



# American Water Works Association Pacific Northwest Section

## FALL TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY OCTOBER 13, 2020 Attendees participated virtually via Zoom

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 via Zoom by Chair Ronda Farmer. Also present: Chair Elect John Roth, Past Chair James Dean, Trustees Cheryl Capron, Michelle Cheek, Dave England, Crystal Jensen; Karen Kelley, Doug Schlepp, AWWA Director Randy Black, Treasurer Bob Ward, and Executive Director Kyle Kihs.

### Chair's Report - Ronda Farmer

- The first fall virtual training went well with about 40 people participating.
- The Section is coping with the new norm and trying to communicate as often as possible, so members are up to date. Virtual trainings are being held and virtual networking events are being planned.
- Although annual conference revenue was lost for the year, the Section is doing okay financially; at this point it appears all the reserve funding approved for this year may not be needed.
- Virtual training guidance document was finalized with standard pricing for classes.
- Planning has begun for first virtual conference in 2021.
- Finance Committee has worked hard on the 2021 budget and it will be presented for approval today.

### Association Directors Report – Randy Black

- AWWA is moving forward to meet the needs of the membership in similar ways as the Section, with heavy focus on virtual platforms
- First virtual ACE summit was held in September and attracted a good number of attendees and sponsorships.
- AWWA President has challenged the leadership to reconnect with dropped members. The Association has provided talking points regarding the value of membership.
- The updated strategic plan was adopted in July; Black reviewed it during Subsection and Officer training today. The plan can be found on the Association website.
- The upcoming winter board meeting will be virtual.
- An in-person ACE is planned for San Diego in 2021, depending on COVID status at the first of year.
- ACE competitions in person will be (reluctantly) cancelled until further notice although best tasting water contest is still under evaluation. Sections are asked to keep momentum going on competitions by sharing past successes, posting videos, etc.
- Utility Management and YP Summits have been rescheduled but all schedules are predicated on the pandemic.
- Association Awards are a great opportunity for Section members to be recognized; Black will provide a list of all potential awards for Section and members; many worthwhile and deserving members deserve accolades. There was only one submittal this year so hope by raising awareness, we can encourage more next year.

## **Approve Spring Meeting Minutes**

**Motion: Schlepp moved to approve Spring meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Black. Motion carried unanimously.**

## **Bylaw Ad Hoc Committee Update – Ronda Farmer**

- Kristin Kihs has stepped down as chair of the committee due to a new position and AWWA duties.
- Bylaws are being reviewed in comparison to Association template. There are many recommendations for language to be added to the Bylaws and many recommendations coming forward from the committee. The Board has started to review the information and that has expanded to a deeper conversation. Once the Board agrees on changes, Bylaws will be sent to the membership for review and feedback before approval.
- The Association Executive Committee approves changes.
- Ad Hoc Committee met many times over the summer and had contact with the Section services person at AWWA for their input. Many of the changes are a result of making sure the Section Bylaws comply with the Association's template.
- Two separate controlling documents exist: Bylaws and Rules of Procedure (ROP). Bylaws require approval by AWWA, and ROP are approved by the Board of Trustees. The two documents must work together. There may be adjustments to the ROP to reflect the way business is done currently.
- Farmer noted that other feedback is being reviewed and if any members have questions please reach out.

## **Quarterly Training Program – Cheryl Capron**

- With the big change in conference format, from in-person to virtual, presentations were reduced from 180 to 48. The Program Committee took a "top down" approach and consulted the committees that do most of the presentations, asking them for four topics. Topics for the quarterly trainings are:
  - Lessons Learned from Managing Mega Projects (will try to tailor so there are take-aways for small utilities) in February
  - Regulatory Rodeo in May
  - Resilience Strategies in August
  - Asset and Data Management in October
- Based on the success of water treatment webinars earlier this year, things should go well. There will be more details available by the end of the month.

## **2021 Budget Overview – John Roth**

- Roth shared a copy of the 2021 proposed budget showing income of \$289,495 and Expenses of \$287,500
- There were major budget revisions in 2020 due to cancellation of the conference and the resulting loss of revenue as well as some expenses associated with the cancellation.
- The Board approved allocation of funding from reserves this year.
- The 2020 budget approach was "top down" with feedback from Treasurer and Executive Committee. Cuts were made and Trustees were asked to develop neutral Division budgets. Each Division must cover their own expenses with offsets in revenue.
- The Section is not fully recovered and has a neutral, slightly revenue positive budget for 2021. Reserves will drop to about \$270,000 which is within the Bylaw requirement.

- In 2020, performance is a little better than anticipated, partly due to the Executive Director negotiating savings on some conference fees and penalties.

### **Public Comments via Zoom Chat**

- Denny Clouse announced his retirement at the end of this year.
- Question regarding bank charges which seem high despite the conference cancellation. Roth noted that bank charges all go into one line item which includes all credit card fees for all committee trainings and networking as well as traditional bank fees.
- An expense of \$300 is for CEU review in Oregon was explained.
- Roth noted that Executive Director Kihs was able to negotiate with the Boise hotels and conference center to avoid some of the penalties and fees for cancellation, knowing the Section will hold a future conference in Boise. The Section received more income from committees than expected. Committees have done a great job putting on trainings and staying in the black.
- Question about ballot printing – election is all electronic now and the annual fee for the electronic balloting process will be much less than the former expense of printing ballots.
- Regarding the process of selecting a Treasurer, Chair Farmer will be addressing that in a memo. She noted the appointment of Treasurer has been extended to another meeting so that candidates have ample time to do presentations.

There was no further public comment. Farmer noted she is available to answer any other questions that may arise.

### **Approval of 2021 Budget**

**Motion: Jensen moved to approve the 2021 budget as presented, seconded by Dean.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Trustee Reports**

#### *Doug Schlepp (Utility Operations Division)*

Distribution and Engineering Committees put together a joint training this Fall but have not yet had feedback. Utility Management Committee has grown from 2-3 people to almost a dozen and is showing great enthusiasm.

#### *Cheryl Capron (Water Science Division)*

Water Treatment Committee had three webinars this summer using Spokane Conference materials and is planning another next year. Water Resource is also looking into a training opportunity. There is much crossover among the committees.

#### *Michelle Cheek (Public Information Division)*

All committees in the Division are planning some sort of virtual training over the next year. The Public Outreach Committee has interesting ideas on how to get better speakers and will continue to explore those in hopes it will increase interest in training events.

#### *Dave Englund: (Philanthropy Division)*

It is quite different raising money without in-person events but there is hard work going on in connection with virtual, on-line events. The E&T did an excellent job managing funds and provided substantial money for scholarships (over \$40,000). The online auction in September brought in a little of \$3,000 for philanthropy.

*Crystal Jensen (Member Engagement Division)*

The Division is not slowing down. The YPs are meeting regularly and reaching out to schools and still planning socials and webinars. No one is deterred by the conference going virtual. The Division is moving forward on diversity inclusion issues. Also organized a meet and greet social today. Committees are being creative regarding member engagement in the COVID environment.

*James Dean (Government Relations Division)*

With all going on, WUC and WARN meetings have been centered on legislative direction as far as what utilities are allowed to do (shutoffs, masks, etc.) They continue to meet and monitor the situation, with new updates at every meeting.

*Karen Kelley (Internal Communications Division)*

Publications have been the focus of Internal Communications, ready to produce second edition of Water Matters. No other updates, everyone is embroiled in their own utilities work.

Chair Farmer thanked everyone for their work and participation. She noted pride in the Section and its volunteers.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.