

IASWG Board Meeting
November 2019
Minutes

Members Present: Alexis Howard (Co-chair, Nominations & Elections), Shirley Simon (Chair, Chapter Development; Member-at-large), Lorrie Gardella (Co-chair, International Affairs; Member-at-large), Ann Bergart (Illinois chapter), Anna Nosko (Toronto chapter), John Genke (NY red apple chapter), Mamadou Seck (NE Ohio chapter), Kristen Perron (Minnesota chapter), Sam Benbow (Chair, Membership; Pennsylvania chapter), Hilda Baar (German chapter), Mark Macgowen (Co-chair, Commission), Kyle McGee (Co-chair, Nominations & Elections), Greg Tully (Most recent past president), Andy Malekoff (Editor, Social Work with Groups), Helene Onserud (Member-at-large), Michael Wagner (Historical secretary), Ginette Berteau (Co-vice President), Carol Cohen (Co-chair, Commission), Mark Doel (Co-chair, International Affairs), Barbara Muskat (President), Joyce Webster (Communications secretary), Sera Kaplan (Massachusetts chapter), Sari Skolnick (Long Island chapter), Poppy Masinga (Member-at-large), Anite Marseille (Francophone chapter), Angel (Nancy) Doetzel (Alberta chapter), John Lukach (Minnesota chapter), Jorūnė Vyšniauskytė Rimkienė (Lithuania chapter), Žaneta Šerkšnienė (Lithuania), Zaneta Smith, Maria Gandarilla (Co-chair, Marketing), Padriac Stanley (Member-at-large), Namoonga Chilwalo (Member-at-large), Donna Guy (Member-at-large), Donna Mclaughlin (Co-chair, Practice), Brian Kelly (Co-chair, Marketing), Dominique Steinberg (Treasurer)

Members Absent: Martin Birnbaum (Life member), Rhonda Hudson (Tennessee chapter), Werner Leiblang (European chapter), Dana Leeman (Symposium committee), Charles Garvin (Co-chair, Practice), Mark Smith (Florida chapter), Roseprimevere Jacques (Member-at-large), Roberta Wallace (North Carolina chapter), Linda Ducca (Member-at-large), Kristina Lind (Northern New England chapter), Olga Molina (Central Florida chapter), Reineth Prinsloo (Co-vice President), Gloria Kirwin (Groupwork Journal)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9th

Joyce Webster called the meeting to order at 8:45am and made brief announcements pertaining to the agenda. Kyle McGee motioned to approve the agenda, Anna Nosko seconded, and all voted in favor.

Welcome and Introductions -

Barb Muskat welcomed everyone in several languages. She reminded members about communication guidelines. All members offered brief introductions with their location and role on the board.

Vote on Australia New Zealand Chapter –

Shirley Simon asked for a motion to approve the Australia New Zealand Chapter. Michael seconded, all voted in favor. Donna Guy, new member-at-large and chapter representative, offered brief remarks about the new chapter. They have 30-40 members and are looking forward to holding chapter events and recruiting new member from other areas as well. Shirley also reported that there has been interest expressed in the formation of a chapter in Israel.

Open Officer, Co-Chair, and Committee Positions –

Barb reported there are several vacancies on the board. Dominique will be ending her term as Treasurer and Barb will be responsible for appointing a new Treasurer. Christine Wilkins has stepped down from symposium committee, so looking for a co-chair for symposium. Chapter Development and Membership also need co-chair roles to be filled. Jen Clements has stepped down as a co-chair of Group Work Camp, but it is unclear if that position needs to be filled at this time, pending group work camp report later in the meeting. Barb noted that co-chairs do not need to be current board members and she encouraged board members to consider who might be well-suited to fill those roles.

Overview of Current Organizational Issues –

Barb reported the organization is strong and vibrant. She noted several new and exciting initiatives that are indicative of organizational growth, but further noted that these activities require additional revenue. She indicated this will be a large topic of discussion at this meeting.

Treasurer's Report / Presentation of Proposed Budget –

The Treasurer Report was presented by Greg Tully, on behalf of Dominique Steinberg who was not in attendance (*full Treasurer's Report was made available to meeting attendees and will be made available on the IASWG website*). The Board acknowledged the good work of Dominique Steinberg (IASWG Treasurer) in compiling the 2020 Treasurer Report and for serving as IASWG Treasurer for more than a decade. It was acknowledged that the financial picture is relatively consistent compared to recent years. The IASWG John and Carol Ramey Endowment Fund sits at approximately \$246K, and it was suggested that this is strong for a small organization. The Board was reminded that two large donations came in last year which are considered endowment monies. Cash-on hand was deemed an appropriate amount as of 9/30/19. Projected expenses for 2020 (including annual organizational expenses added to the budget in recent years in certain areas: administrative salary, board travel, Confex system for symposium, Member Clicks system for membership management, marketing, SPARC grants, special projects, and board insurance), and projected income for 2020 (in annual income categories including: membership fees, symposium registrations/fundraising, and donations), were discussed, with the area of donations cited as the smallest income area perhaps worthy of discussion by the board members present. With the Budget and Finance Committee meeting scheduled at 1 PM, it was agreed that a discussion would be held in the meeting about a possible few minor changes to the budget to arrive at a balanced budget for 2020. It was noted that a full Board vote on the 2020 budget could occur later on Saturday afternoon.

