



**2023 Winter Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2023
AC Hotel (Vancouver) Catalonia Room**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Catalonia Room of the AC Hotel in Vancouver by Chair Michelle Cheek. Also present: Past Chair John Roth, Chair Elect Dan Sleeth, Trustees Libby Barg Bakke, Nick Belmont, Joel Cary, Tyler Clary, Jamie Porter, Tonya Reiss, AWWA Director James Dean and Executive Director Kyle Kihs. Excused: Treasurer Jason Canady.

Chair's Report

Chair Michelle Cheek reported that an ad-hoc committee has been formed to develop a policy regarding conference registration fees. As the conference is the biggest form of income and expense to the Section, a policy for registration increases is needed so the annual discussion about registration fees can be framed. The committee will be led by Dan Sleeth.

AWWA Director Report

James Dean summarized AWWA activities:

- At the Winter Board meeting in Santa Fe at the end of January, the emphasis was on Water 2050 looking globally.
- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee continues to be a hot topic; the Association added Young Professionals to the Executive Committee to enlarge and enhance different perspectives.
- Pacific NW Section will have a meet and greet at ACE in June, all are encouraged to attend.
- Legislative fly-in scheduled for the middle of March.
- For the first time, there is direction from the Association about what they are looking for in Association Directors. Emphasis now is on prior and current involvement with the Association.
- Cheek noted that a survey was sent to Section members in February for feedback on the 2050 Initiative; the Board was also surveyed with specific questions. Responses are requested by April.

Treasurer's Report

In Treasurer Jason Canady's absence, the Chair reviewed the written submittal:

- For 2022, the adopted budget assumed revenue of \$625,500 with expenses of \$590,00, leaving \$45,000 in the reserve. Revenue and expenses both trended below with a net effect of increasing the reserve by \$82,734.

Consent Item – Fall Trustee Minutes

Motion: Belmont moved to approve the minutes from the 2022 Fall Trustee Meeting, seconded by Dean. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Items

Approval of Section Election Results

Chair Elect – Nick Belmont
OR/ID Trustee – Chandra Hingston
WA Trustee – Jolene Gibson
Trustee at Large – Erika Murphy

Motion: Dean moved to approve the Section Election Results, seconded by Sleeth. Motion carried unanimously.

Appointments to the Education and Training Fund Board

Motion: Porter moved to approve the appointments of Bill Carr and Laura Oxsen to the Education and Training Fund Board. Clary seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Cost of Living Increase – Executive Director

Motion: Dean moved to approve a cost-of-living increase of 6.2% effective January 1, 2023 for the Executive Director. Sleeth seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sunset Training Coordination Committee

Cheek stated that after a discussion with Jeff Lundt and the Executive Committee regarding lack of leadership and engagement of the Training and Coordination Committee, it is recommended to sunset the committee. She noted their purpose of calendaring meetings is no longer needed and a common CEU process has proven problematic for consistency across the three states. She added the Subsection Advisory Council (SAC) has stepped up to take a larger role in the process.

Motion: Reiss moved to sunset the Training and Coordination Committee. Belmont seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2023 Kennewick Conference – Pat Everham

- Everham reported that all arrangements are going well; tech sessions and moderators are dialed in as well as most volunteers. Special events are in hand.

Program Committee – Jill Hoyenga

- There are about the same number of presentations this year, but more hour-long sessions that qualify for CEUs.
- Committee cooperation has resulted in a good alignment of topics.
- CEU status: Washington and Oregon assigned CEUs for entire diversity and inclusion tracks and conservation track. Idaho will approve CEUs accepted by other states.
- Regarding absence of a wastewater track, Hoyenga stated one more presentation was needed for a complete track so committee is reserving for next year and anticipating a potential six-hour track.
- The Program Committee scheduled one-hour Division meetings at the conference; those wishing to meet should coordinate within their Division.
- Complimentary registration is only available for main speakers.
- Most Division meetings are scheduled from 5-6 Thursday, the Scavenger hunt begins at 6:00 that evening plus there is a Board cocktail reception for our visiting dignitary 5-6 on Thursday. Some schedule conflict issues are acknowledged but the alternative would be too much dead time.

Member Engagement and Development Committee – Joanie Stultz

- AWWA membership goals have been reached and surpassed, with a 5.1% overall growth; the Section is almost back to 2020 numbers. The AWWA recruitment goal was also surpassed, with 360 new and reinstated members. The Section has been awarded \$3,700 for this achievement and the committee can reinvest the money in membership engagement.
 - Regarding membership challenge, NW Oregon has the most new members; Blue Mountain has the biggest percentage of growth.
 - There are 17 new mentorship matches.
 - Working on updating “booth in a box” kit and planning a membership booth at the conference.

Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee

- Formed in 2020 as a subcommittee and has transitioned successfully to a new chair, Gina Hortillosa. When first formed, the intent was to become a formal committee after a trial period.
- Committee is an established entity; new people join meetings each month with 9 and 10 regularly on the call; another virtual event planned in March and two panels are scheduled at the conference. The committee would model the national committee.
- Stultz requests the Board to initiate steps to establish Diversity and Inclusion as a stand-alone committee.
- Dean noted his full support, adding that this is a separate committee at the Association level and Association guidance will be available.
- **Consensus was to add an item to the May Board agenda regarding establishing Diversity and Inclusion as a stand-alone committee.**
- Board members will be included on future subcommittee meeting invitations.
- Board members were encouraged to attend the conference new attendees / first timers meet and greet Thursday morning.
- Suggestion: first timers be encouraged to be assigned a conference mentor.
- Suggestion: a scavenger hunt could be set up for first-time attendees.

Women in Leadership – Libby Barg Bakke

Barg Bakke reported on the successful event in Seattle, with 230 women participating; speakers were excellent and there was good feedback from attendees.

