

WILPF Board Meeting, Jan. 26, 2021 @ 8:15 ET (via conference call)

Participants:

Board Members:

Darien De Lu: President

Nancy Price, At-large Board Member, Co-Chair of Earth Democracy Issue Committee, and Interim Secretary

Jan Corderman: Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair

Shilpa Pandey: Membership Development Committee Chair

Ellen Thomas: Personnel Committee Chair and Disarm Issue Committee Co-chair

Linda Conte: At-large Board Member

Steering Committee

Dianne Blais: Board Notetaker and Jane Addams At-Large Branch Convener

Departing Board Members:

Eileen Kurkoski: Secretary (her three-year term concluded)

Joan Goddard: Program Committee Chair (her one year, the last of a three-year term, concluded):

Departing Steering Committee Board Member:

Marybeth Gardam: Interim Development Committee Chair (stepping down from this role which she has filled for several years, in the absence of an elected or appointed Development Chair, after completing her three-year board term in that position)

GUESTS:

George Friday: Disarm Issue Committee & Columbus Branch

Theresa El-Amin: Founder of the Columbus Branch

AGENDA with Motions SUMMARY

Announcements

1) Check-in

Old Business

2) Inside Out budget request for increased budget (Passed unanimously)

3) How to address deficit budget?

4) Better budget development in future

5) 2021 budget approval (Passed unanimously)

6) Filling Board vacancies and Board experience assessment

7) What will we do for accomplishing Development and Program work in 2021 w/

Chair positions unfilled? **The ad hoc Development Committee will include in its work proposing the future steps — specifically, possible ways to expand the position in the next two years and ways to pay for the fundraiser position — but focus on a proposal for hiring someone to assist in fundraising as the first step. (Passed)**

New Business

8) *Peace and Freedom* Publicity

9) Race Consciousness Raising Project. Darien made two motions which passed unanimously: **1) Eileen and Joan and others on the Racism Awareness will work on materials and proposals so branches can pursue racial justice.**

2) Nancy & Marybeth will put together materials and plans for a national effort of stopping voter suppression efforts to influence the vote.

10) November Board minutes. Approved as Distributed.

11) (WILPF) News – Revisiting the name of our monthly electronic newsletter.

12) Visitors' Comments. Only Theresa spoke as George had left.

Motions are in bold font; Decisions are underlined; Quotes in italics

Announcements

The Program Mini-grant Committee has formed and is meeting to form a proposal to revise the Mini-Grant program.

Board member in-kind donations – please report any you make, for data for grant applications.

Call for Peace – This October 2020 statement is now on our website, under Statements.

Be thinking about potential candidates (especially from the US) for the International Board (IB).

Desperate need for Communications Committee – Please look for potential members.

Cuba Nobel Nomination – Voted down by IB (but individual IB members can make recommendations to the Nobel Committee).

After **1) Check-in** we proceeded to **Old Business**:

2) Branch Development Program – request for a modest increase for Inside Out budget, for Program Facilitator proposal

For the independent contracting Program Facilitator staff position there are two different proposals for cost:

 A. \$20.50 / hr x 475 = \$9,737.50 (over a period of nearly ten months). (We could go to \$21. / hr and stay within the proposal to the board. \$9,975.00)

Branch incentives: \$300 x 6 = \$1,800 Total: \$11,537.50

or up to –

 B. \$22.50 / hr x 475 = \$10,537.50

Branch incentives: \$300 x 6 = \$14,137 Total: \$14,137.50

Motion by Darien to have the \$14,137 Inside Out budget approved: UNANIMOUS YES

Budget Matters

3) Deficits Darien: *We can't keep spending like this. What might we do – options? We've had a deficit budget the past 3 years. Deficits seem likely because of low membership which means there are fewer angels and bequests. Even w/ increase of members, \$15 of every \$35 in dues goes to International.*

Jan: *There's hope because Nancy got numerous grants. With new web-site the Earth Democracy Committee hopes to support Pat Elder's work and be self-sufficient*

4) Increasing the deliberative time and space for next-year budget allocations.

The board's discussion and approval of the budget is constrained by time and date considerations, so the board – and WILPF – have been unable to look at and consider proposals in an objective and substantive way. Jan had kept WILPF moving forward, using the current approach, but we're not longer in survival or crisis mode. With Program 2.0 the issue committees are more forward-looking.

Starting next (2022) budget, a new approach to program funding is likely and probably will or should apply to all programmatic work, including WILPF US observation at the UN discussion of the Sustainable Development Goals. When we set the '22 budget numbers, we should take that change into consideration when setting mini-grant funding.

