



American Water Works Association Pacific Northwest Section

FALL TRUSTEE MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. in the Lewis Room of the Marcus Whitman Hotel in Walla Walla, Washington by Chair James Dean. Also present: Chair Elect Ronda Farmer, Past Chair Mel Damewood, Trustees Michelle Cheek, Suzanne De Lorenzo, Dave England, Crystal Jensen; Alex Mofidi, Dan Sleeth and Treasurer Bob Ward. Also present were AWWA Executive Board Member/MAC Chair Kristin Kihs, Executive Director Kyle Kihs. AWWA Director Randy Black was excused.

Chair's Report

- During the Board Planning Meeting there was discussion about moving from individual committees to divisions to increase cooperation between committees, work better with subsections and provide better value to the membership.
- Leadership Symposium – very well received and successful for attendees. The Board intends to continue this program next year.

Association Directors Report – Randy Black

- Mel Damewood reviewed the Association Directors Report in Randy Black's absence.
- The Association continues to remind utilities of the America's Water Infrastructure Act and cyber security. Risk and resilience studies and Emergency Response Plans have deadlines and missing these deadlines will trigger a \$25,000 per day fine.
- Utilities are encouraged to look at Source Water Protection under the Federal Government's Farm Bill. WUCs and utilities are to consult with their state's Conservationist re meeting the requirements.
- AWWA Past President David Rager has been tasked with reviewing AWWA's current strategic plan.
- AWWA is moving away from CD's and toward a digital format.
- Although India continues to make slow progress, plans for a solid presence are on course in South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom.
- RMSO training will be in Tucson. Association Directors are encouraged to meet with their Section's Board to ensure that Trustees understand the Affiliation Agreement.
- The Nomination Committee recently recommended the application for Corianne Bennett for the position of AWWA's Service Provider at Large position.
- The Section is planning to resubmit for the AP Black, Diversity, and Honorary Membership Awards. All three were submitted to the Association prior to the October 1.
- Plans are in the works for two award nominations for Meritorious Service. Applications due December 1.

Executive Director Report – Kyle Kihs

- Section election is coming up soon; eligible voters will be notified by e-mail when electronic ballots are available. Voting closes on December 31

Treasurers Report – Bob Ward

- Review of expenses, budget and reserves is complete and no issues have been identified.

Motion: Sleeth moved to approve spring meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Damewood. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Farmer moved to approve the updated Rules of Procedure highlighting sunset committees, seconded by Sleeth.

Discussion and public comment

- Discussion at the Board retreat centered around combining committees of similar genres so there can be more collaboration and cross pollination. Over 40 committees exist and many are struggling for various reasons. At the July planning meeting, the Board reviewed the committees and divisions to identify and address these committees.
- Decision was made to integrate certain committees, (i.e Safety into Distribution and Public Officials into Utility Management). The Historical Committee was sunsetted as all material had been reviewed and organized and most is now in digital format. Small Systems was also recommended for sunseting on condition that subsections would take on the task of serving small systems overall. It was noted that Inland Empire has a good model for this.
- Updated Rules of Procedure contain those changes without losing a focus on the needed activities. For example, Public Officials will not be a committee but will have a conference track.
- The Board is not eliminating the activity the committee has performed but intends to include its function within the appropriate division.
- It was suggested that a half or full day track at the conference address small systems.
- During public comment, the Board was thanked for their clarifications. It will be necessary to be deliberate in communicating to members.
- Question regarding how this will be presented on the website; there will be a statement for each division so everyone knows what they do and who they serve.
- Regarding access to members in each division – liaisons will provide distribution lists.

Vote: motion carried unanimously.

Leadership Symposium – Chris Wanner

Wanner was unable to present so the Chair called for comments and discussion.

- Very positive feedback from attendees. It is anticipated that now the quality of the program is known, attendance will increase.
- This proved to be an excellent quality training so will be continued next year; the Board thinks there is great value to the membership. The structure may change but basics will remain. Format will likely change to one track of speakers plus networking rather than providing different tracks.
- The Section has good models, particularly Seattle Women in Leadership.
- This year the program took a financial loss but sometimes loss is outweighed by the value of the program. The Section may need to commit to subsidizing the program.
- It was a mistake to integrate with YP Summit and that will not happen next year.

2019 Vancouver Conference Financial and Survey Results – Tyler Clary

- 206 responses on survey (survey results are on line).
- Responses indicated Thursday and Friday technical content were most important to members.
- 74% visited vendors
- Mixed reaction to the app; noted that the app did not have some features that were paid for and this will be addressed with provider.
- 25% of responders were first time attendees but only 8% attended first attendee breakfast.
- Improvements would have been parking, size of venue, too-small classrooms, wi fi connectivity, coffee all day.
- Liked the food, competition night and the tech content.
- Net income for \$156,000.

2020 Spokane Conference – Dan Kegley

- Smart phone app will be addressed for the conference.
- Plenty of parking and wifi, venue is big enough for all to stay at one hotel.
- Great golf venue.
- Adding a presentation from Paul Bishop of ABC for professional operators.
- Recognition in memory of Chuck Kingston planned.
- 2 full CEUs will be offered.