Subsection Advisory Council

Reiss noted that the SAC is working on subsection awards and competitions.

E&T Fund –Jeff Lundt

- Reviewed the various funds (designated principal, undesignated principal, retained earnings) noting the amount in retained earnings dropped as those funds were needed in the principal accounts
- For the first time since 2017, there was not enough financial growth to enable distribution of retained earnings; however, since distributions have been staggered there are funds available from prior year retained earnings.
- Total amount for scholarships available is \$46,685 which includes the \$34,484 required distribution plus deferred retained earnings of \$4,513 from 2021 and \$9,688 from 2020. \$8,00 is reserved for short school scholarships with match from Water Equation (WE)
- Reviewed six current subsection scholarships and three in progress.
- Seed funding of \$20,000 has been received for a new Operator Scholarship program.
 - Targets those who want to receive or maintain certification.
 - Could be used for subsection classes, application and exam fees, conference registration with proof of CEUs, online classes and possibly travel expenses.
 - Small and rural utilities could have great benefit.
 - E&T would develop necessary establishing documents and policies so no added responsibility to current Scholarship Committee.
 - E&T would work with Philanthropic Advisory Council (PAC) for outreach.
 - Would include all waterworks certifications, not just treatment plant operators.
 - E&T hopes to develop the program by the fourth quarter of this year; will begin writing a charter and welcomes input from the Board.
 - Board members expressed unanimous support.
- **E&T Fund Committee Requests**
 - Continued support from the Spring Conference, with proceeds to undedicated principal.
 - Advise Committee if any current or new PNWS Board member would like a briefing on E&T Fund operation.
 - Consider and approve the new Operator Scholarship.

TRUSTEE WORK TEAM REPORTS

Jason Canady - Audit and Budget

- Cheek noted that the audit process has started and an audit is planned for April
- The 2024 budget process will start this summer and will be lead by chair-elect Nick Belmont.

Dan Sleeth - Ad-Hoc Committees, Powell Lindsay, Fuller and Lechner awards

- Immediate ad hoc committee needs are based around coming up with a more formal process for future Boards to address conference registration rates each year to promote financial sustainability.

James Dean - National Association Awards, Nominating and Past Chairs

- Both nominating committees are hard at work and are looking at Association Director candidates as well.

John Roth – WUCs and WARNs

- Website hosting has transitioned from City of Yakima to Kitsap Water and Sewer Districts
- March 23 DC fly-in scheduled a month earlier than usual; delegations from Washington, Oregon and Idaho will be attending.
- AWWA has provided talking points about significant issues.

Jamie Porter – Public Communications Division: Conservation, Public Information, Customer Service and Cross Connection

- Water Conservation Committee is offering a full conference track.
- Cross-Connection Control Comm seeking a Vice Chair and providing “March Madness” Cross Connection Control Training with three one-hour webinars spread over three weeks as well as a full track and an early bird in Kennewick and a full day CCC training at the Fall 2023 conference.
- Customer Service certificate program thanks James Dean for providing support as a trainer; one workshop scheduled in Tigard April 12-13 and working on a second 2023 class in October in southern Oregon.
- Public Information Committee providing a full conference track; 2023 Excellence in Communication Awards call for entries deadline is Feb. 20.

Libby Barg Bakke – Internal Communications Division: Utility Management, Publications, Training Coordination Committee and Subsections

- Utility Management has excellent membership involvement on monthly meetings and created a good 2023 section conference program.
- Women in Leadership will have 10th annual conference.
- Publications – Water Matters is published in coordination with her office.
- Suggestion – offer a session in 2024 on how to write articles for Water Matters.

Tyler Clary – Member Engagement Division: Water Information Technology, Member Engagement, and Young Professionals

- I/T does their best while supporting everyone with only two people; if anyone has ideas for new members, please send them on.
- YPs continue to struggle with just one person in a leadership role, would like to encourage other active members to take leadership roles.
- Intend to follow up after scavenger hunt to engage participants and encourage membership.
- Member Engagement has called for nominations for the Diversity and Inclusion Award.
- There is an attempt to have YP liaisons at all subsections.
- Suggestion – feature a YP who has moved up in Water Matters, highlight the value and connections that come with membership.
- Is “Young” Professional the right designation? Maybe something like “Emerging Professional”?
- Dean noted that involving YP at the AWWA Executive Board made a big impact; get them involved in more than just the YP Committee

Joel Cary – Water Science Division: Research, Water Resources, Water Quality, Treatment and Conference Program

- Water Science Division is wrapping up conference session planning.
- Water Quality is planning for the best tasting water competition.

- PFAS conference session is a split day between Water Treatment and Water Resource Committees who worked really well together.
- Water Research is partnering with YPs for student poster competition; winner gets supported funding to ACE.
- The Division will work on planning for a treatment facility tour at the 2024 conference.
- Water Resource Committee is looking for new members and leadership.

Nick Belmont - Philanthropy Division: Scholarship, E&T, Water Equation and Philanthropy

- Water for People has officially sunsetted and is now part of PAC but fundraising for Water for People still a primary focus of the Section and PAC. There is no reduction in commitment, just an organizational shift.
- PAC continues to work on two official events – the silent auction with some new ideas and Wine for Water, which will be at Guardian Winery in Woodinville this year. Registration is live.
- Scholarship Committee is in need of new members.

Tonya Reiss - Utility Operations Division: Engineering, Utility Management, Distribution

- Distribution put together a great conference program.
- Fewer people are at meetings and want to focus on additional members.
- Engineering also made great contributions to conference program; has many active members and a succession plan. Asking first-time program attendees to stay and get a pitch for joining the Section.

Items or comments from membership

There were no further items or comments from members attending.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.