



Washington Evaluators Board Meeting 11/17/2021 – MINUTES

In attendance:

Beeta Tahmassebi, President

Emily Bango, President-Elect

Melissa Chiu, Secretary

Jessica Pomerantz, Treasurer

Esther Nolton, Program Chair

Katherine Braga, Communications Chair – On Leave

Kantahyanee Murray, Community Engagement Chair

Courtney Carr, Communications Coordinator and Acting Communications Chair

Maryfrances Porter- co-coordinator for Mentor Minutes, lives in Charlottesville

Betsy Kaeberle- new coordinator for Mentor Minutes, GWU student, Program design and M&E

Not in attendance:

Patricia Moore Shaffer, Past President

Natalie Donohue, Membership Chair

Kelly Feltault, Program Coordinator

Fanni Farago, Scholarship co-coordinator

Val Caracelli, New Professional and Student Coordinator

Eric Keys, Scholarship co-coordinator

Mindelyn Anderson, Evaluation Without Borders co-coordinator

Katie Pitts, Evaluation Without Borders co-coordinator

Danielle Lane, Program Coordinator

Marie-Ellen Ehounou, Membership Coordinator

Guests:

Tobi Dare – Chemonix in global health division. Grad of GWU with MPH. M&E.

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Agenda Review

2. Governance:

- **Approval of [last month's meeting minutes](#) (Secretary)**
- **Review of monthly financials (Treasurer)**

Melissa motioned to approve. Jessica seconded. VOTE: Approved.

- Review of monthly financials (Treasurer) – see [attachment](#)

Stable, we're over. Josh conservatively estimated membership for the year. So, we've far exceeded expectation. There was a slowdown in November. Expect an uptick if holiday party is widely advertised. \$24k. This is what we've had most of year and all last year.

3. Kudos for AEA presentations and efforts (Beeta)

Thank you to those who participated in the AEA presentations last week. Presidential Strand and panel on how we engage with emerging evaluators. We were supposed to 'host' this year in DC.

4. Update on Action plan (Emily)

Enormous team effort- Emily brought it home. Even though it's late in the year, it captured that we clearly aligned the benchmarks for measuring our progress throughout the year. Will transfer that to 2022. Edits after the summer/Fall were to establish certain benchmarks. Transparency to our membership.

Emily motioned to approve the 2021 Action Plan. Jessica seconded. **VOTE: Approved. No nays.**

Will post to website and put in Digest.

- **Update on getting me your inputs for 2021 year in review**

Each chair-- please send Beeta accomplishments for each committee for the annual report. End of November, Dec. 5 latest.

5. Update on election and board positions (Melissa)

Voting rate 8% for regular election. Higher number though: 51 people voted. We also have a dramatic increase in membership—could be that they aren't aware of the regular cycle of elections.

- **Update on Board transition**

After special election Melissa will ask for the emergency contact information for Google accounts/email addresses. Google will not let you if it doesn't recognize your device, even if you have the right ID and password. Need to change the emergency contact info to be the new Board member. (Current Board members will have their devices recognized.)

Melissa has a Onboard quick start and Transition SOP (wrote last year) and will send that out after the special election. Melissa plans to finish the Decision-making SOP by early January, to vote on at the first meeting in January.

Chairs: please Update your SOPs. It doesn't have to be heavy duty—I think everyone has a base SOP now—just extra tips and tricks to help the next person. Events SOP: Esther is overhauling online events, will add as a section to the main document so keeps all events in one SOP (virtual and in-person). No one (else) needs a new SOP.

Melissa will get Beeta a copy of the certified vote. Need to get Jessica and Esther on Bank account. We were not able to make the change this year. Have to do in person.

6. Committee Updates:

• Communications

End-of-year newsletters. Esther had idea to give people on what we did and where the materials are.

We're working toward Strategic Plan goals, Action plan for 2021- mostly reflects work that has been done this year. Blog, then another report in a month. Don't like the action plan published 1 month before end of year.

Never hurts to do more than one push. If it's not a big burden, then recommend doing something now and then later. Emily can support. Acknowledge that we've been working throughout the year, but we didn't get a chance to write it down. We can and should be transparent to the membership.

Katherine can tag it as a year in review blurb on programs too. Action plan, this is what we did, what you attended, this is on this page with the action plans, etc. Beeta will get Katherine something over the weekend.

We did more with the strategic plan this year and did more with antiracism. So the action plan sequencing was necessary.

• Membership

N/A

• Community Engagement (Mentor Minutes, EWB, Scholarships)

EWB- closing event was today. Three engagements this year. Some may be still going on, but they are coming to a close. Will have year-end statistics after the 20th.

Aiming for survey on University Ambassadors refresh. Not sure when it will be wrapped up. Will discuss in 2022 for implementation. First round of scholarships- want survey to inform that.

Beeta can figure out what classes TEI will donate next year for the scholarships.

