



## **Washington Evaluators Board Meeting 8/19/2020 – MINUTES**

In attendance:

Patricia Moore Shaffer, President  
Beeta Tahmassebi, President-Elect  
Melissa Chiu, Secretary  
Josh Joseph, Treasurer  
Natalie Donohue, Membership Chair  
Katie Pitts, Program Chair  
Erin Murrock, Deputy Program Chair  
Katherine Braga Communications Chair  
Emily Bango, Community Engagement Chair  
Bryce Leary, Mentor Minutes  
Sue Cottrell, New Professional Scholarship Coordinator  
Giovanni Dazzo, Past President  
Charles Gilman, Deputy Membership Chair

Guests:

Esther Nolton  
Ron Freeman  
Fanni Farago  
Kelly Feltault  
Jacqueline Singh  
Raymond Obeng

Not in attendance:

Mindelyn Anderson, Special Initiatives Coordinator  
Laura O'Brien, Evaluation Without Borders Coordinator  
Val Caracelli, New Professional and Student Coordinator

### **Agenda:**

1. Welcome & Agenda Review
2. Approval of [June meeting minutes](#)

Melissa motioned to approve the June meeting minutes. Beeta seconded. VOTE: Approved.

Announcement: Melissa will be cleaning up Wild Apricot files and google drive, deleting event files and reorganizing—let her know if there are files you need to keep and not deleted.

### 3. Old Business:

#### a. Insurance (Josh)

WE is an independent non-profit, not extended insurance by AEA. Link to summary of insurance from Agenda: <https://washingtonevaluators.org/resources/Documents/Insurance%20Backgrounder.docx>

The cost of defense can be substantial, even if we win. Risk is low, but if we were to be sued, the impact could be substantial. And in last few years, WE has been doing more for its membership, which increases risk for liability. These pieces are targeted towards **our** activities.

- General liability- anyone who gets insurance must carry this. “slip and fall”- social event, someone falls and hurts himself. Up to \$20,000 to avoid someone bringing a lawsuit.
- Directors and Officers – covers wrongful acts, negligence, breach of contacts, errors and omissions in fiduciary responsibilities, we might miss something- even if it’s unintentional-- We are liable.
- Social Services and Professional liability: EWB, pro bono consulting services, e.g., someone took our advice and feels something bad happened, may feel the volunteers and the WE board is responsible.

This is a standard set of insurances that organizations carry. We’ve expanded our activities. We’re taking on risk. Not designed to cover everything that might happen: **\$1950** because we added Social Services and Professional Liability. The Board thanked Josh for his extensive research-- this is much more tailored than what other Local Area Affiliates (LAC) have.

-- This does not cover EEO-type liability, it’s extra. Folks typically look for a pattern, such as failure to provide accommodation for people with disabilities. There are resources, policies, prewritten policies that people can take and adopt: conflict of interest, being aware of EEO considerations. WE can put together a small advisory group of members, look for something outside of our daily pattern-- May uncover something else. WE just has to make a good faith effort not to discriminate.

-- Pro bono EWB work- does it cover data insurance? If we’re collecting data as part of the work, are we covered for cybersecurity issues, in the event of a hack-- confidentiality, PII? \*Josh will check.

It would be great to estimate the level of risk for proposed programs. Good to know for even when we survey members or for membership data.

-- The cost of \$1950- would it rise every year or not? Josh is not sure, but generally, other than cost of living increase, insurance costs mainly rise when you make claims. \*Josh will check that.

-- Josh asked about the more active networking events. Sporting events, include rafting and rigorous hike- those are not covered, but we pay more for that, a huge increase. Suppose there’s an event we want to sponsor that’s sporty. We can look to cover additional events. Our general liability is low and have no employees. The minimum is \$600. Ours is lower, so we have extra room to put towards a particular event, e.g., bounce houses, trampolining – dangerous, and expensive.

As we know more we do better. If and when we are able to go back to in-person activities we may need to reconsider whether it makes sense for us to do things that are higher in risk. We weren't really thinking about risk before but it's something we need to consider.

We need to be proactive in our programming and level of risk we want to take, then we can plan ahead to get the additional insurance for an event. Also challenge the programs committee to think about this issue: do we need to set policy as to what we are willing to take on?

Agree: we need to do what we have coverage for and not more than that. I understand that WE hasn't had this issue in the past but knowing now that we could be personally liable I think we need to be wise about what we do.

Regarding developing a policy for programming, it would be great to know how the company defines low, moderate, and high risk so that we can preemptively identify probably level of risk. I would like to know how many activities in each category the insurance company deems within our coverage and what would be above and beyond (i.e., require additional coverage).