Conference Program – Cheryl Capron

- Conference app was frustrating, and Cheryl and Conference Planner Brenda Lennox are scheduled to meet with the vendor to review.
- Regarding Leadership Symposium, the Board should consult with the Program Committee early on if they try to institute CEUs. This would add a lot of workload in terms of documenting attendance, deadlines and need for more volunteers.
- Spokane program is finished; of 192 submitted abstracts, all but about 20 will be used.
- With Trustee meeting moving to Friday afternoon, Top Ops has moved to Thursday. The schedule change affects the number of members who can be scheduled to present or help on Friday afternoon.
- Of the 92 abstracts, 36 were chosen by more than one committee so it was challenging trying to figure out who got what and how to fit them in; the situation could have been divisive, but all have been very cooperative.
- A Public Officials track was added with 6 hours of content.
- The committee meeting schedule is also affected by the schedule change; communication with committees should be done early as the usual meeting time will change.

PAC Nick Belmont, Katie Dillon

- Committee goal so far has been gathering information and creating awareness within the membership that the function is to help and give guidance so that fundraising can be streamlined in the future.
- Actionable goals to achieve by the end of the year are revamping the form that goes to event planners and having as complete a list of events as possible. The list will be sent out for double-checking and making sure small events are included.

- Next year, goal is to get the calendar live on the website.
- Once calendar is live, 2020 goal is to increase utilization of the form. The form will contain itemized questions that will populate into a budget when filled in.
- Ultimate goal is to bundle sponsorships.
- Trying to hit all subsection meetings and would appreciate help from liaisons.

E&T Fund – Jeff Lundt, Heather Pennington, Denny Clouse

- Presentation included information on scholarship calculation, impact of future donations, stress test of the fund and E&T needs.
- Reviewed dedicated principal, undedicated principal and retained earning funds as well as how annual scholarship amount determination is made.
- Anticipated bequest on the one-year horizon could increase dedicated principal by 128%.
- Stress test model shows potential for four years of zero retained earnings.
- E&T needs a steady source of income to undedicated principal to continue to meet scholarship commitments over the long term. Some has typically come from the vendor donation.

The meeting was adjourned for a break at 10:45.

The meeting reconvened at 11:00.

Division Leaders verses Committee Chairs – A Board Work Session – James Dean

Trustees were asked to report on the feedback they received during meetings with their divisions. Chair Dean noted that this proposal is in the infancy stage and the Board is not voting or making decisions but getting feedback at this point.

- Generally concern was expressed about having only one “point person” for a division – this would be a big job for a volunteer to take on.
- Succession planning would be difficult if one person were running several committees.
- Current model is working well; committees like to have their own officers but are also in favor of opportunities for collaboration.
- Planning meetings could be held with opportunities for the entire division to meet as well as the committees separately.
- Having a board liaison to each division is favored. Committees enjoy being separate but want to work together.
- Support for division structure but unclear as to how it will work. Would the division leader be a Trustee?
- Committees like having a chair but it is sometimes hard to fill all the officer positions and to collaborate with other committees. There is a desire to learn what other committees have and share, collaborate on trainings and conference tech sessions.
- From Programming perspective, the chair needs a point person to work with at the beginning of the process. Currently committee chairs receive e-mails and if chairs are eliminated a point person must be able to speak for that particular function within the division. The committee training session is at a bad time of year as committees need to be up to speed in May.

- Providing more leadership positions as committee chairs may allow more members to get support from their employers to attend conferences and other sessions. Personal accountability would be wider if spread among chairs.
- Noted that some committees transcend divisions and it would be difficult to combine state-centric committees into one lead person. SAC is another entity that needs to have someone within the group running the point. There was discussion about how IT can help SAC get information out.
- There is a need to develop collaboration and communication not only within divisions but also across divisions.
- Sometimes committees become “silos”. The division structure would be useful even if committees and officers remain as it will make it more likely they will reach beyond their boundaries and collaborate.
- All committee chairs should be engaged in this process.

Public Comments

- Just having the initial meeting has already opened the channels to committees working together; if committee chairs are not on board with structural change, move slowly.
- Already moving in a better direction.
- To get the most feedback would be good to have a meeting with all divisions involved.
- Each division is unique and that can spark conversation and ideas about how a division is structured.

2020 Budget Approval – James Dean

- The budget was not posted on the website, partly due to the proximity of the first Leadership Symposium which took most of staff and Board’s attention, so the final budget came together in the last few days.
- Income includes \$150,000 from AWWA, about \$150,000 from the conference and \$8,000 from Committees.
- Conference registration fees were increased in 2019 and the Vancouver conference made \$170,000; the Section, however, had to pay \$20,000 for unused rooms as a result of overbooking and subsequent cancellations after the deadline. In the future, members will be urged to book only what they need.
- Projected income for Spokane is \$150,000. It is the only venue where all attendees can fit in one hotel.
- Within the Trustee meeting budget the Board will be limiting the travel reimbursement for subsection officers to those that really need it. Subsections are encouraged to reimburse their people for travel out of subsection funds.
- SAC budget travel funds were eliminated.
- Leadership Symposium will not be combined with YP Summit next year; \$2,000 was added to member engagement so YPs can plan a separate summit.
- Overall Section is at 47.6% reserve, well within the 40-60% ratio.
- The new process involving the finance committee, executive committee and entire board was reviewed.
- A Section E&T contribution is not included in this budget but will be reviewed at winter meeting; any addition would be an amendment to 2020 budget.
- A month is needed between the Leadership Symposium and the Fall meeting and scheduling will reflect that next year.

Public comment

- Suggest an e-mail to those registered when rooms are cancelled and become available to try and avoid the cost for rooms not re-booked before the deadline.
- Support combination of Fall and Winter trainings.

Motion: Farmer moved for approval of the 2020 budget as presented, seconded by England. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.