Minutes of the GWI Board 2022-25 Meeting held on 29th July 2024, 6pm Central European Time (CEST), zoom

Twentieth Board Meeting

Attendees: President Patrice Wellesley Cole (PWC); VP Advocacy Shaila Rao Mistry (SRM); VP Education, Shirley Gillett (SG); VP Membership, Meera Bondre (MB); Treasurer, Sudha Srivastava (Sudha); GWI Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara (SDL); VP Projects, Mildred Asmah(MA); VP Fund Raising Maria Fernanda (MF); VP Legal & Governance, Ujwala Shinde(US).

Meeting called to order at 6**pm CEST**.

1. Welcome: PWC welcomed all to the twentieth Board Meeting.

2. Conflict of Interest: NONE

3. Adoption of Agenda: MB moved agenda and seconded by MA.

4. Adoption of minutes: Minutes of 23rd of April adopted subject to change in Bina Roy spelling.

5. Projects and Legal and Governance updates, Mildred and Ujwala

MA mentioned that Board approved six Bina Roy Partners in Development (BRPID) projects and five of them have gone through. The sixth project is supposed to go to Turkey. They have paid 2023 dues. She further mentioned that, once Turkey made a step of paying dues, GWI can allow them go ahead for the Dr. Mehta seed fund. MA mentioned that they are still waiting for the results of the Earth Shot Prize. That's supposed to be in September through all fingers post.

MA updated about Hegg Hoffet that, Hegg Hoffet meeting was held. And there were 24 applications. 16 of them had university degrees, eight of them didn't so they were disqualified. They considered all the 16 applications. But however, some of them didn't provide sufficient information. And they are being asked to do that. The deadline is middle of August for more applications. After that, it will be shortlisted. Some of them are to provide invoices, refugee status; considering all, need to take informed decisions concerning the Hegg Hoffet.

US mentioned that the Governing Committee meeting is to be held on 2nd August 2024.

6. Advocacy and Education updates, Shaila and Shirley : SRM mentioned that : Progress Update on Advocacy Without Borders Initiative for GWI Reporting

i. B+30 Leadership, Participation, Chairing, Tests, and Language Support: - Successfully finalized a list of B+30 leadership candidates who have expressed interest in joining our initiative. - Language assistance and essential resources have been provided to facilitate effective communication and engagement.

ii. Advocacy without Borders -Engagement with Regional Leaders: - We finally received more recent leadership lists and actively reached out to secure their support and active participation in our advocacy.

iii. Proclamation Preparation for Advocacy Without Borders: - currently in the process of drafting a proclamation that articulates the objectives and vision of our Advocacy Without Borders initiative.

iv. Resolution Development for Advocacy Without Borders : - In addition to the proclamation, working on crafting a resolution that reinforces our dedication to advocating for significant causes across borders.

v. Establishment of Advocacy Committee: - To enhance coordination and efficiency in our advocacy activities. In the process of establishing a specialized advocacy committee, in keeping with all other VP Committees, to implement, oversee the planning, execution, and monitoring advocacy initiatives.

Overall, progress on the Advocacy Without Borders initiative is advancing steadily, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to achieving our objectives with the invaluable support of the NGO Board and our dedicated team members.

Education: EDUCOM had a ZOOM meeting in July in which they reiterated and discussed the child bride project and, as there were only 3 attending due to different factors, agreed to put off until I was back in August. SG shared hopes for some combining or linking in with UNICEF asked board to think of what or how.

Membership and Fundraising updates, Meera and Fernanda: MB mentioned that two new programs have been taken up by the membership committee. One is the independent members network which we are forming. First meeting was there. Now again, a doodle has been sent. The two ongoing programs.

NFA to NFA.

Since last term.

One is India is a partnership on women's safety.

That is still going on in this term also.

The second one is the Spanish speaking culture bridge involving six countries that also continues in this term. A new one francophone connection involving three countries.

