

Minutes of the Board



The International Association for Social Work with Groups, Inc.

November Board Meeting 2013

November 16 and 17, 2013

Fordham University

New York, NY

DRAFT

Present for this board meeting were:

Amirthini Keefe, Maria Gandarilla, Vanessa Treadway, Maria Gurrola, Charles Garvin, Marty Birnbaum, Anna Nosko, Nancy Sullivan, Martie Finkelstein, John Genke, Mamadou Seck, Kyle McGee, Olga Molina, Rhonda Hudson, Mark Macgowan, Beverly Feigelman, Willa Casstevens, Dorlisa Minnick, William Pelech, Susan Ciardiello, Carol Cohen, Hilda Baar, Hilde Müller de Navarro, Tanja Schultz-Remberg, Sonia Spelters, Ann Bergart, Lean Hart Tennen, Jared Kant, Dana Leeman, Andrew Malekoff, Christine Wilkins, Edna Comer, Mark Smith, Mayra Bagnoli, ReinethPrinsloo, Karen Ring, Linda McArdle, Dominique Moyse Steinberg, Jen Clements, Steve Kraft, Greg Tully and Michael Wagner (recording).

President Greg Tully called the meeting to order, and a discussion was held talking about the recent passing of Katy Papell. Details regarding her funeral and a memorial planned for December 14 were shared. Members recounted memories of Katy. The board acknowledged the loss her passing represents to our organization of which she was recognized as a founder.

Adoption of the Agenda:

Agenda was presented to the board without additional comment. Anna N. moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Willa C., and the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Minutes of the previous board meeting:

Michael W. presented the minutes of the prior board meeting in Boston to the board by email in advance of the meeting. The board was invited to edit the minutes to enhance their accuracy by email, and notice was given this date that on 11/30 the minutes would be finalized so that they could be filed and submitted for publication. The secretary moved that the minutes be approved with any alterations to be recommended and made final by 11/30. Mark S. seconded this motion and the board approved unanimously.

Organization for the day:

Greg T. made announcements regarding the status of board members, and provided regrets from Donna McLaughlin, Laura Farley and Patty Underwood. He introduced the new at-large members, and noted who had transitioned off of the board as well as new and attending chapter representatives and members serving under special appointment. He welcomed all to the meeting.

Board proposed to discuss three overarching themes that the organization has created ad hoc committees to address: 1). Membership retention, 2). Fund-raising and development; and 3). Our International Identity.

Development and fundraising discussion began accounting for new costs that we are incurring without having developed more income to meet those costs. Association has some \$250,000 in endowment and

\$100,000 in cash reserves. This represents a drop in reserves from three years ago when we had about \$140,000 in cash reserves, indicating that we are spending money as we agreed to support things like the website, SPARC, chapter support funds and board travel allowances. At this board meeting there needs to be some decisions made whether we are willing to continue to spend down the funds, develop new sources of funding, or cut back on the expenses so that we remain stable. There was a suggestion that the board consider committing more money (tens of thousands of dollars) to continue to fund things like more European outreach, attending international conferences, and support chapters in more places. It was noted that social work camp manages to raise \$9,000 to \$10,000 every other year for its support to campers.

Membership retention discussion recognized that we get many new members at symposia who do not continue to be members in the years after. It was felt that if we could maintain those new members that our membership would again be raising up instead of holding steady or falling. Discussion of steps to support new members with outreach calls and connections to association were described by Ann B. She noted that other organizations are not doing that same kind of outreach. Board discussed the time commitment that individual outreach requires. Suggestions for additions to website presence and opportunities for potential members to find IASWG when seeking dissertation supports or international social work references were provided. Discussion of the work of the Chapter units and their function in maintaining members was discussed by the board at-large. Board members talked about programs and connections or reconnections to schools of social work as important parts of the work. There were also discussions that the important connections that people feel at symposia need to be captured so we can use that as well. Suggestions to use Facebook outreach, centralize more symposia and other association tasks, broaden our scope to include non-social work group workers, incorporate the linkage to non-social workers into symposia and certification of training by IASWG, and develop an ad hoc committee just on training were all discussed.

Greg called the discussion and asked the board to consider over the weekend what action steps we might take to move this development idea forward.

