

Women's International League for Peace & Freedom National Board
 Minutes: July 31, 2025 at 4pm PT / 6pm CT / 7pm ET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING:

No.	Item	Lead
-----	------	------

1. **Welcome & Board members present:** Martha Collins (co-president), Shilpa Pandey (co-president), Barbara Nielsen (treasurer), Eileen Kurkoski (Membership Development Committee Chair), Julie Kabukanyi (Nominating Committee Chair), George Friday (Program Committee Chair), Marybeth Gardam (Development Committee Co-Chair), Darien De Lu (former president), Julie Leak, Tina Shelton

Absent: Cee' Cee' Anderson (Personnel Committee Chair)

Member Guests: Phillip Cole, Regina Sneed, Karen, Lydia Diamond, Martha Kamopp, Robin Lloyd, Jan Cordeman

Linda Low, Executive Director

2. **ED Report** Linda Low

Linda invited the Board and Issue Committee chairs to a presentation on July 24 to present the work plan she developed for the next 12 months. She took the last 4-5 months to familiarize herself with WILPF. She noticed a decline in membership and is concerned because WILPF is operating in a budget deficit. She discussed the “re-envisioning process,” specifically focusing on:

- 1) Rebuilding key operational processes to be efficient and to create a “culture of care,” where members feel supported and heard.
- 2) Membership engagement and growth: She noted that the way people join organizations has changed. So, she is working on changing the way WILPF reaches out to emerging activists.
- 3) Fundraising: Addressing the deficit and supporting new initiatives.

She will present to all members about this process for transparency and feedback at the end of August. Linda reported that they have done six focus groups with about 60 WILPF members, engaged in various parts of activism, the organization, and the country. She has reached out to national allies, like CodePink and Veterans for Peace.

She stated that it will take a group effort to rebuild and sustain WILPF financially. One strategy for that includes grants. Also, she asked that members fundraise through relationships and that board members give \$500 to demonstrate leadership.

3. Committee reports & action/decision requested from board

3.1. Program Committee & WILPF International (Intl.)

Palestine Working Group update

George Friday

A written update was provided before the meeting. The Advancing Human Rights Committee (AHR) does not currently have a chair. At the latest Program Meeting, DISARM/End Wars and Middle East Peace & Justice Action (MEPJAC) led the informative discussion. George stated that all of the Program meetings are recorded.

The WILPF Intl. Palestine working group typically meets monthly but did not the past month so there is no significant update.

3.2. Nominations committee

Julie Kabukanyi

The committee meets the second Tuesday of every month. From January 2025-July 2025, the committee fulfilled their responsibilities by developing the 2025 election timeline, identifying open board positions, preparing the call for applications in August, reviewing the no-campaigning rules, analyzing the feasibility of electronic, hybrid or OpaVote voting, and recommending the appointments of Dianne Blais as Secretary and Shelah Harper as an alternate Intl. Advisory Board representative.

3.2.1. See after 3.2.4. for the election timeline.

- 3.2.2. Open positions: *Immediate Appointment* Program Committee Chair (2nd seat), *Fall election*: Secretary (partial-term), Program Committee Chair (1st & 2nd seat), Treasurer, Personnel Committee Chair & Membership Committee Chair
- 3.2.3. Eligibility requirements: 12+ months on national-level committee (including board, ad-hoc, and issue committees) & 24 of the prior 30 months as a WILPF US member.

Robin raised the concern that the 24 mo. requirement restricts the applicant pool. Darien reported that the 24 mo. has not been the concern, the issue has been the one year committee requirement. Julie K. said this issue is for the by-law committee.

3.2.4. Campaigning proposal: Allow committee-related communications and prohibit use of WILPF channels for self-promotion. The proposal is under review.

Ellen raised the issue of the 6 mo. buffer provided to members who lapsed on their dues submissions and wondered if they should be allowed to vote in elections. Linda said that the 6 mo. period is valuable to retain members. George asked for counsel about the \$500 provided to issue committees that frequently goes untouched.

