

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF WOMEN (AAUW)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 18, 2022**

Meeting held by Video Conference

Directors Present/Absent*

Julia Brown, Chair
Malinda Gaul, Vice Chair
Peggy Cabaniss, Finance Vice Chair
Cheryl Sorokin, Secretary
Kimberly Adams
Joseph Bertolino**
Lisette Garcia
Elizabeth Haynes
Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard
Karen Kirkwood**
Jeanie Latz
Eileen Menton
Edwina Frances Martin
Shaila Rao Mistry
Mary Zupanc
Gloria Blackwell, Ex Officio

Staff Present

Shannon Wolfe, Managing Director and Chief of Staff

** Joined the meeting at the point indicated in these minutes

Call to Order

Julia Brown, Chair, called the meeting to order. She congratulated board members Peggy Cabaniss, Cherie Sorokin, and Mary Zupanc on their re-election to the board. She noted that both Dale Satake, who had been elected at the annual meeting, and Monique Taylor who had been appointed earlier in the year, had terms starting July 1, 2022. She noted Dale Satake would be joining the upcoming meeting of the board in June as guests.

Strategy Discussion

Referring to a previously distributed memorandum dated May 12, 2022 titled "Impact Exercise Results," Gloria Blackwell, CEO, reviewed a summary of the discussions held at the February board meeting on AAUW's impact and areas at the national and affiliate level critical to delivering on AAUW's strategic goals. She noted the continuing tension caused by lack of unrestricted funding which affects not only programming and projects at the national level but also the ability of the national organization to address affiliate needs. She reviewed and responded to director comments on the programs and projects at the national level that are

supported mainly by unrestricted funding, noting that support for addressing affiliate needs was also dependent on unrestricted funding. She pointed out that AAUW's revenue sources continue to fall short of the organization's desire to increase its impact through national programming, research, and advocacy while at the same time improving services to and relations with affiliates.

The board discussed the difficulty of assessing AAUW's impact at the affiliate level. Ms. Blackwell pointed out how lack of data as well as the importance of considering the persistent decline in affiliate membership must both be considered in looking at AAUW's use of unrestricted funding to support affiliates, particularly in the near term. Several directors commented on the difficulties experienced by affiliates and the increased disconnect and lack of trust between affiliates and the national office as a result of the AAUW staff reduction in prior years.

Ms. Blackwell responded to questions on expense, time and energy needed at the national level to address affiliate needs, and the board discussed possible options for reducing both the cost and the strain on the national office of providing services to affiliates. Ms. Wolfe commented on the complexity of AAUW's organizational structure and the need to find ways to simplify that complexity. Malinda Gaul, Chair of the Governance Committee, noted that the Governance Committee was considering a change to the existing board state liaison program that could increase communications with state affiliates and provide ways to improve relationships with affiliates while at the same time lessening the need for affiliates to engage directly with the national office for assistance. In preparation for the June board meeting, Ms. Blackwell asked directors to reflect on what specifically could be achieved by increasing support for affiliates at the national level.

Ms. Blackwell pointed out that it would take time to develop data on AAUW's impact at the affiliate level as well as to examine options for reducing the complexity of the organizational structure. She also noted that discussions on issues related to AAUW's long-term sustainability would continue to be a priority for future board meetings.

The board discussed the impact of a number of AAUW's existing programs and how those programs and other factors differentiate AAUW from other organizations focused on gender equity. Ms. Blackwell commented on internal reviews being undertaken to look at how existing programs, including research and advocacy, and outreach to new audiences, are being offered and funded. In response to questions, Ms. Blackwell pointed out that AAUW research, public policy and advocacy efforts were effective and highly respected, although she expressed disappointment that affiliates are not fully taking advantage of these programs, including AAUW's Two-Minute Activist program which is utilized by more nonmembers than members.

Karen Kirkwood joined the meeting at this time.

