meeting our fundraising goals.

Appointments to nominating committee: Sabreena Brit approved.

Appointments to Membership Development committee: Kristen Alder, Barbara West, Deb Garretson approved. Marie-Louise hopes that the committee will eventually consist of 9 people.

Appointments to National Congress Committee: Mary Hansen Harrison and Barbara Reed approved.

This concluded our meeting. Women felt it was a successful meeting and gave thanks to Catia for good facilitating. Sydney felt that we should give more time for member's participation.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Diersch and Robin Lloyd

Approved by board via email on September 6, 2013