

Saturday, September 28, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes

0. Attendees checked in with WILPF office(s) held & branch membership

Board members:

Darien De Lu, President, Sacramento, CA

Barbara Nielsen, Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair, San Francisco, CA

Marybeth Gardam, Development Committee Co-Chair, Iowa City, IA

George Friday: Program Committee Chair, Southern Piedmont Branch, NC

Cee' Cee' Anderson: Personnel Committee Chair, Atlanta, GA

Eileen Kurkoski: Membership Development Committee Chair, Boston, MA

Ellen Schwartz: Nominating Committee Chair, Sacramento, CA

Philip Cole, At-large Board Member, San Francisco **Branch**, CA

Tina Shelton, At-large Board Member, Philadelphia, PA

Ginger Harris, Secretary, Boston, MA

US Section representatives to International WILPF entities:

Julie Kabukanyi, International Advisory Board Rep., Boston, MA

Jane (Cricket) Doyle, US Liaison to the Americas Region, Santa Cruz, CA

Guest WILPF members:

Theresa El-Amin, Advancing Human Rights Chair, Fannie Lou Hamer Branch, GA

Announcements were described in the agenda.

Old Business

1. Minutes from Prior Board Meeting will be emailed later and corrected & approved by an email vote.

3. Recruitment Needed for Board Committees:

Darien explained that the standing committees listed in our Bylaws (except for Congress Committee) require chairs to be Board members. These standing committees are Development, Personnel, Finance, Membership Development, and Nominating. Also, most of them have few members. What can we do?

Tina suggested advertising them in our annual ballot.

Marybeth suggested asking new members what their paid & volunteer experiences are, then inviting them to undertake related small tasks to see if they like working in committees.

Cricket suggested committee chairs respond quickly to new or potential members.

Darien will send the Board what relevant information we already gather from donors.

4. WILPF US hiring & contracting issues:

Cee' Cee' is seeking additional Personnel Committee members due to anticipated increased hiring & contracting. If we hire *employees*, then we'll need to address *employee* matters, e.g. guidelines for issues like maternity leave, disabilities, reporting hierarchy, etc. Darien asked to meet with Cee' Cee'.

George, with her extensive personnel experience, suggests asking prospective staff how they expect to spend their first few weeks on this job.

Barbara asked to meet with Cee' Cee' soon to avoid spending further time on wording that confuses contractors with employees. Phillip agrees. Darien suggested a possible future Bylaw change for the name of the Personnel Committee to deal with both employees & contractors.

5. Peace Seekers Procedure (PSP):

Because the Personnel & Membership Development Committees have been too busy to create this PS procedure, Darien suggests formation of an ad hoc committee to carry it out.

As someone who'd like to use the procedure, Phillip hopes it can be formed soon.

Cricket thought we were waiting for a good procedure from International WILPF; Darien said that possibility is no longer foreseeable.

Eileen worked on our PSP and wonders if we can find experts in or out of WILPF (e.g. experts in Non-Violent Communication) to serve on our Peace Seekers panel or find others to serve.

Darien suggested that service as a Peace Seeker can be a way members can get their year of service on a WILPF national committee, making them eligible to run for our national Board (if the proposed Bylaw amendment, requiring such service, passes).

6. Seeking Suggestions on Finding Board candidates:

Ellen Schwartz described how outreach to prospective Board candidates is impeded by problems with the forwarded Nominating Committee and Committee Chair email addresses.

Tina offered to serve on the Nominating Committee. Ellen accepted. Darien will relay to Glenn this update to the committee's listserve and email address, and ask him to see what can be done about the delivery failures of the WILPFUS.org email address(es).

Darien also asked us to get lapsed members to renew so as to be able to run for the Board, since eligibility requirements include 24 months of paid membership in the last 30 months.

7. What board members need to participate constructively in setting board agendas:

Marybeth thinks a strategic plan (e.g. 5 years) would enliven Board members' interest & action. Without a long-range plan, we get mired in minutia. George agrees, suggesting ideas like growing branches, strengthening DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), supporting WILPF International's programs.

Eileen offered to join a committee to plan a strategic plan, as did George, Marybeth & Cricket. At Eileen's request, Darien will ask Nancy Price.