Treasurer's Report:

Total value about \$352K – Cash on hand available \$109K with some of that committed to printing proceedings. 5 year review shared with the Board. Endowment at \$250,000. Endowment was intended to reach about \$1M where the interest would then fund an operations person but the interest on savings dropped to nearly 0%, and those plans fell apart. At present all interest is wrapped back into endowment. Question raised whether we should return to the plan to raise at least \$1M in endowment to be able to use interest on it to fund operations. The board explored expectations for the endowment, and talked about ways to invest the funds differently to see if greater returns could be achieved given the improvement of the interest market. Cautions were given to assure safe investments to assure resources are not lost in this process. Developing plans to move some endowment funds out of CD into money markets was recommended, and developing policies to guide how much risk should be

taken were discussed. Recommendations were made to task this in a “fund raising / development committee” role. Dominique agreed to begin exploration of some investing strategies for the committee. Ideas proposed to increase income included: trying to complete development of two chapters, fundraising to have a “Mutual Aid” track at symposia, increase the membership goal in the budget, set an expectation that Calgary will have a surplus rather than a \$0 sum budget, look for contributions, or cut back spending.

If the budget is going to be adopted then the fact that we are spending down our cash on hand needs to be addressed with an increase in income, or the budget will sooner than later fall into the red.

There were further recommendations as the question was discussed by the board. We could raise dues by \$5-\$10. We could charge more for symposia, and perhaps offset expenses by seeking grants associated with the symposium as they had done in Calgary and Toronto before that. We could cut costs by centralizing.

Board discussed the need to have realistic numbers in the budget, and not just “hopeful” numbers, and a discussion of the perils of increasing registrations and dues when times are still difficult and fewer faculty are supported by schools to attend were heard. Suggestions were made to poll the members, and to also consider differential fees as one way to spare the least able if we increase fees.

Dominique moved that the budget be approved by the board. Steve moved to amend the budget to include more realistic numbers. Jen seconded Steve’s motion. The question of what to amend was directed towards the board. Steve moved to amend \$40,000 in membership income to \$30,000, and to amend \$34,500 in funds to be raised to \$10,000. Anna N. seconded the motion. In discussion it was asked if the vote could be postponed so the committee could take up the question of what is realistic.

The motion was tabled until after the committees met later in the day.

Symposia Reports / Chapters / Committee Preparation:

Boston 2013 Symposium –

There is a bill in dispute with the transportation company. Steve K. is resolving the matter. Successes included creation of time for networking, the PRIDE March participation, a wide range of plenaries, the Mass Chapter funded a film that is now a marketing tool for Chapter recruiting. They made connections with agencies and schools of social work. 15 submissions will go to the proceedings. The board provided its appreciation, and enthusiastically applauded the 2013 Symposium. One suggestion was made to consider people with physical disabilities in choosing venues.

Calgary 2014 Symposium –

Getting the word out, William P and Karen R. distributed bookmarks, and pointed board members to the web where the program will go up once Karen R. is back in Barbados. They are hoping

people will stay at the Hotel Alma on the campus at University of Calgary. Highlights shared included movement and yoga classes during the symposium, elements of Spirituality and Diversity including a Wall of Gratitude, an opening and closing with indigenous peoples and their traditions to welcome all to the land. Content has been chosen to meet the expectations of new practitioners as well as experienced practitioners. They are arranging a one hour am session and 1 ½ hour pm session using an idea from Boston to allow for “talk circles”. They are planning the dine around, and hope to have some of the sessions (perhaps a plenary) broadcast given the University’s reputation for online program (making the symposium more available.) Sunday’s panel will be an International Panel to discuss the future of group work.

Alma Hotel has rooms of different types from Euro-style to Dorm- like rooms in the same building. Building is 200 yards from conference site. In-kind offerings from the University, and the fact that William is seeking a grant to defray some costs, highlighted the effort to contain expenses.

Board noted that the CONFEX fees in the budget are not included with the symposium costs, and that this needed to be considered in the future as it is a specific symposium expense but charged to the association.

The board prepared to break for Committee meetings:

1:30-2:45: Marketing will meet. Commission and Practice will meet together. Fund Raising and Development will meet with Symposium Planning

2:45-4:00: Commission and Practice continue. Membership will meet

4:00-5:00: Chapter Development will meet. International Identity will meet Nominations and Elections will meet.

Reports from 15 Chapters were now presented at Board Meeting:

Linda reported that the Chapters had a phone meeting between the symposium and this meeting.

South Africa (Reineth): Running trainings for basic and advanced. Applied to profession’s board for recognition. Expanding to work with clergy and students. Developing GW Theory and practice in 4 year plan.