Date	Task
Aug 1, 2025	Contact printer to confirm production timelines
Sept 13, 2025	Board nomination deadline
Sept 20, 2025	Board application packet deadline
Oct 4, 2025	Submit ballot materials to printer
Oct 25, 2025	Ballots mailed to members
Nov 1–13, 2025	Candidate forum(s) held
Nov 14, 2025	Ballot postmark deadline
Nov 24, 2025	Ballot counting begins
Jan 2026	Announce results

3.3. Membership committee

Eileen Kurkoski

As of January, WILPF US has 1,082 members with valid mailing addresses. From January to April, 51 members joined. She believes WILPF needs more new members to make up for losses in renewals and deaths. The membership committee asked branch leaders to touch base with their members, going back three years. She stated that office manager Chris Wilbeck, sends renewal reminders three times a year. Another recruitment strategy involved Shelby Young (field manager), Jan Corderman (Des Moines), and Shaili Stockham (summer intern). They contacted 50 attendees who viewed a film hosted by MEPJAC. Two attendees were interested in learning about WILPF and results are pending. The committee is continuing to update the WILPF member database. They have reached 200 out of 400 Jane Addams branch members. A third has not responded, but they have good addresses. Several have passed away.

3.3.1. Board decision requested to increase annual membership fees

VOTE: As it has been 30+ years since dues have been raised, the membership committee asks that the board votes to raise membership dues from \$35 to \$40 starting in Jan.2026.

- Marybeth believes dues should be raised to \$45, considering inflation and the possible need to raise it from \$40 to \$45 in the future. She believes it should be done in one step instead of two.
- George supported the move to \$45 but is concerned that a dues raise can cause members financial hardship.
- Darien did not think a \$10 jump in dues was appropriate during the re-envisioning process and does not see a problem with revisiting this topic in later years.
- Barbara inquired why members weren't contacted about their preferences.
- Tina believes that the \$35 to \$50 range won't make a significant difference to members, but those that cannot afford that should have the option to pay less. She also stated the need for a message on the renewal form that donating more is always an option.
- Marybeth said that a lot of members took the sliding scale option in the past. Barbara agreed and said that members believe we have more money than we do.
- Dianne is in favor of \$50 and that Chris (or the membership chair) could handle the finances for special circumstances.
- Martha said that there already is a 6 mo. renewal law and is in favor of \$50. She suggested a "Sponsor a Sister" idea where a member could pay for another that is struggling to pay. Martha asked what the potential revenue could be if dues rise.
 - Marybeth did the calculations: At \$35, income is \$42,805. At \$40, income is \$48,920 (about a 6k increase). At \$45, income is \$55,035 (about 12k increase).

Record	
\$40 due increase	Vote
Martha	Y ½
Shilpa	Y ½
Dianne	Y
Barbara	Y
Eileen	Y
Julie K.	Y
George	Y
Marybeth	Y
Julie L.	Y
Tina	Y
Darien	Y
RESULT	Passed

3.3.2. Microgrant program update Phillip

Jan Corderman originally suggested the microgrant program that Shelby Young drafted. The three members of the Microgrant Committee are Dr. Jean Kennedy (Fresno), Jane Doyle (Santa Cruz), and Phillip Cole. The committee took \$1000 of mini-grant money to turn into microgrants, available for \$250 a piece. This comes from the original \$5000 grant pool. The microgrants are available to branches to recruit new members. Branch treasurers

should contact the membership development group (Eileen, Shelby Young, or Jan Corderman). Dianne inquired about an eNews announcement, Eileen stated that the board will get details later, and Phillip clarified that the announcement will go out through the listserv. The process includes an application with a detailed budget and a follow-up report. Shelby and Eileen will filter the first round of applications while the mini-grant committee will make the final decision. **Darien called for a vote because this microgrant proposal will change the original grant qualifications → Unanimous Yes** (with the exception of Cee' Cee' who was not in attendance, qualifying as an automatic abstain).