Financial Discussion –

Barb then led discussion about the impact of the shortfalls in the current 2019 budget and the projected 2020 budget. She indicated, because symposium tends to be the largest revenue source, that the symposium committee often feels burdened to reduce costs, which impacts the overall feel of the symposium. She also noted that membership lists indicate more than 300 recently lapsed members, which is indicative of possible revenue if they were to renew. She posed the question: do we cut costs or find ways to drive revenue? She then opened the floor for discussion. Discussion was robust and diverse. Ideas floated included: seeking grant proposals (Carol Cohen offered some specific potential funding sources), narrowing fundraising focus to target specific events/projects (i.e. gw camp, SPARC, etc), seeking out additional organizational memberships, possibly offering different levels of organizational memberships with varied benefits, charging for trainings/certifications, easier way to donate when renewing membership, requesting corporate sponsorships/community giving (from companies that align with our values). Andy noted that our messaging will be critical and that, in order to brand ourselves, we should present ourselves as an organization focused on advancing democracy. Barb suggested the organization institutionalize a "money" committee to develop some of these strategies and create a comprehensive plan for financial development. This formation of this committee was tabled until Sunday. In the interim, Barb asked each member to offer in writing one way in which they/the organization can either cut costs or generate revenue. Lastly, Mamadou offered an updated on the finances of the NE Ohio Chapter. Barb reminded chapter representatives that they are responsible for reporting their chapter finances so that the organization can correctly complete annual tax returns.

Symposium Report from 2019 NYC Symposium -

Sari Skolnick offered a brief report about the 2019 symposium. She reported the symposium drew about 350 attendees and generated \$20k in income for the organization. Overall feedback from attendee evaluations was very positive. She reported plans for the 2020 symposium in NYC are well underway, with the planning group meeting weekly to maintain momentum. She noted several potential changes to the schedule, noted need for additional translation services, and requested members think about possible plenary speakers. Another request was made for members to think about how to increase number of symposium attendees. Greg noted that the abstract submission portal will open soon and that we need to recruit additional submissions if we hope to have additional paying attendees.

Journal Updates -

Andy Malekoff offered an update on the Social Work with Groups Journal and noted a deadline of January 15, 2020 for submissions to a special issue on Group Work Psychodrama (guest editor Sari Skolnick). He also noted that the first double issue in 2020 will be group work stories in social justice.

Updates regarding discussion groups & action items carried over from June 2019 meeting –

Fee Structure – It was the task of the fee structure group to investigate alternatives for the current IASWG fee structure in order to determine a structure that is more equitable, inclusive and just to current and future members. Hilda Baar presented a power point developed by the group that included a proposal to adjust the membership fee structure of the organization to the following:

- Regular US members \$ 75
Students/retired/unemployed \$ 37.50
- Regular Western European/Canadian/
Australian/New Zealand members \$ 70
Students/retired/unemployed \$ 35
- Regular Eastern European members \$ 35
Students/retired/unemployed \$ 17.50
- Regular African members \$ 15
Students/retired/unemployed \$ 7.50

Hilda provided information that indicated the change in fee structure would be cost-neutral for the organization but better align with our values. Carol Cohen motioned to approve, and Anna Nosko seconded. Discussion took place and questions included how this might affect our administrative workload. Overall, discussion indicated support of the proposal, with members voicing a desire to table a formal vote until Sunday, pending investigation into administrative feasibility.

Translation/Language Access – Ginette presented a power point on behalf of the translation work group. She indicated the objective of the work group is to reflect on strategies that promote access for members who use a language other than English. Ginette’s report included a newly developed policy statement regarding language and translation. Members voiced strong support for the statement and for the efforts of the group. The following statement will be posted to the IASWG website in English, Spanish, German, and French.

Proposed Statement of IASWG’s Aspirations and Principles Regarding Language Inclusion :
As an international organization, we are committed to work towards IASWG membership being available internationally, and to reduce linguistic barriers to participation as much as is possible. We recognize that the right to speak one’s own language is a human right. Understanding that promoting this right is challenging, and difficult to achieve, we are committed to expanding linguistic diversity within our organization as much as is possible.

The group further suggested IASWG expand informational access through attention to linguistic inclusion (i.e. examine existing materials and make efforts to expand availability in English, French,

German and Spanish.) In addition, the group offered specific recommendations for translation/language that included: a review of the IASWG website to see where translations can be included, support of the symposium committee in its efforts to make other languages more accessible, and support of members who translate on a voluntary basis.

At 12pm, the group adjourned for lunch and proceeded into the following committee meetings -

12:30-1:30	Budget & Finance	Practice	
1:30-2:30	International	Nominations & Elections	Ad-hoc Certification
2:30-3:30	Chapter Development	Marketing & Webinars	
3:30-4:30	Membership	Commission on Group Work in Social Work Education	

At 4:30 PM, Board members reconvened to review a few minor suggestions resulting from the Budget and Finance Committee meeting; the Committee’s suggested minor changes to the proposed 2020 budget that served to balance the budget. After a brief explanation of the few minor changes, a motion to approve the proposed 2020 budget (with the few minor changes) was made by Joyce and seconded by Maria. All voted in favor, thus unanimously approving the 2020 Budget. A second vote was called to institute a standing development, or “money”, committee. All members voted in favor.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10th

Barb called the meeting to order at 8:53am and reviewed the remaining agenda items.

