

**WACOSA Board of Directors Meeting**  
**August 26, 2024**  
**5:30 P.M.**

Members Present:

Peggy Bayer  
Jeff Benveniste  
Ron Brandenburg  
Matthew DesJardins  
Laura Krueger  
Thad Olsen  
Joe Perske  
Lindsey Rennie  
Herb Trenz  
Sandie Westergren

Members Absent:

Curt Gainsforth  
Mollie Garden  
Jennifer Johnson

Staff Present:

Nancy Betts  
Julie Haag  
Meghan Hines  
Ann Kennedy  
Traci McKinnon  
Lynette Nicholson  
Mary Rothstein  
Stephanie Schaefer  
Lynn Welle

Guests:

Dennis Meemken

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Joe P. motioned to approve the agenda and seconded by Herb T.; a vote was taken, and motion carried.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

Sandie W. and Nancy B. introduced our guest, Dennis Meemken. Dennis is a WACOSA Legacy Society member and prospective board member and is here observing our meeting.

Nancy B. introduced Meghan Hines, WACOSA's new Development Manager.

**3. BOARD TRAINING IN PERSON CENTERED PLANNING**

Stephanie Schaefer did a 15-minute training presentation on person centered planning.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Thad O. motioned to approve the May 6, 2024, minutes as presented and Joe P. seconded; a vote was taken, and motion carried.

**5. FINANCE REPORT**

Traci M. reported on the June 2024 financials. The finance committee reports we are on track according to our budget. Our public support is more than what was expected due to

our recent endowment deposits and grants. Our investment income was also higher than expected due to increases in the market rates currently.

Jeff B. reported that the WACOSA team is spot on with budget, with positive net of \$270K so far this year. There was nothing of note to report at this time.

A motion to approve the June 2024 financial report was made by Laura K. and seconded by Lindsey R; a vote was taken, and motion carried.

Traci M. reported that the 401K audit was presented at our previous meeting, but was tabled as we were waiting for the 5500 to be completed. We did receive a clean audit with no issues noted.

A motion to approve the 401K audit was made by Jeff B. and seconded by Thad O.; a vote was taken, and motion carried.

## **6. FUND DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Meghan Hines reported on our WACOSA Bash, which is scheduled for September 14, 2024, from 3-6 p.m. at the Moose Lodge in Waite Park. If any board member has tickets, that need to be sold, and/or turned in to Julie or Meghan by September 5<sup>th</sup>. Our sponsorship totals are just over \$32K, with last year coming in at \$43K for our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. We have 76 baskets for the silent auction, our Grab and Go board has a combined total of \$4,800.00 in gift cards/certificates to sell at a reduced price. If anyone would like to volunteer, email Meghan so she can reach out when it gets a little bit closer. [mhines@wacosa.org](mailto:mhines@wacosa.org). So far 183 tickets have been sold.

The APH Lobster Fest fundraising event was held on July 31, 2024. There were 115 APH employees that were scheduled to come through for the event which included a tour and painting workshop with Dan Mondloch, and the lobster feed at the Bartlett's. They raised \$454K in designated funds, which is an approximate \$50K increase from last year.

Planned giving/endowment - Meghan is meeting with Ed Stracke to get trained on our planned giving processes and procedures. WACOSA's endowment has grown by \$230K since the first of the year, and is currently at \$581K. The flexible fund or quasi endowment is at \$36,200K, for a total endowment balance of \$652K.

The grant writing part of the development department has been split out from the development committee. The development committee has decided to shift towards a heavier focus on philanthropy, to strengthen our endowment, WACOSA Legacy Society growth, fundraising events, and appeals. We are seeking more members if anyone is interested in joining the development committee or if anyone knows someone in the community that may be a good asset for us, please let Nancy or Sandie know.

## **7. PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

Lynn W. reported on the current program activities. Cow Tipping Press writing cohorts had 2 public author readings in July, one at the library and one at Whitney Senior Center. Their books can be purchased on Amazon.

On July 19<sup>th</sup> the WACOSA South & North programs had police appreciation day. Our Waite Park police were invited them to be on site with clients in a non-threatening environment.

On July 26<sup>th</sup> we enjoyed WACOSA Night at the Rox. Client Troy threw out the first pitch.

On June 14<sup>th</sup> we had the stakeholder picnic and an in-service training day for staff. Approximately 300 attended the picnic. Staff did team building activities at St. Ben's college and enjoyed several presenters.

July 24<sup>th</sup> was a visit from the MN Disability Law Center to complete a monitoring visit with clients and staff.

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

Lynette Nicholson reported on the current open positions, which have been reduced significantly since she came on board.

Our days to hire previously were 15, is now down to 4. Days to start previously was 15-20, and now getting in within 10 days.

DSP week is September 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>. We have a weeks' worth of activities and appreciation gestures to show our gratitude for what they do every day.

Our annual employee engagement survey will be out the following week.

## **9. MARKETING REPORT**

Ann K. reported a focus on marketing for the BASH and increasing community awareness of our event.

General marketing updates included promoting Cow Tipping Press events, the Beans play at the Paramount Center for the Arts, APH event, the Bash.

Our in-house jobs are steady and stable, so new bids are handled on a selective basis. Our customers continue to pursue additional jobs for us, as they experience continued staffing shortages, so we assist as able. The Marketing committee will be looking at relevant KPI's in the coming months, as our organization adapts to the changing sales and program services environment.

## **10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Nancy B. reported on the general updates at WACOSA. We applied for the first stage of the DHS Staff Retention Grant which may provide one time retention bonuses to our DSP staff as funds are available. Depending on the response to this first stage, DHS will be releasing the requirements of the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, and we will report back to you the results. It is a grant that could provide up to 1K per direct care staff member as a one-time bonus

from the State of Minnesota, with the employer (WACOSA) being the fiscal recipient and manager of our grant.

The Sauk Centre lease has been renewed, without any notable changes.

General updates:

- Happy to announce MOHR selected one of our staff, Travis, for a DSP Achievement award. He has spent the last couple of years taking tour groups to Camp Ripley.
- We completed dock improvements at our 320 building.
- We took 5 vans down to an auction in Glencoe and ended up getting about \$8,700. We purchased two new to WACOSA vehicles from Facebook Marketplace. We continue to seek area vendors, so we have predictable turnover vehicle stock to choose from.
- Thank you to those that came to see the play, Beans. Joe P., Mayor Kleis and Eric Putnam did cameos in the performance, and it kicked off St. Cloud Granite City Days.
- We are preparing for our CARF survey next year. Steve is coming back to help coach us through it, but cannot be the surveyor.

## **11. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

Board openings at the end of 2024: Peggy Bayer is at the end of a 3-year term (1<sup>st</sup> term). Herb Trenz is at the end of his final 3-year term, and we will be losing him off of the board. Jeff B. recommended a person and will send contact info to Sandie.

Joe P. will be meeting with Eric Putnam who agreed that the employment opportunities that we offer at subminimum wage is a great asset. Joe would lead the effort and thinks having the conversation is worth doing, as taking away 14C would do more harm than good. The next steps should be getting together our legislators, parents, and staff, and strategize a way to keep it. There could be other agencies across the state that could be involved.

## **12. ADJOURN THE BOARD MEETING.**

A motion was made by Herb T., seconded by Laura K., to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken and motion passed.

**Next Meeting: October 7, 2024**

---

Matthew DesJardins, Board Secretary

---

Date