

## **Saturday, November 23, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes**

### **Attending**

#### **Board Members:**

**Darien De Lu** (Sacramento, President),  
**Ellen Schwartz** (Sacramento, Nominating Committee Chair)  
**Eileen Kurkoski** (Boston, Membership Development Committee Chair),  
**Tina Shelton** (Philadelphia, At-Large)  
**Barbara Nielsen** (San Francisco, Treasurer)  
**Ginger Harris** (Boston, Secretary)  
**George Friday** (Southern Piedmont Branch, NC, Program Committee Chair)  
**Martha Collins** (Milwaukee, Development Committee Co-Chair)  
**Marybeth Gardam** (Iowa City, IA, Development Committee Co-Chair)  
**Phillip Cole** (Brisbane, CA, At-Large)

**Absent:** Cee'Cee' Anderson, Personnel Chair

#### **US Section Representatives to International WILPF Entities:**

**Cricket (Jane) Doyle** (Santa Cruz, WILPF US Liaison to the Americas Region Representative)  
**Julie Kabukanyi** (Boston, WILPF US Member of the International Advisory Board)

#### **Member Guests:**

Emily Ricketts, Joan Goddard, Michael Ippolito, Nancy Price, Robin Lloyd, Theresa El-Amin, Jan Corderman, Regina Sneed, Gloria McMillan, Dianne Blais

**For this meeting:**           **Minutes: Ellen**  
                                     **Vibes: Ginger**  
                                     **Timekeeper: Tina**

The meeting started with check-in and the harmonizing practice.

#### **ITEM 2.     President's Message – Darien**

Being on watch and active on our planet – burning, flooding, and more – and in our country as it turns toward authoritarianism. Watching these remarkable events, we are called to activism. The struggle with nonviolent action requires courage.

### **Old Business**

#### **ITEM 3.     Approval of Minutes – from April and Sept. 2024 Board Meetings – Ginger Harris**

**Approved** with correction of header of September minutes to make clear that it is BOARD minutes. Many had not had time to read the minutes, but they were sent out in

advance of this meeting. They will be considered approved for posting on the website, but if Board members found substantive concerns within the next week, they could raise them.

#### **ITEM 4. Brief update and discussion on Strategic Plan Committee**

At our September board meeting, Eileen, George, Marybeth, and Cricket volunteered to join a committee to do such planning. Nancy Price is considering possible involvement. The committee had no update or report.

*Probably*, it makes more sense for this ctte. to get started *after* the new ED is hired and oriented. *Additionally*, for this ad hoc ctte. to be effective, it needs a chair. If the new Co-Presidents choose to appoint the committee members again for the new Board term, the Co-Presidents can also appoint a chair.

The Co-Presidents can consider what the mandate is to the committee. Some possible topics are financial stability, growing branches, activating and supporting the program work of our issue committees, addressing WILPF International's programs, and structuring and strengthening WILPF US

**At the discretion of the incoming Co-Presidents (TBD), the work of this committee temporarily suspended, until after hiring of the ED.**

#### **ITEM 5. Coordination and planning among different parts of WILPF for programs and panels at UN functions – Eileen**

Collaboration, coordination and planning among parts of WILPF, including the international WILPF levels beyond WILPF US, was broadly discussed at the September Board meeting. International WILPF has an important role at UN functions; however, the WILPF US work tends to be substantially independent of what International is doing.

Currently, the funded WILPF US involvement is our UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) program, with our "Local to Global" and Practicum programs. In 2024 some members of a branch and others organized a panel for the UN Summit of the Future, which WILPF US also supported, but it was only through an individual donation that a venue was provided, very near the last minute.

It's difficult to say *yes* or *no* to branch or member requests – or even our CSW program request – *without causing offense* if we have no overall plan, goals, or even standards. *What approach or standards should WILPF US have* for what WILPF decides to support through staff time– *or even to fund directly?*

Also, the nature of the UN is changing as corporations have increasing influence. How does that *organizational shift* affect our goals and interest in WILPF participation in UN events?

Finally, and fundamentally, *who* in WILPF should be included in planning and reviewing proposals? That *could* include Board and issue committees, other WILPF US programs, branches, and members. Potentially, our WILPF US UN programs can develop leadership, recruit members, express and advance our program goals, and even be a basis for encouraging donations and grants to WILPF US. How do we bring the relevant Board, program, and committee members together for such collaboration?

