



American Water Works Association Pacific Northwest Section

2021 Spring Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes May 6, 2021 Online via Zoom

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 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; Doug Schlepp, AWWA Director Randy Black, Treasurer Bob Ward, and Executive Director Kyle Kihs. Trustee Karen Kelley was excused.

Chair's Report – Ronda Farmer

Farmer referenced Nancy Sullivan's request for suggestions about completing the sentence "You know you work in water when....." She asked that this be addressed before the meeting ends today.

- COVID-19 Update: More in-person events have been planned and hoping for more in-person and hybrid events including fundraising, golf tournaments, meetings this year.
- Bylaws Update: Bylaw revisions were submitted to the membership and were approved 139-7. The Board will be moving on to updating Rules of Procedure to reflect the changes.
- Section Awards: The following award recipients were congratulated for their achievements:
 - Subsection Advisory Council Award: Jeremy Djajadi, Sybis, LLC
 - John Lechner Award of Excellence: Lee Odell, Murraysmith
 - Kenneth J. Miller Award: Shantel Shepard, Tacoma Water
 - Pioneer Award: Josh Kennedy, Jacobs Engineering
 - Heart and Soul Award: Brad Phelps, Jacobs Engineering
 - AWWA Honorary Member Award: Denny Clouse, North City Water District
 - Powell-Lindsay Award: Randy Black, Lakewood Water District and Corianne Burnett, Carollo Engineers
 - George Warren Fuller Award: Dan Kegley, GSI Water Solutions
- Introduction of Incoming Board Officers:
 - Michelle Cheek, Chair Elect
 - Jamie Porter, Oregon/Idaho Trustee
 - Tyler Clary, Washington Trustee
 - Nick Belmont, At-large Trustee
 - Jason Canady, Treasurer

Association Directors Report – Randy Black

- AWWA is focusing on membership, continuing the “member get a member” campaign with a program overhaul, new incentives and resources. Membership has dropped below 50,000 and 40 of 43 sections have seen a decline in membership.
- A committee has been formed to develop the “Enterprise Model” of membership related to utility benefit membership. The model has been piloted successfully in one section and would require adoption by all sections. A final report and recommendation is due next month.
- The organization is striving to have diversity and inclusion at a higher level and working toward broad appeal and more diverse partners in both public and private sectors.
- Currently two magazines “AWWA Journal” and “Optflow” are published in hardcopy and AWWA is considering going fully electronic. Input from members is sought and Board members were asked to contact Black with any suggestions about the best way to keep publications viable.
- Strong focus on public trust.
- Legislation – Lead and Copper Rule has been proposed by the EPA and challenged by special interest groups as well as other government entities. WUCC has recommended that the Association intervene on behalf of the EPA as it has completely reviewed the rules and feels they meet the public’s best interests. Other areas of concern for next year are PFOS and cybersecurity.
- AWWA is in great shape financially, after receiving 75-80% reimbursement of conference expenditures from insurance.
- ACE: Virtual conference is planned for June 14-17 with new items to help make virtual attendance more interesting, including entertainment. The conference will feature over 80 hours of learning across six professional tracks and AWWA is doing all it can to mirror a face-to-face conference.
- Regional Meeting of Section Officers will take place and it is highly recommended that all members who can attend do so. RMSO in the west is August 20-21 in Midway, Utah and in the east November 16 and 17 in Annapolis, Maryland.
- Washington has approved ACE CEUs

Financial Update – Bob Ward

- The complete Treasurer’s Report was sent to all Board members.
- Budget for the year is a little under \$300,00 with similar expenses. Looking at a net income of \$2000 for 2020 according to the adopted budget. Reserves were forecast at \$356,000 which meets the requirement stipulated in the Bylaws.
- At the end of the first quarter, \$120,000 has been received from AWWA, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of what we expect for 2021. Conference income of \$16,450 including sponsorships and registration is about $\frac{1}{4}$ of what was projected.
- Payroll protection plan loan of \$20,832.50 from 2020 was forgiven in January. A second loan was received in 2021.
- Ward expressed his thanks to the Board and Executive Director for successfully navigating the challenges brought about by the pandemic. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Treasurer.

Virtual Conference Training – Cheryl Capron

- First quarterly training was more successful than we thought in terms of attendance and we learned a few things. One is that if presentations are uploaded prior to the event it eliminates issues about connectivity and is a good backup. So far all is going well.
- It will be a challenge to ramp up for the 2022 Tacoma conference while keeping up the 2020 virtual sessions but Capron expressed confidence in the team.