Mentor Minutes: Betsy and Maryfrances.

1) Presented at AEA on Mentor Minutes, looked at survey. Very few mentees responded, but Lots of mentors. Mentees were very happy. Mentors (11) were pursuing their mentee more than they were responding. They were much more invested in being a mentor than the mentees were interested in support. Everyone was happy, though. These were additional comments.

2) Looked at mentees- most are early career looking for career advice. Confirmed the impression that we need a short-term boost, networking and career connections that help launch people. We should make it clear in the matching, website, follow up email, that they can continue to meet, but don't require it. Confident that going to a shorter commitment will be appreciated.

Thinking of surveying the entire membership- people who haven't participated, what are they looking for. They developed a 3-question survey: interest in being mentor/mentee/both; current or a shorter term, Longer- 6-12 months, Or something else.

3) People are interested in a range of things. What support are you most interested in offering or receiving? Techniques, networking, building a business, career transition, etc. Not sure how much we will get. 50? Out of 575 members.

Question: Does the Board want to look at it. Also, how do we promote it?

Discussion:

Like up front formalizing what the relationship it is. Here, participated with intention of meeting multiple times. At work, mentor program was a defined period. Definition of a time frame helped. Relationship may be a term we avoid. Giovanni mentioned a couple years ago: intentionally meant it to be brief--2 sessions.

Liability:

There's a question of liability for setting up connections. We don't have HR, so if something that happens, harassment, that could be an issue. What is oversight like for long-term relationship? Can the survey better refine what mentors interested in, e.g., draft a theory of change for the first time, or for work vs. someone with a career change in mind that might mean a more in-depth interaction.

Liability has come up over the years in different forms. We have insurance now. Also, the insurance company had resources on waivers, things we should be using pro forma. Other LAC members were very cautious of this for liability reasons. When you sign up, check a box that you're not holding WE accountable for the advice you receive. We're not vouching for the quality of the info. You have to decide if it's a useful input or not. In other contexts, when consulting professionally, you say verbally, I am giving you options, I'm not supervising you. It's checking the box. ***Maybe can get Maryfrances and Betsy access to the insurance site to dig around the forms.**

Structure of the engagement:

Currently initiated by meeting for 2 hours and the word mentor. Mentor implies a lot of work, and did it lead to not enough mentors? Shift name and language to imply more professional consultation? We are your weak network of colleagues. Invite you to ask questions, and can add technical things. If people choose longer term, then meet at your own risk. This is a doorway to ask questions.

Maybe talk about it/name it as Career "Connections" to get away from the word "consultation" or advisory or anything implying a relationship? The Describe as informational interviews and tech assistance? Many seemed to like both ideas. It's a career date, informational interview. We can use language that we'll give you access.

Nonmember mentors? Sometimes there is specialized fields/areas people are interested in. Earlier this year, a Board member vouched for a mentor in a specialized field. Can we instill this in a policy? Offer a discount for people who are willing to be mentors? Or a second year free for people who actually do play the role of mentor?

Sometimes mentees don't know what exactly they want to talk about. How to make sure it's productive? What if we ask Mentees to write S.M.A.R.T. goals and Mentors are matched/volunteer based on the goals? Add one or two specific questions mentees present in session?

Can we look at MOUs like we use EWB? Not exactly, but something similar.

Can provide resources for longer term mentors. For shorter term: job aid, when you meet with your contact, here are some questions you may want to ask. Not prescriptive, but it helps. Then mentee can think about it.

DECISION:

Board is ok with the survey questions and don't need to see them before it goes out.

Can contact Natalie and Katherine on how to put out the survey. Survey all membership, remind them in communications. Are you interested? And help us rebrand in a proper way. Katherine will send out the actual email too.

Question for future:

Are there opportunities for opening up the engagement programs? Opportunities for offering beyond members participation? This is low-hanging fruit. Or mentees who can't afford or aren't aware? Think about for the future.

- **Programming**

Upcoming events through to December Board meeting ([full list](#)):

- **11/17 EWB Closing Event (Members Only)**
- **11/17 November WE Board Meeting (Open to Public)**
- **12/14 WE 2021 Virtual Holiday Party (Open to Public)**
- **12/15 December WE Board Meeting (Open to Public)**

We are winding down for this year.

Issues to Discuss (in order of priority):

- **Holiday Party - Save the date: December 14th.** Open to the public. Great list of raffle prizes. Includes membership prizes. Hopefully can draw people in. Natalie to be the emcee. Board there to pump people up.
- **Already beginning to plan some 2022 programming so that new Program Chair has less to worry about**
 - **Already have most of 2022 Q1 planned, Kirsten will pick up with the rest**
 - Karen Zeiter is new program chair.
 - Continuing the President's dinners. We did more than needed this past year. May not do quite as many next year.
 - Not your grandmother's logic models. Cynthia Phillips. And two younger evaluators. Make them more people-centered than process-centered. Open up to the LAC. Already have more people registered in one week than many events' final registration numbers.
 - Kicking off the year really strong.