3.4. Bylaws committee

Darien De Lu

The bylaw committee proposed two different changes to section “V.A.2. Qualification for Board Membership.” The first measure would broaden “active member of a national-level WILPF US committee” to include branch participation (V.A.2.a), so that more members would be eligible. Eileen stated that she would have done better during her first year on the board if she had experience on an administrative committee. Martha agreed with Eileen. Linda understood the presented concerns, but said that she sees the same 30 people on different committees and wants to broaden the pool. She also said that members can mentor one another to offset a lack of administrative experience. Julie K. testified to having good mentors that helped her in the beginning. Martha was concerned about the language of the bylaws, specifically questions about the orientation and the word “active.” Darien said defining “active” is not in the purview of the bylaws committee, rather it is for the nominating committee. *See vote record after the second proposal summary.*

The second proposed measure reduces the candidate requirement of 12 mo. of “WILPF US activity” to 9 months. This would only apply to Board Interim appointments and its purpose is to make it easier to fill board vacancies. (This change refers to sections IV.D.3. & V.A.2.a.). Dianne did not think that three months is not significant enough to change the bylaws. Barbara suggested a trial period.

Bylaw Amendments (V.A.2.)

	Vote: Broadens that ‘active experience’ to include being an active member of a branch for at least 12 months.	Vote: Reduces the (current) candidate requirements of 12 mo. of “WILPF US activity” to 9 mo. (Only board appointments to interim bd. membership, to fill bd. vacancies.)
Martha	N ½	N ½
Shilpa	Y ½	N ½
Dianne	Y	N
Barbara	Y	N
Eileen	Y	N

Bylaw Amendments (V.A.2.)		
Julie K.	Y	Y
George	Y	Y
Marybeth	Y	Y
Julie L.	Y	N
Tina	Y	N
Darien	Y	Y
RESULTS	Passed	Not Passed

Possible proposed amendment: Change the name of the Steering Committee to the Executive Committee and reduce its size, in hope of increasing efficiency. Martha questioned what the purpose was to condense the Executive Committee. Marybeth was concerned that downsizing the committee may obstruct fundraising goals. Something to possibly address in the future is that the past president is not on the current steering committee. Shilpa and Dianne believe that if the name was changed, then the committee would need to be the executive officers and perhaps the ED. Tina stated that effective communication would be enough to resolve issues about board subset meetings. Marybeth and Darien stated that if WILPF has an ED, they should be invited to the meeting because it would be their job to implement the action items discussed. Regina Sneed wrote that the executive committee and the steering committee typically have different responsibilities. *[This was a discussion about feasibility, not a vote on the measure.]* Darien wrapped up with a welcome to join the bylaws committee.

3.5. Development committee update Marybeth

WILPF no longer has the part-time fundraising staff person, Jeneve Brooks. The committee downsized some of their fundraising goals, in alignment with Linda's work plan. Linda has come up with different fundraising strategies and the committee will be asking for more support from faithful donors. WILPF maintained its low expenses and the 110th anniversary event brought in \$5,397. This was short of the goal, but they received positive reviews and were able to reconnect with former members. Darien inquired about the \$5,000 donation from the Robertson family for the CSW on June 16th. Marybeth clarified that it is not listed with grants and to follow up with Chris if more concerns arise.

3.6. Finance committee and budget update Barbara

Figures are reported in document no.10. The committee is trying to capitalize on earnings and expenditures are low. WILPF is still running a deficit.

Eileen spoke about how committees do not always use the money allocated towards them. She inquired about where the unused money goes. Linda stated that half of the \$3,500

provided to issue committees has been spent thus far and if the money goes unspent, they do not get to carry it over. Linda said that the money for issue committees is not a significant amount compared to the deficit.

Darien noticed that there was a new 2025 budget cut of a \$1,000 donation for 'No to NATO'. That \$1,000 had been an allocation in the 2024 budget for the activities organized last summer, when WILPF US was one of the organizers of the NATO Counter-Summit and Rally held in Washington DC in early July 2024. Darien was concerned that one-time budget items from previous years were unintentionally getting carried over into current budgets.