Diversity Member Inclusion Subcommittee Survey – Esther Chang

- Only 20-30 responses have been received to the survey published in the newsletter. Chang asked for the Board to help publicize the survey.
- Survey responses will be reviewed June 1 but the plan at this time is to keep it open all year round.
- An early successful event was the panel discussion regarding how to bring your authentic self into the industry.
- The Chair thanked Ms. Chang for leading this important initiative.

Scholarship Committee – Cory Baune

- 2020 recap: 12 scholarships were given through the committee totaling \$46,900. All but two recipients were attending college within the section. The Section has given out \$645,700 in scholarships since 1971.
- In 2021, the E&T Fund has put forward a budget of over \$50,000 due to some retained earnings from 2019 and 2020 so the total may go down next year.
- NW Washington subsection has contributed \$3,000 this year as well as an additional \$1,000 from AWWA for any operator money we can match.
- Altogether \$56,176 in scholarship funding this year, a record amount.
- Currently the committee is in the process of ratings, rankings and scoring; likely there will be a recommendation to the chair within a week or two.
- A pilot program this year is to take \$12,00 from the scholarship pool and distribute to operators attending the NW Washington short school. Once given out, an equal match will be received from AWWA Water Equation – resulting in \$24,00 in scholarships. The success of the program will be monitored.
- Baune noted that the committee hopes to build on this model and include other short schools in the future. The program may rotate or provide a block of scholarships for each short school.

Consent Item

Approval of Winter Trustee Meeting Minutes

**Motion: Black moved for approval of the Winter Trustee meeting minutes.
Second by Dean. Motion carried unanimously.**

Action Item

Approval of Slate of Candidate for 2021

Farmer presented the proposed slate of candidates for 2021:

- Chair Elect: Dan Sleeth, Doug Schlepp
- Washington Trustee: Pat Everham, Tonya Reiss
- Oregon/Idaho Trustee: Joel Cary, Mark McGuire, Erika Murphy
- Trustee At-Large: Libby Bakke-Barg, DeEtta Fosbury, Michelle Johnson
- Association Director: Alex Mofidi, Lacey Gores Priest, James Dean

Motion: England moved for approval of the slate of candidates for 2021 as presented. Second by Roth. Motion carried unanimously.

Retiring Trustees and their Organizations Thank You

Chair Farmer gave heartfelt thanks to the retiring trustees:

- Dave England – Nob Hill Water District
- Crystal Jensen – SPF Water Engineering
- Michele Cheek – Portland Water Bureau
- Bob Ward – West Yost Associates
- James Dean – City of Yakima

She noted what a pleasure it has been to work with them, appreciating the mentorship from James Dean and the advice and input from all the rest. She thanked them for all that they do within the Section.

Year End Section Wrap Up – Ronda Farmer

- Farmer thanked her employer, Spanaway Water Company, for their support.
- She said this has been a trying year with tremendous learning opportunities. This difficult year has only strengthened the organization. She thanked both the Board members for their hard work and the membership for its valuable feedback.

Passing of the Gavel – Ronda Farmer

Farmer passed the gavel to the incoming chair, John Roth. He noted he is honored and excited to lead the Section into 2021. He thanked Farmer for blazing a trail as no previous Chair has faced what she had. He also commended the Board and the Executive Director for their flexibility and inspiration.

Mr. Roth made opening comments and noted he will be calling for an Ad Hoc committee to update the Rules of Procedure. He said it is important for current leaders to understand the current structure and a goal is to inform all members about how we do business and how we measure performance.

Action items regarding upcoming events 2022 Section Conference

Motion: England moved for approval of an in-person conference in Tacoma in 2022. Second by Porter. Motion carried unanimously.

2021 Leadership Symposium

Motion: Schlepp moved to cancel the in-person 2021 Leadership Symposium scheduled for August 26 at the Salem Convention Center. Second by Belmont. Motion carried unanimously.

All expressed regret and agreed on the value of the conference and that the first one had been a great success. The timing is just not right although the in-person session is included in the 2021 budget. Consensus was to continue the Leadership Symposium in 2022.

2021 Fall Training and Trustee Meeting

Motion: Cheek moved to schedule an in-person fall training and trustee meeting at Lake Chelan from September 29 – October 1, 2021. Second by Capron. Motion carried unanimously.

During discussion it was agreed this is a smaller event and a good ramp back up into normal operations. It also lends itself to a hybrid format if employers are hesitant to sending employees in person. A head count should be obtained as early as possible so no extra expense for unused rooms or meals is incurred. It is no longer possible to get insurance coverage for events but the Section's internal mechanism is the required Reserve Fund which can act as a safety net.

Questions from the Membership

There were no questions or comments from the membership.

Chair Roth suggested that the Board members remain after adjournment to suggest their "you know you work in water when " completion suggestions via Zoom video which can be forwarded to Nancy Sullivan. All agreed.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.