

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
United States Branch
Minutes of Board Meeting
April 1, 2014

Facilitator: Mary Hanson Harrison

Note Taker: Deb Holley

Time Keeper: Barbara Nielsen

Board Members in Attendance: Altaira Hatton, Barbara Nielsen, Deb Garretson, Deb Holley, LaShawndra Vernon, Laura Roskos, Mary Hanson Harrison, Millee Livingston, Nicole Scott, Odile Hugonot Haber, Peggy Luhrs

Staff in Attendance: Ria Kulenovic

Board Members Not in Attendance: Catia Confortini, Sara Tess Newmann

“No-Policies Made” Meeting The meeting commenced at 7:42 pm CDT, opened by Mary Hanson Harrison, president. Mary reminded everyone that this was to be a non-policy-making meeting; a 60-day notice is required, per the bylaws, for a meeting at which policies are made.

Future E-Alerts for the Board Mary and Ria are going to discuss sending an e-alert to everyone for future board meetings. Deb Holley sent one out for this meeting, but it apparently didn't reach all board members.

Where to Send Future Questions Mary also stated that in the future, if there are questions for the board, they should be sent to Deb Holley, at debjholley@gmail.com. The subject line on the emails should read: Board Question April 1, or whatever meeting date is next.

Last Month's Minutes' Corrections & Approval Mary turned the meeting over to Deb Holley to discuss the last meeting's minutes. Deb said that she did not receive approval from everyone on the minutes prior to the meeting, and that there were apparently some changes to be made to the last minutes. Mary called for the mentioned changes. Barb Nielsen thought a change to the sentence “Barbara reminded everyone that the retreat needs a 60-day notice and we need better budget information” should be changed to read “Barb reminded us that we need better budget information before going on a retreat.” The “60-day notice” does not apply to the retreat.

Laura confirmed the change in the 60-day notice for a retreat, and also added that she did not feel Peggy was technically present at the last meeting. Peggy was asked for her input and she agreed that she hadn't been there for the meeting of the new board. She had “her hand up” on the call for a considerable amount of time and had not been noticed, and was muted so that she could not be heard, apparently due to technical difficulties in seeing call participants on the switchboard. Peggy finally gave up and

left the call before the new board began its meeting. She agreed that she should not be listed as having been on the board call.

Deb Holley said that she would make the two corrections to the minutes and send them out again to everyone in an email.

New Board Training Mary then commented that the board's training needs to take place as soon as possible. She asked Ria if she could comment on how it was accomplished last time, and Ria said that she had found the name of the person who led the consensus training last time, and she is going to ask her to do it again.

Board Members Current Task Mary said, "Hopefully everyone here is reading the bylaws every day." She is working on a handbook and there is a resource manual, which she wants to send out as well.

Sharing of Peace Training Experience Altaira shared some things she had learned through her Meta Peace Team "CLARA" peace training, including what each letter of CLARA stands for. The training helps individuals learn how to deal with personal relationships and working with others in a non-combative way. The people giving the training have offered to come and give a 4-hour workshop at Congress this August, of which Altaira is very enthusiastic. Altaira had previously also sent out a page of notes on her experiences at the training to all of the board members.

National Membership Drive Ria brought up the national membership drive, saying the national office has begun work on it. Some of the branches have already received packages, with the rest of the branches receiving packages this month. There are refrigerator magnets and pledge cards in the packages, as well as brochures. Each branch will receive a membership list, which they should update with Ria on discrepancies. The Centennial Coordinator will also follow up with a call to each branch, to develop marketing material and update the directory. This will help in the future with things such as ballots, etc. Mary commented that if nothing else is planned by branches for April 28th (WILPF's 99th birthday), they can at least pass out the packages.

Action Plan Reports by Standing Committees The next topic was the reporting of action plans by the chair of each standing committee. Mary commented that committees need to be getting together to make plans and a backup person should be designated for each chair, in case a stand-in is needed.

Standing committee reports were as follows:

Personnel – Nicole Scott, Chair – This is Nicole's third year on the committee, and her first year as chair person. She has worked on Ria's contract, and she has a meeting Thursday on the Program & Development Director position that is posted on the web. She's also been working on some policies. She hopes to make the committee stronger by making it more organized, and she wants to have templates made up of job

descriptions, handbooks, etc., so that the next chair will readily have the information available to them. Mary asked Nicole what she thought was the biggest difficulty she's experienced in the past three years. Nicole replied that there should perhaps be a limit on the number of years someone can serve on the committee. She would like to see some fresh people come onto the committee.

Nominating – Barbara Nielsen, Chair – Barb has been in contact with her members to organize a conference phone call before the end of the week, including the former chair of the committee, who could possibly provide some continuity. She also advised Mary that the meeting started late, so short committee reports might help keep the meeting on schedule.

Program – Deb Garretson, Co-Chair – Deb said she'd had one program committee meeting, and the group is in a learning curve. She is setting up 1-on-1 calls with the members, so that there is good communication among the group.

Program – Odile Haber, Co-Chair – Odile has been talking to various branches and is working to form various groups that are doing the same work.

Treasurer – Altaira – Altaira has been examining the financial statements that she has been given.

Membership – LaShawndra Vernon, Chair – LaShawndra has made several calls around Wisconsin regarding membership, and has already reached out to the Centennial committee, where several members have some new ideas. One good idea is having an adoptive branch strategy, and other ideas include doing other organic things around membership, capitalizing on how every branch works with others. She is having a lot of conversations. The membership packets look really great and she thinks we could add to them for engaging new members.