-- Josh would like guidelines on where we stand in terms of a cap. We initially budgeted \$1500 based on not understanding exactly what we need. Reasonable for insurance. We have \$22k in assets. Also personal liability is no good.

-- Was the quote based on our revenue and operating expenses? This could be anywhere from 20% to 35% of our operating expenses each year. We try to hold onto at least \$5k in reserves. Suppose there's a decrease in revenue: do these quotes ever decrease based on the size of our nonprofit?

Josh: They got all the info- revenue, assets, number of Board members, hours per year (volunteer hours on programs). Josh doesn't think it would change substantially because they're covering us for activities, not the size of our membership or budget.

If we find ourselves in a new position, we can renegotiate. It's untenable for Board members to be liable personally. Data insurance would be a potential add on. Can we vote on current three insurances and add the data piece later, so we don't keep dragging out how long we're not covered?

Josh motioned to take a vote on accepting the proposal to purchase 3 liability insurances.

Patricia: Amendment—we will go back to inquire about a rider to cover data insurance.

Melissa seconded the motion and amendment.

VOTE: All yes, no no's. APPROVED.

Everyone gave Josh a HUGE thanks for all the work he put into this.

#### b. WE Commitments to Antiracism/Training

The Board thanked Emily and the task force for the work on WE commitments to antiracism. It's something she and many on the Board feel passionate, feel strongly about. Posted a copy of the latest draft:

[https://washingtonevaluators.org/resources/Documents/WE%20Antiracism%20Commitments\\_081520.docx](https://washingtonevaluators.org/resources/Documents/WE%20Antiracism%20Commitments_081520.docx). We'll have discussion, then vote to approve and commit to the actions.

Special thanks to Esther for making it more visually appealing.

Emily consolidated it further to prepare it for an external audience, how will we implement this.

Emily motioned to vote to accept these commitments and to post them publicly.

Melissa seconded the motion.

VOTE: all yes, no dissents. The motion carried.

Patricia is impatient to move on to the actions and strategize how to put into action. Beeta noted that we will use this to help guide WE's strategic planning.

The Task Force will meet in September to talk about the strategic plan, how to integrate these principles into it and maybe find a consultant to support us in that process. Hope to present to the board next meeting. Let Emily know if you are interested in working on that.

Kelly Feltault (guest) may have consultant contacts for this. Ron Freeman (guest) said he was willing to help.

-- The next step is to embody it and put into action. Think about next year, strategic planning process and each committee chair's responsibilities. What does it mean for each chair?

Is it one particular person's responsibility in addition to make sure someone is keeping an eye on it? We should build it into our system.

--Where on the website to post this, the About section? At least temporarily, then make it a new tab? Or on the home page? "Learn about our commitment to antiracist principles." Or the Letter from the President section?

#### 4. New Business:

##### a. Membership Survey

We want to make sure we reflect the diversity of the membership.

Natalie and Esther ran the Membership survey for 4 weeks. Had weekly reminders. Had a great response rate- featured in Digest- 207 complete out of 389 who were contacted. Lapsed members: 16 out of 58 contacted. Some communications did trigger people who didn't realize their membership lapsed and they contacted us right away.

We created a follow up portion to current survey, a seamless transition to indicate interest in volunteering and collected contact information. No link of this PII to the survey data. 151 people completed that portion of the survey. They indicated interest in Pro Bono/EWB work, mentoring, volunteering in general, and for the Board or a Committee. They will do a deeper analysis. \*Let them know what data you need and how soon and they will get it to you, e.g., programming.

Only 1 person actually signed up for membership after all the contacts, so Natalie will reach out individually but will do it all at once. IREX lapsed, but they didn't know their membership lapsed. More to be done through follow up.

-- Received an email on when we will display the data publicly. We weren't originally planning to do this. The thought would be to provide a summary. We can't just put a dashboard out there. We would have

to download the data and put up a viz. Board felt it is ok to put out a summary of the findings, sharing results in that format. Also this is a signal to our members that we're being transparent.

-- We will add something on how we plan to use the results. Regarding demographic info, some people were concerned about why we collected that info, so we should state in the summary why we collected it and how we plan to use it. This is especially important with our commitments toward inclusion, how to meet members' needs.

Suggestion: If there are questions we might deem sensitive- maybe add in parentheses why we're asking the question. A: We DID have a statement in the survey about understanding our demographics better, and repeated it on each page we asked a demographic question. We were surprised about the comment, and even one comment is enough to trigger transparency.

There may be some people who may not be comfortable with our taking a stance on issues of diversity and inclusion. Some people will not see it as part of our mandate. We have seen that at the national level. Nevertheless we intend to so we should clarify why we asked and how this fits in.