South Florida (Mark S): Laura had been in a serious accident and recovering since Spring. Chapter sent students to GW Camp and they inspired the chapter. Did all day workshop with LGBT groups in Ft. Lauderdale on effects of bias.

Massachusetts (Dana): no official events after completing Symposium. Holding a monthly consulting group and also a brown bag series for new group workers.

Illinois (Ann): using a model with 2 to 3 events a year, one of which is social in nature. Noted it is difficult to bounce back from hosting symposium.

European Chapter (Tanya): Session in Germany and session in Dublin, looking to enhance local activities under auspices of the European Chapter. Planning to attend European Group Work Conference (that happens every second year). They are currently being joined by Lithuania who is also contemplating a chapter, which would mean 3 chapters in Europe (European, German and Lithuanian).

German Chapter (Hilde): This is their 20th anniversary in March. Meeting with workshops, and another meeting planned later in November with six workshops. Now redoing website and planning anniversary meetings.

Pennsylvania (Dorlissa): working to increase members.

North Carolina (Willa): hosted first ½ day conference, and school of social work at Chapel Hill sends regards to the board.

Long Island (Beverly): reports they are still going strong and have added SW's from Stony Brook to their steering committee. Katy had asked all schools of SW to participate with the chapter, and they have done that. They try to do programs at different schools and campuses. Recent program with Carol C on "GPS for Group Work: Finding Your Way". Gathering video tapes- some 75 now available. Another program in April will include a Jen C session about "Mutual Aid".

Central Florida (Olga): had a workshop with Rhonda H on empowerment models for working with African American group participants. UCF has added a new elective on GW for undergrads to add to current 2 group work courses.

North East Ohio (Mamadou): focused this year on bringing in students in planning for the chapter, wanting to bring workshops to agencies. Workshop on ethics and SW with Groups at Youngstown, 200+ participants discussing Standards and developing Code of Ethics. Another spring workshop is in the planning stage.

Red Apple (John G and Martie F): focus on getting the chapter back together to reconnect. Planned a Post Posium with 6 presentations and featuring George Goetzl and Kurt Sonnenfeld. Planning a social event in Jan/Feb and making a facebook page.

Toronto Region (Anna): able to use space at the University of Toronto for a workshop with Ellen Sue Mesbur on Mutual Aid. Susan C is going to Toronto to do a major presentation on activity work with adolescents. Gathering video examples of group practice. Membership building is hard because people come to workshops but don't necessarily join Association.

Southern California (Vanessa): announced change of chapter leadership and board representation. Rolled out newsletter, added a treasurer, marketing chair, and membership chair to leadership. Presentation hosted about groups with the homeless and non-traditional populations. Working on Facebook and website. Proposing a survey to see what people want. Cal State Long Beach got a lot of new and potential new members. Session in October with Greg on leading group dynamics for practitioners. December planning a dinner for members. Planning to build more of a presence in LA and San Diego by offering workshops.

Minnesota (Amarinthe): doing a lot of structure building work, and changing two main board members, so revamping chapter, and developing opportunities for people to talk about groups they are running . Planning to offer packages of presentations with case consultations to go along with them.

15 Chapters are attending this board meeting. Chapters forming in Lithuania, Calgary, New Mexico, and Montreal. Chapters reminded that if they film presentations these can be posted to the website.

New call out for the training project with Steve, Dominique and Helene, who built their own training model, and ended up encouraging the development of the SPARC committee in the process.

Publications in process include material on: Creative Use of Group Work in the Field (Dana guest editing); Group Work Standards; and the status of Group Work education. Commission will be talking about expanding information in publications. We need information to go to Emily so that it can be posted to the website including an e-blast of the call for special issues of the journals.

Practice will be talking about 2 projects, one revising the Standards, and the other working on ideas and issues related to objectifying mutual aid.

Board Meeting Adjourned for lunch followed by the 5 hours of various afternoon Committee Meetings.

Sunday, November 17

Meeting called back to order: Greg recapped Saturday, and shared arrangements for Katy's services on Tuesday from 2-4 and 7-9 in Verona NJ at the Funeral Home.

Greg reminded the board of the need for committees to call for action steps to move our collective agenda.

Group Work Camp Report (Jen): \$3000 surplus for Camp this year. Need a new co-chair for Camp before next cycle in 2015. Board commented on the impact of Camp on attendees who then participated in Chapter activities in several chapters. Discussion about the idea of doing camp in more places, or even simultaneously in several places. It was stated that the attendees at Camp represent the core group we think will revitalize group work.

