



**2022 Spring Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**April 29, 2022**  
**Greater Tacoma Convention Center**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center by Chair John Roth. Also present: Chair Elect Michelle Cheek, Past Chair Ronda Farmer, Trustees Nick Belmont, Cheryl Capron, Tyler Clary, Karen Kelley, Jamie Porter, Doug Schlepp, AWWA Director Randy Black, Treasurer Jason Canady, and Executive Director Kyle Kihs.

**Chair's Report – State of the Section**

- Chair John Roth welcomed everyone to the meeting. He proposed the following changes to the agenda:
  - 2023 Section Kennewick Conference Report moved ahead to follow Chair's Report.
  - Add action item: approval for the Chair to sign the Executive Director Job Description.
- Commended all involved for an excellent conference.
- Welcome to the incoming officers:
  - Chair Elect Dan Sleeth
  - AWWA Director James Dean
  - Oregon/Idaho Trustee Joel Cary
  - Washington Trustee Tonya Reiss
  - Trustee at Large Libby Barg Bakke
- Introduced visiting AWWA Vice President Angela Ballard-Landers from the Chesapeake Section.

**2023 Section Conference in Kennewick**

Pat Everham said planning is going well for the 2023 Conference. Amenities include an adjoining, attached hotel, great opportunities for golf and tours of wine country. The team is working to coordinate an excellent conference and things are on track.

**AWWA Vice President Angela Ballard-Landers**

- Ms. Ballard-Landers was presented with a Pendleton blanket on behalf of the Section.
- She complimented all involved in conference planning and noted that being able to attend an in-person conference has given her hope for a brighter future.
- AWWA's important new initiative is Water 2050 and the Association invites all members to share unique perspectives for insight and inspiration regarding sustainability and the vision for the profession in the future. She said the Association remains strong and healthy and continues working on behalf of all its members.
- Other Important issues include education about the new funding available for infrastructure investment; preparing for the lead and copper rule, helping small utilities, workforce development, diversity, and creating positive PR about the industry.
- She thanked attendees for staying engaged; without a robust membership, the association could not accomplish so much. She asked all to think back to how they started in the Association and get colleagues engaged, particularly young professionals. She noted that getting a member but not keeping them is a negative outcome so urged everyone to make every effort to help new members engage.

- Drinking Water Week is May 1-5 with the slogan "There When You Need It." Materials are on the website.

### **Association Director Report – Randy Black**

- Expressed thanks to Angela Ballard-Landers for joining the conference from her home in Maryland.
- Congratulated James Dean for joining the AWWA Board as Association Director.
- Cybersecurity is a focal point for AWWA; Congress has addressed the issue and noted the weakest link now is water infrastructure; we will be working on addressing protection needs of members.
- Infrastructure Investment Act means 85 billion dollars will be coming our way; a priority criterion for applications will be those from disadvantaged communities. AWWA will be keeping up as more information is made available.
- Visited Indianapolis as visiting officer and had a wonderful reception and the opportunity to share information about PNWS.
- Thanked all for their support as this was one of the most satisfying and gratifying things in his career.

### **Financial Update – Jason Canady**

- Complete financial report was e-mailed to Board members.
- Finances for the first quarter are looking slim.
- Conference attendance looks strong, and we may have met the target for conference revenue.
- The Board still needs to determine whether funding will be available for travel requests to ACE.
- Committees are urged to continue collecting projected income.

### **Consent Item – Winter Trustee Minutes**

**Motion: Farmer moved to approve the minutes from the 2021 Winter Trustee Meeting, seconded by Clary. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Action Items:**

### **Rules of Procedure Approval**

Roth noted this was the next logical progression after the recent Bylaws update. A collaborative approach was taken, including many stakeholders. There was much comment and excellent feedback and the ROPs were workshopped by the board and general membership comments were incorporated into this final draft.

**Motion: Belmont moved to approve the Rules of Procedure as amended, seconded by Porter. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Executive Director Job Description**

Roth noted the job description is referenced in the ROPs; the description presented has had HR and legal approval from AWWA as well as Board review.

**Motion: Farmer moved to authorize the Chair to sign the Executive Director Job Description and to approve job description, seconded by Belmont. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Recess**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 for the purpose of a break prior to the presentation of awards.  
The meeting was reconvened at 4:00

## **Award Presentations**

### **Lechner Award of Excellence**

Lechner Award of Excellence – John Roth, Kristin Kihs

Chair Roth noted this award is presented annually to recognize a Section Service Provider such as a vendor or consultant who has demonstrated exemplary service to the drinking water community and to AWWA's mission and goals. Although a Section award, the recipient is also submitted to the Association for national consideration. This year's winner has been selected as the national award winner as well and will be attending ACE in San Antonio to receive their national award.