New Board Retreat & Orientation The next topic concerned the question of orientation for the new board. Altaira spoke up; she has some concerns after looking over the expenses for last year's retreat, and does not think a retreat is feasible this year. Expenses were greater than income through last year. Barb suggested that possibly a retreat could be done at Congress, if room could be found for a couple of extra days for a small group. That would cut expenses by not having additional air fare. She also suggested that the board might look at some Skype meetings or other types of meetings that might go beyond regular telephone calls. Mary reminded everyone that another board meeting is scheduled for May 24th*, and that there would probably be another meeting even before then. Millee suggested that the board should talk with Laura Dewey and see what part of expenses would be reimbursed if the board had a retreat at Congress, saying someone should research out what the expenses would be on the project. Mary summarized up that the board could have a retreat before or after the congress. She then asked for a consensus individually, and

everyone agreed to it. Peggy asked what the dates of the Congress are and was told they are July 31st to Aug. 3rd, 2014. Congress will be held in Detroit, Michigan.

Appointment of New Signatories & New Business Policies Altaira began the next topic of discussion, that of signatories appointed from the new board. She commented that she has seen some great signatory policies in other organizations, but so far hasn't seen any good ones concerning electronic funds transfer. Mary suggested that for now the board could use the same general selection used by the past board. This would include Mary, Altaira, and Ria. Altaira agreed to the suggestion, and said that she'll try to have additional homework done on a policy for the board by the May 24^{th*} meeting.

Laura spoke up to warn that when it came around for a board consensus regarding signatories, she would not approve a document that she hasn't seen. She is concerned about not having a signatory in Boston, since the bank is located there. The bank is easier to work with if the people there know a contact person. She also mentioned that she felt a maximum amount of money should be set for contracts requiring one signature, and anything involving higher amounts of money would require two signatures. She gave as an example a copy machine lease in the past. With two people signing, they would be more apt to read and understand what they are signing. The copy machine lease cost far more than initially understood, and she believes two people signing the contract would have caught the total amount of the cost listed in the contract. Barbara said she and Altaira have had several emails back and forth agreeing that the board is going to need to pick signatories for the Eastern Bank account quickly to avoid a problem. She said there are questions regarding how much money we have in our WILPF accounts, who has the credit cards now, or who has turned them in from the previous board. She also asked how the board can protect Altaira from liability, and give her good direction regarding the finances. She pointed out the board doesn't know who has bank authority currently, or whether the names have been changed. Altaira needs more time to study our financial situation, but Barb questioned what's going on in the meantime? Ria replied that as of now, the former board members are still on the accounts. Ria has a \$5,000 limit, but so far, has not needed money and doesn't anticipate much in the way of expenses.

Millee agreed with what Ria had just stated. She said the board needs to have a resolution or document of some kind stating who the new signatories are, and dismissing the old signatories as soon as possible. The decision on who's going to sign contracts and who has liability can be decided in a couple of weeks. Altaira suggested that we need to have provisional signatories as soon as possible, and put a new policy into place on May 24^{th*}. Ria said that the office has a template for a document listing provisional signatories for the new board. The board, however, wants to see any change concerning signatories in writing before approving it. It was decided Ria will continue as the only signatory for the time being; she doesn't anticipate many expenses. Altaira should have a policy completed within three weeks. Laura asked if

Altaira had been given any of the passwords to log into any of WILPF's accounts on-line. Altaira said she had not. Ria will give Altaira all the financials and the passwords. Mary summed up: We will vote for a financial policy on May 24^{th*}; Altaira will have the research done three weeks from today (April 22), to be distributed to the board members. There will not be a provisional signatory at this point, since Ria doesn't think she'll need to write checks. Millee asked for clarification – Is the board talking about the signatories, or talking about a document? Altaira also asked for confirmation. Mary said the board is looking for a document by the 22nd on financial policy.

Questions from the Stack Libby Frank was curious if, when sending out a 60-day notice for a board meeting, all other members of WILPF could be alerted as well. The comment was made that several of the new board members are in favor of sending individual WILPF members updates on the board and its meetings. Mary asked Laura how it had been done in the past, and Laura replied that all board meetings were set at one time, and then sent by email to each board member and also posted on the WILPF web site. Mary said the board would try to get them scheduled. Renee Prespare said she wanted to ask about something she didn't understand. She cited an organization of which she was familiar, where there were 2 signatories located across the country, and another where there were 3. She doesn't see where it should be a problem to have signatories across the country, given that it is routinely undertaken by corporations across the country.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm CDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Holley
Board Secretary

*It was later realized that Mary had mistakenly referred to the next board meeting as being on May 24th, a Saturday, when in fact she meant to say "May 20th", which is a Tuesday.

Action Steps to be Undertaken:

1. Mary and Ria are to discuss how future e-alerts should be sent and by whom.
2. Corrected version of final minutes is to be sent out by Deb Holley.
3. Ria is to ask the person who performed consensus training for the last board if she will undertake training for the new board.
4. All board members are to be reading the Bylaws and becoming knowledgeable on them.

5. Standing committees are to be arranging meetings with their members and also appointing a stand-in committee chair in case they themselves are unavailable for some reason to do the job.
6. Arrangements should be made for a board retreat either before or after the Detroit Congress,

and Laura Dewey should be contacted regarding a breakdown of retreat expenses.
7. Altaira is to conduct research and have a new board financial policy document available for review by April 22, including how many signatories and who they should be, how to protect Altaira herself from liability, what amount limits should be put on check-writing, what the policies should be concerning check-writing and electronic funds transfer, and suggested rules for signing contracts; in short, a complete financial policy for WILPF. Ria is to give Altaira all of the financial statements and passwords to WILPF's accounts as soon as possible, to begin Altaira's familiarization with the financial situation.
8. Next scheduled meeting is May 24^{th*}, although there will likely be yet another meeting called sometime before the May meeting.