Greg reminded the board of the three themes of this meeting are to attend to: member recruitment/retention, fund raising, and developing our international identity.

Discussion regarding the Budget re-opened: membership numbers suggested on Saturday were based on an erroneous assumption when projected, so Olga indicated that the budget income amount for membership should be reduced by \$5000 to be \$35,000. In addition, fundraising (Economic Development Committee) budget cell should be altered to read \$15,000 to better reflect what can be raised, leaving a deficit budget of between (\$19,000) and (\$24,000) unless we cut spending. Question is called by Dominique. Steve's prior motion that the amended budget be approved is seconded by Linda.

Discussion continues determining that deficit budget does not account for the ability to pay for activity out of cash or by fund raising and use of interest from endowment to put money in the operating budget. Investing to maximize interest would change the math.

Steve withdraws his motion in deference to a motion to be made by Nancy.

Nancy moves that the membership income cell be changed to read \$35K instead of \$40K. Steve seconds. Vote is called: 35 approve, 1 abstains.

Linda moves that the contribution line in the budget be altered to reflect the conversation above and to approve the amended budget, and Mark S seconds. Vote is called, 34 vote aye, 2 vote Nay. The board requests clarification of the rationale for the Nay votes but the budget as amended is approved.

Board discusses the need to see the budget as a call to action, and to not feel comfortable with a deficit budget as a way to operate as an association. Further discussion about ways to encourage contributions were discussed including making sure that if people want to honor Katy that we are offering opportunities for that, and to use proven strategies that have worked for GW Camp.

Greg provided the first report of the Economic Development committee, and the following ideas were discussed: Using symposia tracks to generate contributions to fund our activities; seeking grants from public, private, corporations and personal sources; using estate planning to increase revenue; organizing special events to encourage membership. Board needs to commit to raise money or our budget will drain our reserves and our endowment.

Question was raised about using pledges to increase people's willingness to give and to increase the projected income (difficult because we operate with a cash budget that this suggestion does not alter). It was pointed out that raising scholarship money for symposia attendees does not increase the resources available to us directly, but it does raise money.

Membership Report: Committee reports 618 renewed and newly paid members. Discussed 3 motions. Did not achieve consensus in committee.

Motion to increase membership dues for Canadian Members: Olga moved to increase current \$50 US to \$60 for Full and \$30 for students. Steve seconded the motion. Discussion indicated this represented a 40% increase in dues for members from Canada and is unreasonable. Recommendation made to limit increase to \$5 US. Questions raised what this would mean for people in other countries, and if they would be asked to pay increases as well. Board was reminded that Canadian rate was set 5 years ago to address an imbalance in the exchange rate to make the rates equivalent. If the exchange rate is now nearly equal it creates disparity. Suggestion to phase in rate for current members, and to bring in new members at the new rate. Concerns that this will feel unfair are discussed. Recommendation made to increase the US rate to \$90 and then to not have to adjust the Canadian rate so much. Note made that other organizations have significantly higher membership rates. Suggestion made to ask what the chapter members in Canada might be able to manage, but it was considered unfair to ask in that way.

Board discusses value of membership. Mark S. moves to call the question: 17 vote Aye, 12 vote nay and 7 abstain. The motion to increase Canadian dues to \$60/\$30 carries.

Motion by Membership committee to set High / Middle / Low country membership rate income standards, to set up more equitable membership dues that need not be set for countries individually. Olga moves that the motion be approved. Edna seconds the motion. The committee notes that this will not change the Canadian rate. Discussion noted that country levels of prosperity don't necessarily translate to social worker salaries. Members were concerned that a standard policy would limit the ability of groups to organize chapters. Discussions try to balance the need to standardize against the need to treat each case individually. Members stated that there are depressed areas in wealthy countries that would not be able to equitably participate. Availability of IASWG material on the internet and in the media is crucial to this effort because it will drive membership in new areas. Greg called the question: 1 vote in favor, 31 votes in opposition and 3 abstentions. The motion does not pass.

Motion by Membership committee to add an automatic renewal system to memberships through a service like Pay Pal. Olga moves that the motion be adopted, Steve seconds the motion. Discussion focused on the mechanics of the renewal process: could contributions be added, would a person be notified before a new rate is paid. It was suggested that the systems be studied, and the motion brought back at a late meeting. The question was called by Greg. 25 members voted in favor of the motion, 5 opposed and 5 abstained. The motion to establish an automatic renewal system passes.