Would LOVE to see us open up the possibility of being featured in programming to WE members. Some sort of a submit-your-proposal for a session by a certain date and we select a few members to present.

- **DCSCEP Organizing Committee - kicked off and held two meetings so far**
 - Date of conference: April 1st, more information to come soon, all day online.
 - Conference portion expected to be virtual but planning to have an in-person happy hour (hopefully!) WE has traditionally hosted the happy hour, \$300.

- Requesting Board approval for \$300 toward happy hour sponsorship, which we typically provided in the past. Add this placeholder.
- Students are invested.
- Val has been passionate.

Someone suggested increasing to \$500 because WE has more student members, also online conferences have more attendees, and inflation.

Even if normally would be voted on next year, the organizing committee needs to know if it has the money now.

It was in the budget for this year too: \$300 for student events. But we also have \$300 for networking and social events

Faculty sponsors are asking for Deans to ask for more. Conference is virtual so not asking for as much. Inviting a speaker- goes towards an honorarium. Still discussing what to charge as a registration fee: Past was \$10-\$15. As part of the Strategic Plan, Esther has proposed it to be free, but still needs some funds.

Let's talk to Professional scholarship, also talk about Memberships. Would like to see us put our money towards that and making it accessible. **Note: Natalie and a small team met to discuss membership pricing structure. Have thoughts about how to be more accessible.**

Beeta: Propose \$300 for now, and then if need more than that, ask for it next Board year. Melissa seconded the proposal. **VOTE: Approved. No Nays.**

Happy to re-up. Will be celebrating students at the end of the day.

Esther's entire graduate class attended the AEA happy hour WE held. Esther's students: they wrote reflection statements, etc. They noted several Board members by name as being helpful.

Membership fee for the VOPES?

Val attended session at AEA on VOPES, through IOCE. There's an annual membership that we should be submitting and profile. Free membership.

Melissa updated it recently, a few weeks ago. An email came to through the WashEval@gmail address. Melissa went into WE's profile. It said it was a free membership. Updated the profile (long). The Communications email is primary (b/c most of their emails are events that Melissa has been forwarding to the Communications email), Secretary as secondary, and President as tertiary.

From Katherine Braga to Everyone: 07:57 PM

Dear WE Communications,

Your membership renewal at WE until 11 Jun 2022 has been completed successfully.

Your updated profile details:

Email: communications@washingtonevaluators.org

Organization: WE

Member since: 11 Jun 2015

Membership Status: Active

Next renewal date: 11 Jun 2022

We will not pay past years' memberships. If has not benefited us, then we don't pay. No one billed us. The last VOPE charge in the budget was from 2016: \$100. If they come up with a charge, Beeta will push back. If there's a charge going forward, will discuss then.

Val got in contact with Donna Mertens who didn't say anything about a fee. So, let's be forward looking. Look out for this- look out for this if it comes up again, ***maybe add as part of the transition doc to do a profile update.**

Volunteer of the Year Award-

*MC to reup the form and Katherine to put in Digest.

LAC agreement.

Collaborative agreement. There was No agreement that defined themselves and the LAC's. LA's run in different ways. AEA is clarifying the relationship with us in an MOU. The first draft used to have a lot of formal legalese. Invited comment and review. One LA hired a lawyer, came back with issues and expressed to AEA.

Anisha Lewis took out the legalese, which made it too formal. Confusion was whether AEA was using this to create oversight over the affiliates, to shut us down, dictate what we do or not. It wasn't the intention, but it was coming off that way. They just want to establish there IS a relationship. Make it a chapter model rather than separate associations.

Have discussed with non-local members and WE. Are we becoming more like AEA?

Anisha circulated new draft. Beeta will circulate. LAC didn't meet last week. It's been 3 months since last meeting.

Do they owe us spots in the conference if we don't have an agreement with them. What about the expectation we will promote AEA to our membership? etc. It's good to clarify our relationship.

Do we have benefits to being an affiliate or chapter? A: This year we received mailing lists from AEA for all AEA members in the area (Town Hall meetings). They gave us two premier spots at the AEA conference. Some people we approach to partake in programs do so because they think we are part of the AEA umbrella. We have access to AEA President to participate in a program.

There are times when they go off, but we are sufficiently independent. More upsides than downsides. When conference is hosted where an affiliate is, we would normally have a lot of exposure and presence, Signage, Keynote and open plenary, Presidential Strand, etc. Branding is DC. And they come back to DC every 3 years.

Will they force everyone to be AEA members before becoming a member of WE? –This is not in the MOU. This is just defining the relationship.

We will circulate and give people a week to review and comment.

6. Board Action Items (if any)

8:12 pm ADJOURN