**Discussion covered a number of topics, including background on the CSW and whether the CSW Programs need a committee to help plan topics and address costs. (There was a small committee for a few years before COVID.) Perhaps there is also a need for a WILPF program committee calendar and someone to remind issue committees and the CSW about timing needed for details that need to be addressed.**

Theresa suggested that Betty Burkes be brought into this process, as 2025 will be the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Conference and she was WILPFUS President in 1995.

Discussion was mostly around the CSW, and setting up a committee (separate from the staff role of coordination for the Practicum and Local 2 Global). That CSW Programs Committee could possibly also deal with other UN meetings like Summit for the Future. (the deadline for which was 2 days from this Board meeting).

Ellen pointed out that the Minigrant program has in the past funded side events, including the at the CSW. Applying for a Minigrant requires advance planning, but the UN events aren't a surprise. Our members should be able to plan soon enough to apply for a Minigrant so we wouldn't be asked to fund unbudgeted items, hastily planned.

### **New Business**

#### **ITEM 6. Funding the new website: Proposal – Darien and others**

Board members received two emails, one on Nov. 19 and another on Nov. 21, with a number of documents related to the new website. The Nov. 19 email contained the forwarded email from the al dente company the with letter ("Dear WILPF") briefly presenting themselves and their support for WILPF's mission, such that they are giving us a **75% discount** on the site. The subsequent email provided that letter again, an update of Darien's email content that had introduced it, and two separate documents identifying the many cost savings and other advantages the new site offers us.

Having the site completed within months means that we'll be able to use its many new features during the national organizing anticipated in January as WILPF joins other peace and justice advocates in influencing Congress and otherwise working to shape U.S. policies. It also means that we'll be ready to support and publicize the work of the new executive director (ED).

Following wide-ranging discussion, we proceeded to a vote:

**MOTION: WILPF US agrees to the contract with al dente, a Japanese company, for our new WILPF website, completed in 2024, for \$7,200 total.**

**Passed by a vote:**

**Abstaining: none**

**In favor: Eileen, Tina, Marybeth, George, Ellen, Julie, Darien, Ginger,**

**Opposed: Barbara, Phillip**

Next steps are to get an invoice from the al dente company and finish the website.

**ITEM 7.      Proposals related to an Addition to the Collaboration & Partnerships Protocol – Gloria McMillan & Nancy Price**

Gloria and Nancy are concerned about the potentially serious consequences of a hasty *partnership* that Disarm is considering, with the Founding Mothers Movement. One of the FMM leadership team owns and publishes a violent war game.

They submitted three proposals.

1. Proposed: an addition to the current Collaboration Process, Step-by-Step Procedure (approved by the Board July 30, 2019 and updated December 2021) for *due diligence* in researching the INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN THE GENERAL CONCEPT PROPOSAL.

The Collaboration Procedure “is about proposing a long-term alliance and formal collaboration between WILPF US and some other organization or project.” This proposal was postponed for now, to allow careful consideration and specific wording, so it was not discussed further nor voted upon at this meeting.

**2. Request for Time for Study supported at the Board level (Disarm Committee will do the research).**

**Passed by a voice vote:**

**In favor: many**

**Opposed: none.**

**Abstaining: none**

**3. Request for a Delay of the DISARM Vote (scheduled for tomorrow) and presentation to the Board when the study is completed.**

**Passed by a voice vote:**

**In favor: many**

**Opposed: none**

**Abstaining: none**

**ITEM 8.      Groundwork for a more effective WILPF US in 2024 and support for an effective new ED: A staff work proposal – Darien**

What are the components that contribute to WILPF being more successful? They include *delivery of information*, using our WILPF tools, and preparing for and encouraging the greater involvement of both current *and new* WILPF members.

Here are some basics:

1 – posting regular website calendar updates about the meetings and other events of issue cttcs., standing cttcs., and ad hoc ctte.

2 - coordination between our IT staffer and the Website Ctte. to update the new website as we discover “bugs” or other changes needed.

3 - routine webpage updates - coordination, as above, with the issue cttcs., programs, and others who request such updates

4 - review and coordination with IT staff on eAlerts

5 - sufficient social media work to maintain/establish a *basic* WILPF presence through, at least, “bare maintenance” posts – including on the new BlueSky platform

Darien has fulfilled the roles in items 3 and 4, however, she is stepping back from that after January 25. We will need someone to take over that work, which should not be expected of the new co-presidents or the ED.