Ms. Blackwell responded to questions on the potential of another major grant from the Coca-Cola Foundation, in light of the importance of the Coca-Cola grant in prior years in developing programming unique to AAUW. She noted that the Foundation was a sponsor of this year's

NCCWSL program for college women leaders, but it was still uncertain whether another major grant would be forthcoming.

Directors discussed the importance of continuing conversations on priorities and AAUW's impact and expressed appreciation to Ms. Wolfe for the reports sent to the Finance Committee and the board on AAUW's financial situation and how various programs were currently funded.

Joseph Bertolino joined the meeting at this time.

Ms. Blackwell commented on the difficulties of increasing revenue, especially during the pandemic, and responded to questions on the strength of AAUW's fundraising efforts and staff.

Approval of Minutes and Membership Consent Calendar

Referring to previously distributed draft minutes of the February 2022 board meeting, on motion made, seconded, and carried, the board adopted the following resolution:

Resolution Re: Minutes of AAUW Board of Directors' Meeting

The Board of Directors of AAUW approves the minutes of the February 18, 2022 meeting as presented.

Acknowledgement of Written Reports

On motion made, seconded and carried, the board acknowledged receipt of the following written reports:

- a. Executive Committee Meeting Report dated May 12, 2022;
- b. Memorandum dated May 12, 2022, from Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard, Audit Chair, and accompanying audit planning letter from Gelman, Rosenberg Fitzpatrick (GRF), AAUW's auditor for the fiscal year ending June 2022;
- c. Memorandum dated May 12, 2022, from Shannon Wolfe listing the planned board meeting dates for fiscal year 2023 as well as the diversity and inclusion workshops planned for staff and the board during the fiscal year.
- d. Executive Summary of Financial Results and Finance Memo covering the period ending March 31, 2022.

Report on Data Base Conversion and Implementation

Ms. Wolfe reported on the problems encountered during the development phase and following the launch of Nimble, AAUW's the new database system, including ongoing issues and remaining work to be completed to make the system as fully functional as planned.

Ms. Wolfe reminded the board of the goals for the new system, noting that it was designed to replace 10 different legacy database systems which added to the complexity of refining an "off the shelf" vendor-developed program to suit AAUW's complex needs at a reasonable cost. Referring to a slide she shared with the board showing the complexity of dues collection under previous systems, she then reviewed the risks created for the organization through the use of

multiple data bases managed by multiple departments. She also commented on the need for increased systems flexibility in light of how the organization had changed and was continuing to evolve. She commented and responded to questions on design and refinement choices that were based on affiliate needs. She then provided examples of how AAUW's structural complexity affected the conversion to a new database system, noting differing affiliate and national office needs for information and data.

Ms. Wolfe reported that work was continuing to refine the new system and to implement additional rollout phases, now that the initial phase was largely complete, and she reviewed the timing for finalizing the initial rollout of the system as well as for implementing certain anticipated changes.

Ms. Wolfe summarized and responded to questions on lessons learned during the development, testing, and rollout processes, including issues with and missteps by the staff of Nimble as well as AAUW and AAUW's gifts receipts processor. She reported on actions being implemented to help reduce such missteps going forward. In response to questions, she confirmed that the migration of data for AAUW's accounting systems had been reviewed by the Finance Department to ensure accuracy.

Directors provided comments and concerns re issues they personally encountered in using the new member portal, as well as concerns brought to their attention by members attempting to use the Community Hub portion of the system. Several directors with backgrounds in technology and systems conversions offered suggestions as to possible types of refinements that could be helpful to members going forward.

Ms. Wolfe acknowledged the frustration of members attempting to utilize the system in the early phase of the rollout when it was not working as intended. She reported on continuing efforts to work with affiliates and members to explain the new system, train users and reduce user anxiety about the system. She estimated that it might take as long as two years for everyone to understand and become comfortable with the different processes and the increased functionality of the new system. Directors encouraged regular communications with members on the status of the new system as well as continued training programs as new functionalities are developed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Cherie Sorokin
Board Secretary