Tina asked who makes the decisions of where/when CDs get transferred. Barbara answered that the Finance Committee makes the decision.

3.7. Lloyd Family Legacy report and budget update ED Linda Low

The gift enabled the start of the reenvisioning process. This includes focus groups, social media, how WILPF shows up externally, and creating a stronger internal culture. In Linda's ED update, board members were provided with a four-section, four-year budget for the \$500,000 LFL gift. Broadly, \$50,000 was earmarked for general operations and the rest goes towards the ED position, hiring an agency to support and implement the reenvisioning process, and innovation/piloting new initiatives to support growth. After questions from board members, Linda spoke about the employment of the field organizer, Shelby Young. Shelby is part-time under two contracts totaling 10 hours/week: one for WILPF field organizing under general WILPF operations, and a second contract under LFL campaign for direct support to Linda, the reenvisioning process, and innovation process.

3.8. DEI at WILPF US Darien, George, Tina

Darien reported that the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) program currently being followed does not have any oversight or guidelines. George is leading the programming with internal discussions and subgroups on how to embrace DEI and sent a call-to-action email. Linda asked the group if a conversation, separate from the board, needs to be had. Tina wanted to combine feminist leadership principles with DEI, but there was no funding for additional training, contrary to what she had hoped. The conversation is open-ended. Advancing Human Rights has not talked about DEI, but Darien mentioned the brief presence of an anti-racism subcommittee in AHR. Tina & George talked about the possibility of each branch creating a work plan to prioritize relationship building, organizing with people of color-led organizations, and recognizing that diversity takes many forms. Linda suggested an ad hoc, open house meeting to talk about this.

4. Next board meeting dates

Martha

Thursday, October 20th at 4pm PT / 7pm ET

Thursday, January 29th at 4pm PT / 7pm ET

5. New member & board orientation process

Dianne, Shilpa, Julie L., Shaili

Dianne discussed how there are going to be two orientations: one for new members & one for new members of the board. Dianne and Shaili (intern) will be dealing with the former. The project will include videos, one being Geneve's 6 minute video presentation. Shaili has a comprehensive powerpoint that will be available for new members and will make a video highlighting especially important information from the powerpoint.

Shilpa will be sending out a poll for board member availability in the last week of August. She (and possibly others) will be presenting a 90 minute board orientation, outlining what is expected of board leadership. Past presidents will be invited to speak about their experience, and all members are invited, in order to mentor new members. The session will be recorded so that it is accessible once new members join the board.

6. Open discussion between Board and WILPF US

members on items as submitted by WILPF US members

Shilpa

Regina suggested that each board meeting should have an opportunity for members to ask questions, make announcements, etc. at the beginning. She mentioned that Veterans for Peace has this model, steady membership growth, and a news presence. Lydia Diamond, who left before this section of the meeting, requested to know how the code of conduct formation is going. Linda also responded to Phillip's question about her work plan presentation, explaining that she will be holding a reviewal meeting at the end of August and the invitation will come in a special eAlert.

Linda facilitated a dialogue between board members and issue committee members to discuss how WILPF defines disruption. Linda asked how WILPF can define guiding principles and appropriate behavior. Tina mentioned that we should consider using WILPF's international code of conduct. Shilpa believed that it was a mutual understanding that members will follow the international code of conduct and stated that it is not necessary for WILPF US to form its own code. Regina agreed with Shilpa and added that US-specific elements should be included. Linda mentioned that the consequences of harmful behavior have not been defined at the US section.

The following documents were provided to board members before the meeting:

1. ED report
2. Program committee report
3. Nominations committee report
4. Membership committee report

5. Bylaws committee report
6. Bylaws amendment proposal for board qualifications
7. Bylaws amendment proposal for the executive committee
8. Bylaws amendment proposal for interim board appointment requirements
9. Development committee report
10. Treasurer report on the 2025 budget
11. 2025 actuals to budget through June (general operations)
12. Lloyd Family Legacy (LFL) Campaign report
13. LFL backgrounder on agency decision to support WILPF US reenvisioning
14. LFL budget update