All of the listed items are important ways to support not only WILPF in general but, also, the incoming ED. Social media (SM) work is likely to be something that the ED values, and she may well want to initiate the hiring of a staff member for that alone. However, the state of our current SM “presence” is... greatly decayed, after two years of no SM staff and almost no attention. *Relying only on our WILPF volunteers posting isn’t working!*

It’s difficult to say how many hours per month would be needed for this work. Perhaps 30-50 hours per month is reasonable, and that could flex down or up.

**Proposal** to budget and hire support staff to carry out the tasks above – a temporary position to tide us over through onboarding of ED and revisioning project.

We already have an experienced and skills-demonstrated staff member available immediately to fill some of these roles, if we so chose. How or by whom to do this work can be decided separately. (But something should be in place before Darien ceases to be President and doing the ones she does)

Discussion: Theresa and then Marybeth did not approve of new hires made in the last months of the outgoing president’s term. Barbara pointed out that we have no “staff” currently, only independent contractors. Also, she believes the ED should be the one to identify and hire someone to do that work. Cricket, on the other hand, thought the ED might appreciate having support staff in place as she acclimates to her job. Nancy urged that WILPF should have a SM *plan*.

A Board voice vote deferred the decision to further discussion in Executive Session.

## **ITEM 9. Steps toward Anti-racism/DEI and feminist leadership training for Board and National Leaders of WILPF – Tina**

Tina suggests that a team of three research and create a proposal for an anti-racism and feminist leadership training for our Board and other national leaders. Research would include exploring possible grant money for such training or finding resources within our networks that can provide this service to us.

Tina’s suggestions realizes recommendations for WILPF US work that Darien made in 2020-21 but for which we lacked volunteers. Also, it would create a formal WILPF US structure to address current DEI work.

Questions and comments:

Phillip objected to the training and excoriated the presence of *unofficial* committees which are segregated as to race. He referenced the limited pre-2020 work of the Advancing Human Rights Issue Committee’s Racial Justice Working Group on this topic and the Fresno Branch’s ongoing Fresno “Unpacking Racism” work. Julie asked why do this and what would

the mission of the committee be? She felt that we've had committees in the past that focused on racism and that lots of committees are already addressing the topic.

Tina: The mission is to help us become less racist in our WILPF institutions. Darien added that in recent years she has tried to set up committee, but WILPF US has no such committees. The Black Liberation Caucus (an independent group of WILPF members, not an official part of WIPF US) opposed that work, saying it was their job. So, although Darien sought to recruit members, the BLC suppressed any WILPF US participation or committees on this topic.

As President, Darien has created this ad hoc ctte. and appointed Tina as chair. Tina will reach out to find out what are our options, including the range of cost (low-high), time involved, and level of expertise for trainers. She expected to be prepared with preliminary information at the January or March Board meetings.

**The Board supported Darien's creation of an ad hoc committees to research and propose what anti-racism and feminist leadership training we can do, especially to become more anti-racist within our U.S. Section. Tina, as appointed chair, has committed to work within that committee.**

**ITEM 10. Comments from WILPF member guests – (up to 2 min. each)**

**End of public portion of Board meeting.**

**An executive session of Board meeting followed the public portion.**

### **Report from the Executive Session of the Board meeting**

All the Board members in attendance at the Board meeting stayed for the executive session.

In order to address this work for a few months, until the new Co-Presidents and ED decide how they want to do these things, the Board voted in favor of this proposal:

#### **PROPOSAL for Michael's assignment.**

**Up to 10 hours/month to deal with bugs**

**Up to 15 hours/month social media through most of January**

**Up to 5 hours/month Calendar updates on website (not posting: that can be done by Glenn or Matthew; the hard part is gathering and aggregating the events, from committees. That is what Michael would be doing.)**

**Up to 5 hours/month Interface between committees etc who want webpage updates, and Glenn.**

**Total max 35 hours. Most starting in January; Social media could start sooner. Would be likely through March when new Board in place, new ED is installed and acclimated.**

Abstain: none

For: Ginger, Darien, Tina, Ellen, George, Eileen, Marybeth

Opposed: Phillip, Barbara

<b>MOTION PASSES.</b>
-----------------------