The AWWA MAC Council Awards Committee selects the national awards. Kristen Kihs, the national MAC Council Chair, was introduced to announce this year's recipient.

Mrs. Kihs stated that this year's recipient of both the Section and Association's John Lechner Award of Excellence is the first woman to receive the Association's award. The awardee has been an AWWA member for over 15 years, has volunteered her time in numerous section and national committees, is a past Trustee of the Section and currently serves on the AWWA Board as a Service Provider Director at Large. She presented the award, with congratulations, to Corianne Burnett, an accomplished engineer, mother and a great friend.

### **Diversity and Inclusion Award – John Roth**

Chair Roth stated his pleasure in presenting the Section's first annual Diversity and Inclusion Award which was created to recognize an individual, group, or organization that has created, promoted and maintained diversity and inclusion by establishing an environment that recognizes, encourages, and effectively utilizes each individual's talents.

The recipient is a recognized leader in equity within the water industry and began by creating opportunities for women's leadership through co-founding the Women in Leadership Symposium. She now serves as a minority evaluator for the City of Portland, leads equity programs on capital projects for the Portland Water Bureau and Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, and serves as president and co-founder of Women Leading Water, which takes an intersectional approach to promoting equity in the water industry.

She has presented on equity, diversity, and bias at numerous local and regional conferences, ranging from local operator trainings to a keynote presentation at the CA-NV American Water Works Association conference. She also presented multiple times at the Section conference within its inaugural Diversity & Inclusion technical track. Her equity and inclusion trainings and presentations have reached thousands of technical professionals at organizations including municipal agencies, consulting firms, and professional associations. These trainings incorporate evolving best practices for the water industry and help foster diversity and inclusion.

She has been working for ten years seeking ways to make our communities more equitable and livable. She has said, "When I am at my best, I enable people to leap from where they are to a whole new vantage point. That new perspective makes the impossible possible." He then presented the inaugural Diversity and Inclusion Award to Nicki Pozos.

### **A.P. Black Award – Angela Ballard-Landers**

**Ms. Ballard-Landers noted the** A.P. Black Award was established in 1967 in honor of Dr. A.P. Black to recognize outstanding research contributions to water science and water supply rendered over an appreciable period of time. While this award is presented annually at AWWA's Annual Conference and Exposition, the Association wants to share the good news that this year's recipient, Melinda Friedman, is from the Pacific Northwest Section.

Throughout her distinguished career in the drinking water industry, Melinda Friedman has helped improve public health for millions of people through her tremendous contributions to vital research on drinking water quality. She has been able to personally implement practical application of her work by providing technical resolution to several system challenges, including two of the most high-profile distribution system upsets: the 2014 Flint, MI and 2002 Washington, DC lead release events. Furthermore, her specific research outcomes were adopted by the AWWA Partnership for Safe Water

guidelines for distribution systems, a program now followed by over 150 utilities serving 38 million persons across the United States.

### **Retiring Trustees and their Organizations Thank You – John Roth**

Chair Roth thanked each member for their leadership and contributions and expressed thanks to their employers as well for their support. Retiring trustees were presented with plaques recognizing their service:

Doug Schlepp – RH2 Engineering  
Cheryl Capron - retired  
Karen Kelley – Eugene Water and Electric Board  
Randy Black – Lakewood Water District  
Ronda Farmer – Spanaway Water

### **Year End Section Wrap Up – John Roth**

Roth asked everyone to fill out the end-of-conference survey. He noted he was particularly gratified at the accomplishment of adopting the Rules of Procedure today as it represented a truly inclusive process.

### **Passing of the Gavel**

Chair Roth presented the gavel to incoming Chair Michelle Cheek.

Ms. Cheek presented Mr. Roth an award honoring his service as Chair.

### **New Chair Thoughts for the Year Ahead – Michelle Cheek**

- Welcome back to an in-person conference after three years
- Areas she would like to emphasize this year include:
  - Financial sustainability (noting that proactive management has resulted in a financial position stronger than many expected; will continue to be conservative and there may still be hard choices ahead).
  - Diversity and inclusion (would like to help the Section further the stated mission of the AWWA Committee, continue surveys and consolidate new ideas into a solid plan);
  - Update the Strategic Plan with new Strategic Objectives that incorporate diversity and inclusion
  - More focus on outreach for high school students to introduce them early to the water industry and career opportunities.
  - Diversity in networking and fundraising opportunities.
- She expressed sincere gratitude to John Roth and Ronda Farmer for their service, contributions and leadership.
- All are invited to the closing reception, which she noted will honor both Roth and Farmer as well as the incoming Chair; all three should be celebrated.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:29 p.m.