Marybeth: *Once we have goals and more advanced planning on every level at WILPF that will help budgeting.*

5) 2021 Budget Approval

Jan's intro: *Finance Committee (Darien, Eileen, Mary Hanson Harrison, Marybeth and Jan) had 13 meetings from Oct. to Jan. The committee proposes this almost balanced budget – with a \$16,000 deficit (line 114). This budget takes 1/3 of the bequest.*

Marybeth: *This isn't a lot to spend to keep a national organization going – we do a lot w/ little money.*

Darien: *“would like more \$ to have more staff (like an executive director)– hard for me to juggle all the balls”. Mini-grant expenditure is higher as issue committees are expected to ask for more \$. The budget is a goalpost.*

Eileen moved to adopt the budget and Jan seconded. Passed unanimously.

Darien: *This is the first time we've had a budget in January and passed it so quickly. Thank you to Jan and the Finance Committee for their budget work.*

Other Old Business

6) Filling Board Vacancies and Board experience assessment

Darien acknowledged the election of and thanked the 2020 board candidates: Ellen and Linda, as well as Shilpa and Jan who both ran for re-election. Additionally, she acknowledged the board members whose terms conclude with this board meeting: Eileen (served three years as Secretary) and Joan (ran for and served as Program Chair, for the last year of the three-year term).

At the same time, no one applied to run for five of the board positions, including some very important ones (see item 7).

Darien thanked and asked outgoing board members to make an assessment of their board experience:

Marybeth: *The board culture has been improving the past 8 years; there is cooperation now. Challenges: over-long meetings & packed agendas. I recommend more, shorter meetings. "I learned from women I served with."*

Eileen: *I agree w/ Marybeth: I found the experience worthwhile and it was wonderful to be part of groups that work well together and accommodate others. We need to grow w/ multi-cultural activists.*

Joan reiterated Eileen's sentiments and stated *we need to encourage people to be involved.*

7) What will we do for accomplishing Development and Program work in 2021?

Note – The Development Committee Chair and both Program Committee Chair positions are unfilled, with no current potential applicants.

Darien: *We appointed a "Fund-Raising Position ad hoc Committee" but the members weren't clear what the committee was to do. The update Eileen sent out said the committee has been working on the position but also has been addressing thank you notes & a prospecting email to people who had been to a webinar. I don't want the ad hoc committee overtaking Development Committee work. I want the focus of the ad hoc committee to be hiring a fund-raiser.*

Eileen: *The ad hoc Development Committee members felt the webinar attendees should be contacted about joining WILPF & thank you notes written to large donors. Also, we want a list of donor contacts so board members can contact them: it's energizing to talk to the donors. The spring appeal needs to be started soon (typically started about Feb.).*

Jan: *I considered the ad hoc committee as long-range, strategic. I think of membership development as part of development.*

Nancy: *Earth Democracy did get a Patagonia grant. Previously Earth Democracy had written a grant to Ploughshares, and we used much of that grant language in the Patagonia grant – an example of the advantages of writing grant applications, even if you don't get the grant. ED is now working on the Human Right to Water. The Development Committee has Marguerite Adelman, a great grant writer. We should get issue committees to think about grant goals. The Dev. Committee could reach out to issue committees to help them get grants.*

Marybeth: *I'm concerned about including membership development w/ development. Hiring a fund-raiser to build membership dilutes fund-raising efforts. We're already doing a lot w/ membership development (Inside Out, etc.), but we haven't done a lot w/ an experienced fund-raiser (expensive). We're doing better now with membership than in the past. Hire a person to work only on fund-raising.*

Shilpa: *The focus should be only on hiring someone. I agree w/ Marybeth that a fundraiser needs to focus on fund-raising (our weak area).*

Linda C: *I have a way to raise \$: A kind of agreement with certain stores that, every time you buy something, a percentage of the \$ spent goes to a chosen charity.*

Darien moved that the ad-hoc Development Committee limit itself to hiring someone to assist in fundraising. Seconded by Shilpa.

Jan: *I thought the fund-raiser would be a limited position, with increasing responsibility based on performance.*

Darien: *We're asking the ad-hoc committee to propose a vision with a short-term plan.*

Eileen: *How are we to pay for a fundraiser? That wasn't in the budget just approved.*

Darien: *I want the ad hoc committee to propose how to pay a fund-raiser.*

Nancy: *I would like a good job description and cost estimates before a final vote.*

Darien changed the proposal to: **The ad hoc Development Committee will include in its work proposing the future steps — specifically, possible ways to expand the position in the next two years and ways to pay for the fundraiser position — but focus on a proposal for hiring someone to assist in fundraising as the first step.**

Shilpa was fine w/ seconding the refined proposal.