-- Discussed holding a brown bag event to present the results. A good start for our strategic planning process. To learn what our members want and need. It would be a great additional event during this time in which we need to do things remotely. If decide to do townhalls for the strategic planning this could be something we do as part of that. Plan for early October, after a write up is vetted with the Board in September, when we can discuss what can be appropriate to share with a larger audience.

-- Regarding programming: 182 people said they like brown bags as a form of engagement, the highest one. [182 respondents out of 207= 88%!]

## b. Strategic Planning

We have a 4-year plan, started in 2017 under Nick Hart's presidency. Patricia and Giovanni were on that Board. We know 2021 will be busy since we'll be coming out of the Great pause. Also, the AEA conference is scheduled to be in DC in 2021. So instead of layering it on, let's do it this year.

Take advantage of this and do a full member stakeholder engagement. Talking with Emily, because of the Task Force, on how to bring those principles into our structure in a deep way. How should we enact those principles and practices? Add people to the board, change the by-laws and mission? Embed in strategic plan? Must be a multifaceted strategy.

We are committed to moving it forward with a major planning effort this fall. We have a new and emerging evaluators panel and the election—we'll carve out time to make this planning process happen. We're looking for suggestions, then will huddle with the task force.

How do we do this in a sustainable way, feed it into the work that we are doing? They were going to decide at the next task force meeting if they want a consultant, then get an adequate quote. Or maybe we need a consultant review. Also we must figure out as a board what we need, what makes the most sense, perhaps issue an RFP. If we want to get a strategic plan in place in the next few months, then we need to start acting now. Set a plan for the strategic plan first.

We are hoping that ALL of you are planning to be part of 2021 so it would be coming your way regardless. Esther offered that she's been trained in facilitating strategic planning through Leadership Strategies, and they also have consultants available for this work. Don't know what their rates are.

#### c. New and Emerging Evaluators panel

Mindelyn organized an event, Friday Sept. 11, 3-4 pm. There are 3 confirmed panelists, including Esther. We have some outstanding requests for support from the board. Need to create a flyer, scheduling registration in Wild Apricot, communications, Zoom, and if there's anything she's missing. \*Please respond to Mindelyn's email. Patricia asks Katie or Erin to support the Wild Apricot event and the Zoom, and Katherine to get the word out.

#### d. 2021 Officers Election

WE holds an annual election in the Fall. This year, we're electing a President-elect (1-year term, 3-year commitment) and Treasurer (2-year term); which are elected by the membership. Other positions are nominated by the incoming president.

The election process: we open up nominations, the Board reaches out to individuals to garner interest. Then after nominations are closed, we hold a Meet the Candidates event. After that, we hold the election open for a few weeks. We try to do it before AEA, especially when it's in DC, so that the new Board members can network in that role.

Suggestion: Could we do the meet the candidates event in conjunction with another virtual event? Maybe 15-20 minutes before the event?

Also, as FYI: AEA will be virtual this year and scaled back quite a bit.

### 5. Other Committee Updates

#### a. Programs

Programs: if you have an article- let Katie know.

#### b. Community Engagement

Emily- the two scholarship recipients are on the call.

EWB- one evaluator joined.

Mentor Minutes- updating with new SOPs. The mentor bank is outdated, so rolling out new surveys to help create better matches in the future. Are current mentors still interested to get to people who are not responding to email. Have new potential emails after the membership survey-- Bryce can extend a personal invitation to them.

Fanni (guest): thank you for the scholarship and support. Learning about this organization was a blessing, and she's excited to keep learning.

We'll extend invitations to both (Fanni and Bryce) to attend a Board meeting to talk about what they did with the scholarship.

### c. Membership

New organizational member: Pew Charitable Trusts is a new Organizational sponsor. Thank you, Josh!

Got two new members (some already on). Membership numbers were 406 active, now 395. Slight dip could be because of COVID. Will do a little more pushing. The interest is there, but it's not a normal time, so we are distracted. Budget: there was a dip in June, but July is good. We are mostly tracking last year, which was a banner year. Overall, membership numbers are good, very stable compared to previous years.

There are also people interested in a remote membership, mostly people who moved away but still want to engage in virtual activities and get the digest. WE welcomes remote members. Raymond Obeng (Massachusetts) stated interest in being a remote member.

### d. Communications

WE's AEA 365 blog week mid-September- EWB is the theme. Laura is coordinating the lineup of articles. Giovanni at the start and Laura at the end. Middle 3: case studies from participants or clients.

Member spotlight lineup. Jacqui Singh is coming up. Let Katherine know if you have ideas for member spotlights.

## 6. Adjournment

We are a mighty force, a mighty Board.

Comment: I enjoyed attending the WE board meeting this evening, Thank you for making these open to members. An opportunity to witness all the thoughtful and hard work that goes on. Happy to be a WE member. :)

The WE Board welcomes members to attend Board meetings!