Practice and Commission Report: both committees met for 2 hours as they shared common topics. Plan to review Standards to determine if a revision is in order. Each member of the committee will take a portion of the Standards and report back to the chair if there are revisions necessary. Project in process to define Mutual Aid is being postponed to help prioritize other work on the standards and to allow the mutual aid process work to develop further. IASWG continues with CSWE partnership presentations and individual presenters are coming successfully through the CSWE peer review process. IASWG is a partner organization to CSWE. Commission will get more materials on the website by forwarding information from the chapters, and also getting our responses to new curriculum guidelines to our commission related pages. Expressed a desire to create modules to build the syllabus exchange materials, and then to improve that content, perhaps even developing things like assignment suggestions or sample test questions creating a "test bank" as well as an educational planning tool. Commission and Practice are establishing a work group to explore continuing education and training matters (made up of Carole C, Mark M and Mark S, Willa C, Rhonda H.) Members will be attending World SW conference in Australia.

SPARC in second round of grant making (Carol C, Barb Muskat, and Marcia Cohen on committee), and have read proposals with unanimous agreement in the committee to put forward the following proposals:

William Pelech: endorsement to perform multi-year research project

Kianna Battle: endorse dissertation request

Glynne Zackon: to endorse project

Marcuio Cifuentes: endorse and fund project for \$1000

Zareta Smith: endorse research and fund for \$710

Carol C moves that the board accept the recommendations of the SPARC committee, and she provided a packet describing all projects. Mark S. seconds. Brief discussion about using SPARC projects to energize members. Question is called and vote is taken: 34 votes Aye, none opposed, and 1 abstains. Motion carries.

Symposium Planning: Committee has successfully standardized the budgeting process for symposia, making the process clearer for planning groups. Session evaluations are now also standardized, and the overall evaluation is available online. The committee is recommending that a process begin to standardize the Volunteer Policies and Practices, perhaps using the training model. Recommendation made to add In-Kind contribution projections to the budget to reflect real contributions to symposia.

Symposium Planning committee made a motion to increase symposia registration fees by 10% for future symposia. Included is the intention to use funds increased to support scholarships. Dana moved that the board approve this recommendation. Steve seconded. Discussion was brief. Question was called. Vote was 30 in agreement, one against, and 4 abstaining. The motion to increase future symposia registration fees by 10% passes.

Motion to approve Calgary Plenary Speakers was presented to the board: Edward Canda, Professor at the University of Kansas on community work in SE Asia; Betty Baston Rickay, First Nations Healing Circles; Nancy Doetzel on spirituality and teaching as a motivational speaker; Arnold Mendel on the Process of Group Work; and an International Panel to discuss the future of Group Work (SA, Germany and Asia so far).

Board members recommended people for the panel, suggesting a North American participant. Board members were recommended by their peers. Dana called the question and moved to adopt the slate for processing by the committee. Steve seconded. The slate was approved unanimously.

Marketing Committee report: planning to develop group practice tips content for website, and looking for resources for practice skills perhaps with Whiting and Birch. Explored World SW Conference in July in Australia as a place to do outreach, as well as CSWE in 2014. Deciding which to attend was tabled by the committee until the next conference call. Article and press release developed to distribute. Recommendation for chapters and members to use Google Calendar to promote activities, and to send information to Emily for inclusion on the website. Committee has a button in development from Germany, and plans to see about making the Mel Goldstein videos available online. Discussion of the board included the idea that we develop a list of places to send notices and news items to share with Emily to streamline distribution.

Chapter Development: Chapter work keeps our organization alive. Use of phone conference begins to have an effect on the group. 6-7 areas developing or considering developing chapters indicates we have room to grow. Send interested people to Linda for chapter development.

Nominations and Elections: Mark S. noted that the committee is recommending moving the timeframe for elections to get clear of the board meeting, so new board members can join the board during the symposium of the year they are elected instead of after. IASWG now distributes ballots in multiple languages, and notes it is important we continue to do that to have international presence. The committee needs three positions filled so we are looking for 5 or 6 candidates for elections. Submit recommendations to the nominations and elections committee.

Steve announced that he may be resigning his position as general counsel as he is retiring from his legal practice on February 24, 2014. Greg thanked Steve for 25 years of donated legal advice to the association and to the board. The board appreciated Steve's contribution.

Greg moved that the meeting be adjourned, and a sessional ending was held.

Respectfully submitted in draft to the Board on 5/31/2014

Michael Wagner, Secretary