US Group Work Camp –

John Genke and Ann Bergart reported that they are looking at lasallemenor.com as a new setting for the camp and showed the group photos of the site. Members confirmed that they feel accommodations will be adequate and appropriate, John and Ann noted that they are looking for new co-chair for camp.

International Issues Committee –

Lorrie Greenhouse Gardella and Mark Doel reported on the creation of an *International Impact Form* to be used for each committee, activity, and event the organization undertakes. Areas of consideration on the form are: Language, Accessibility, Economic Justice, Diversity, Publications, and Communication Across Cultures. The idea is that the potential impact in each of these areas should be considered before implementing programming or making committee-level decisions. Lorrie made a motion that the board adopt the *International Impact Form* for implementation and use. Helene Onserud seconded. Some discussion ensued – i.e. this tool demonstrates our commitment to equity, questions about language as well as the need and desire to evaluate any data this tool gathers moving forward. All voted in favor. The group noted that this document should be manually translated before posting on the website.

SPARC –

Carol Cohen briefly showcased the SPARC section of the website, reviewed the history of the committee, and offered the SPARC report for this year. The committee recommended one awardee for endorsement and two awardees for endorsement and funding. Carol motioned to approve these

recommendations. Shirley seconded. All voted in favor, with one abstention. Brian reported that there will be a special issue of Social Work with Groups for SPARC awardees in the coming year or two.

Membership Fee Structure Vote –

Joyce represented the tabled motion from yesterday regarding the new equity-based membership fee structure. Joyce confirmed Emily reported she will be able to easily modify membership categories online. All voted in favor, with exception of Maria and Dominique who abstained.

Symposium 2021 –

Jorune and Zaneta announced that the 2021 Symposium will take place in Lithuania. Targeted dates are June 17-19, 2021. Members expressed broad support and excitement about the 2021 Symposium taking place in Lithuania.

Committee Reports –

Chapter Development – Shirley reported the committee met to discuss accomplishments and areas of support needed for chapters. She will be hosting a follow-up Zoom call to discuss theme that emerged about how to better retain chapter members. She reminded members of the committee of the need to complete the Annual Chapter Report for 2019. She highlighted that the report now includes a question about identifying chapter members who might be interested in board committee service, as well as additional questions about financial reporting.

Practice – Donna McLaughlin reported the committee brainstormed ideas about how to enhance practice resources on our website, as well as curating additional practice offerings at symposia. Committee work will continue via Zoom.

Nominations & Elections – Alexis and Kyle reported areas of focus for the committee that include mentoring and skill development of new board members (as well as first time attendees), as well as ways to better embrace diversity and equity in the nominations and elections process. The committee developed a concrete timeline to improve the process, starting much earlier in the year. Kyle noted that there were several strong candidates and the committee will continue to outreach to those not elected. Some discussion ensued about being intentional about “onboarding” not only newly elected board members but any first-time board meeting attendees.

Marketing – Maria reported the committee identified areas of focus for 2020, specifically internationalization and development of a brand strategy. Joyce noted that Emily should be involved in any conversations and decisions regarding branding.

Ad-hoc Certification – Michael reported he and Hilda just became co-chairs and that the committee is re-grouping. Areas of work and exploration include – how to offer a unique product/not duplicate other programs, whether use of term “certification” is appropriate, how to consolidate and arrange content, whether to offer “levels” of certification, etc. Members engaged in discussion about the committee’s report and offered suggestions for future consideration. Challenges and opportunities will continue to be explored among the committee on future Zoom calls, with an eye on the committee bringing forward a solid recommendation to the board about first steps.

Commission – Carol reported on IASWG’s strong presence at CSWE (US Council on Social Work Education) conference. She noted they are hoping to link up with someone from ASWB to discuss group work issues in licensing. Mark reported the committee continues to work on best ways to infuse group

work in social work education. He noted the IASWG website has resources, including syllabi from across the globe. The committee is looking for syllabi in languages other than English, as there are currently none. Mark further offered an update about the status of symposium proceedings.

Membership – Sam reported the committee has taken on membership renewal initiatives that include personalized mailings and a developing phone call script that chapter chairs can use to reach out to lapsed members. Sam further reported on plans for the membership committee to have a strong presence at the 2020 symposium. Sam noted that the membership committee is still in need of a co-chair.

Closing Remarks –

Barb commented on the impressiveness of the work undertaken this weekend and asked each member to share one concrete thing they will be doing as a result of this meeting. Members shared in a round-robin format, followed by closing remarks by Michael Wagner.

Note: There was no agenda item for chapter reports at this meeting. Chapter representatives had an opportunity to share chapter updates in the chapter development meeting Saturday afternoon.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joyce Webster
IASWG Secretary