Proposal was approved with six yes votes and Jan voting no.

New Business

8) Peace and Freedom Publicity

Darien: *The virtual 28-page edition is coming out this week. A new platform allows better printing and is better visually. We would like multiple e-alerts to remind people about the P&F issue. Are there 2 or 3 people who will add a personal message to another e-alert?*

Nancy & Ellen volunteered, and Darien was willing if another is needed.

9) Race Consciousness Raising Project

Eileen gave her report about this topic. We have predominantly white membership in WILPF, and we *need more diverse members to get into "good trouble."* Carol Fulp's Success Through Diversity: Why the Most Inclusive Companies Will Win convinced Eileen we need more diversity. *Corporations are making more money by increasing their diversity and are doing better than volunteer organizations in making this change.*

*To promote diversity, we need to understand that a feminist approach is about **relationships** and we have to understand the WILPF audience.*

A few members, in a committee, are gathering books, etc. related to racism. We want to prioritize how to use them in branches and issue committees.

We want this initiative to make a difference, and WILPF has bonds to the Poor People's Campaign (PPC) and SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice). Any comments/suggestions?

Joan: *I'm looking forward to participating in suggesting materials.*

Eileen: *How to be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi is an excellent book.

Darien: *If we want branches to discuss/work on anti-racism, we need pressure and encouragement from national leadership.*

Joan: *We need to start ASAP.*

Darien: Proposal: *The committee w/ Eileen, Joan, and Janice Hawkins will collect materials and work w/ coming up w/ materials and study guides for branches to pursue. The focus is not so much on personal racism as structural racism. Do any other people want to volunteer for the committee?*

Marybeth: *Black people are telling whites that the next two years are important in addressing voter suppression and, specifically, how it affects people of color. In addition to Eileen's suggestions, I think we should put together some action plans for the mid-term election.*

Nancy: *In the second impeachment discussion, the House didn't talk about suppression – only election fraud – even when suppression was a major factor. I'm willing to put some materials together about necessary reforms to address gerrymandering, the electoral college, etc.*

Marybeth: *I will work w/ Nancy but want it to be a big umbrella issue.*

Nancy: *This could be national WILPF campaign and could involve many groups involved w/ voter suppression*

Darien made two motions:

1) Eileen and Joan and others on the Racism Awareness Committee (we will hopefully come up with better name!) will work on materials and proposals so branches and members can pursue racial justice.

2) Nancy & Marybeth will put together materials and plans for a national effort of stopping voter suppression and efforts to influence the vote.

Darien wants a report from both for the Steering Committee's Feb. 23 meeting. Darien will let branches know that we will be stepping up. **Both motions were seconded and passed unanimously.**

10) November Board minutes. There were no questions and the only comments was that they looked great. Jan moved to approve and all voted aye, except Nancy, who abstained.

11) (WILPF) News – Revisiting the name of our monthly electronic newsletter.

Based on last month's vote, the name chosen was News.

Wendy has noted that folks are confused by the similarity of the names: eNews to News or WILPF News.

Glenn says “My strong recommendation is to not change it until you are ready to change it to something that people can get behind. Calling it just ‘News’ is about as flat as you can get. At least eNews has a ring to it. I agree with Wendy that if you are to change it, change it to something very different that really works.”

Alternative Options to WILPF News:
News You Can Use, Speaking Peace, Stepping Stones, P, F ’n’ J, Fem Views.

Darien will do an e-mail vote rather than taking up time now.

Jan: *I suggest* “Making Peace: News about WILPF works, from across the US section”.

Darien: I will send out an e-mail w/ all the choices and Dianne will use Rank Choice Voting (RCV). Send your 3 top choices to Darien.

Ellen: *Did Peace Release get ignored?*

Darien: I’ll add it to possible suggestions.

12) Visitors Comments

Theresa El-Amin: *I’m curious about the financial discussion. Hiring a fund-raiser is a bad and strange idea. Members are the best fund-raisers. The question is what is WILPF raising \$ for – you’re not broke.*

Consciousness-raising is a bad idea.

All across the South, voting is sacred.

Fannie Lou Hamer was mistreated by WILPF. You have to overcome having all-white branches.

You have to find out from Blacks in their organizations what they want & tell them you want to work w/ them. Join the NAACP. They are the primary people to work on voter suppression.

Black people want us to end wars. WILPF is about disarming the empire and building peace.

Race consciousness has to be done internally. WILPF has to have the Advancing Human Rights Committee. You have to do more on disarmament and nuclear weapons!

I have asked Jan to speak to the Columbus branch.

Respectfully submitted,
Dianne Blais