New Business

8. Re-certification of Issue Committees:

George introduced Darien's idea of making issue committees meet most or all of their program requirements before receiving their revocable allotted \$500/year. Darien feels issue committees are falling short of expectations reflected in the Committee Guidelines, Best

Practices & Information. She asks if annually budgeted issue committee funding should be restricted to committees showing substantial conformance to expectations.

Theresa and Tina feel that heavy-handed rules dissuade people from remaining in WILPF. Ellen S. reminds us that when our projects were initiated at Triennial Congresses, funds were allocated for 3-year projects; now using 1-year mini-grants, the scope of projects is limited and not as inspiring.

Cricket offered further ideas on how to engage members in carrying out issue ideas. She noted that the active issue committee members tend to be personally and deeply concerned about the issues, and well informed on them, but the project ideas and support are not reaching the branches. An important task of the issue committees goes beyond that *they* – those 6 or 10 members – just “do something”. They are expected to actively contact the branches and say, “Here are things you can do,” offering little steps, bigger steps, and great big steps.. National WILPF wants to see projects out there at the branch level, with background help, ideas, and directions, from the issue committees. That way a branch – one person in the branch or the entire branch – can take up something they wouldn’t necessarily have put together themselves.

9. Budget

Barbara asked what Board members think about deficit spending in 2025, suggesting that our standing committees might want to engage in fundraising. Darien pointed out that only our Development Committee should be expected to do so, not our Personnel, Nominating, Program, or Membership Development Standing Committees.

Barbara answered Tina’s specific details questions about our 2026 budget and our non-deductible tax status, explaining that when people wish to make a tax deductible donation, they must make it through the Peace Development Fund (PDF), but dues cannot be counted as a charitable contribution.

Darien added that If a person's estate upon their passing is 5 million dollars or lower, which most of us fall into that category, they don't need a tax deduction and can send a bequest to WILPF directly rather than through PDF. It's only if an estate would be taxable that such bequests should be made through PDF. This is important because PDF takes a percentage of the funds for their services. She added that anyone planning to set up bequest plans should, of course, consult with their tax advisor.

10. Collaboration among different parts of WILPF at UN functions:

Tina described confusion among parts of WILPF (International, Sections, Issue Committees, Branches, and Members) at the UN’s Summit of the Future.

WILPF participates in the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) event via our “Local to Global” and Practicum programs, to introduce new & long-time WILPF members to the UN. Barbara described details of WILPF participation, e.g. WILPF’s 69 years of participation in the UN’s CSW.

WILPF is one of about 40 organizations having consultative status at the UN, which confers advantages.

Eileen wondered if the UN is becoming dysfunctional partly due to US influence on it.

11. Renaming branch protocol, for clarity:

The Board-approved document on the Branches webpage (<https://wilpfus.org/sites/default/files/docs/Branch-Recommendations-%26-Protocols-7-22.pdf>) is currently called "Branch Recommendations and Protocols," but had started out as "Protocol for National-Branch Relations."

Darien proposes that the Board return the title of this section to its previous title: "Protocol for National-Branch Relations."

Eileen and Barbara asked the Board to include in the existing document – adding this to Darien's proposal – the Branch activity of "recruiting & retaining members." Darien did not accept their request as an amendment, asking Eileen to submit it at a later meeting. Darien called for a vote on changing the title only. IT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Should the eNews go to *every other month to save money*?

E-News is edited by staff, whereas eAlerts are now edited by volunteers, e.g. Darien.

Darien shared some statistics on eNews readership, generally showing that about 35% of the recipients opened the eNews email, although few people clicked on the continuation of any of the stories. (Glenn has noted that these statistics are likely to be higher than what is actually the case, due to new Apple privacy standards that distort them.)

The proposal that Darien advanced was to shift the eNews from monthly to every other month. Ginger, Tina & Phillip oppose this change. George favors it. PROPOSAL FAILS.

13. Comments from WILPF member guest:

Theresa was glad to see the wide participation of all Board members in this meeting. She said that SARN (Southern Anti-Racism Network) is trying to decide whether to fund the Atlanta and Piedmont branches, which do not yet have bank accounts.

Tina reported the Communications Committee proposes to create an evaluation of Project 2025.