MB mentioned that the during their first meeting the point that came up was that members do not understand English. MemCom will help it translate into French for them. They will take it up as a first program.

The forms will reach all the CIRs and Presidents of all the NFAs to understand what difficulties they have in retention and recruitment of members.

7. Membership and Fundraising updates, Meera and Fernanda

MF mentioned that she made a casual contact with a person from the Lowell Foundation with a personal friend, they have plenty of questions.

For example, they asked about how donations can be tax deductible. How can they choose where the money is going to be sent? And then donations be specifically allocated to create fellowships or specific funds.

And there was also a question regarding if there is a policy in place for managing donor restricted funds. Many of the questions were related to how the money is going to be handled and where the money is to be allocated.

She mentioned to them, that there are a specific programs to which the money has been allocated right now, like the teacher for rural futures, the Bina Roy partners in development.

MF mentioned that she wanted to have a little more information regarding money before approaching anyone directly. She further informed that she made the draft for the letter to send to Melinda Gates, to which she wanted approval from the Board. She further mentioned that she can contact directly using LinkedIn, the person who is responsible for gender and equality in the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, who the president of gender and equality division, Anita Saidi. And maybe through this approach using LinkedIn, letter can be directly sent to her.

Because she has been told that the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation contact organizations directly.

She also submitted that an expression of interest at Nova Nordics Foundation, which is the largest foundation worldwide, that basically funds research in health sustainability And may be through these expression of interest GWI can set up possibly at the first contact for them to fund an specific program in the line of work, this can be development, for example, or sustainability. For these she will need to submit a Nora profile that they have requested. MF asked the board how much freedom or liberty she would have in order to fill Nora profile. All the individual donors that she has already identified, including Melinda Gates, Shirley Sandberg, Mackenzie Scott, and she has also identified corporate donors. For example, the Global Fund for Women, Women's Fund Network, and all these organizations that she has listed, she should be able to contact them.

She asked whether she has liberty to contact them directly or she should send letters to the board before actually establishing any contact.

She further informed that she is in contact with NG, which is a large energy business corporation in France through casual contact. And they said they are interested, but because of the summer break in France, both with L'Oreal and NG, everything can be start until September.

She requested treasurer to send her email so that she can ask her doubts to Sudha.

She further asked regarding the bricks that the funding that GWI has already received, if there is any feedback with these people, any acknowledgement have been sent to these donors. To continue with the engagement, to donors engage, maybe regular updates on how the contributions are making a difference, because then maybe through their social networks, GWI can reach more people. MF shared a draft of a letter on the screen to be sent to the different organizations for fund raising.

8. Young Member Network update, Sudha:

Sudha updated that "Last week on 23 July,I had the second quarter financials meeting with accountant,.Fincom convener and executive director to consolidate second quarter financials for the period between 1st March and 30th June.

Finance committee is having their quarterly meeting later this month to discuss the quarterly report and other matters.Then the report will be presented to board with recommendations.For the financials analysis.Two points I would like to put both attention.That those two things that were unanimously agreed to put in the 2024 budget for the income section.One is the legacy donation that we are expecting from US 52,000 Swiss francs.And the other is SDG projects grant that everybody in the board agreed to put in 10,000 Swiss francs.So these are the significant 62,000 put in as income for the 2024 budget at the beginning of this. So I just wanted to put both attention for this these two amounts.But in terms of the income because this the 62,000 is a large amount in absence this amount.We are looking again ending there with deficit. So I think that needs addressing.So now we have to keep it 2023 arears.We also have update for Turkey 2024 dues They are not paid yet,. That are communicated to Mildred for any actions on the project.Because now the 2023 arrears are clear."

Sudha updated about YMN that "as a part of the monthly conversation series last week on 26 July, we had a get together session for all GWI members to learn about the young members network last five years since 26 July 2019. It was attended by many young members reflecting and sharing the experiences. It was good."

SDL asked that whether Turkey is approved for Bina Roy 2024 project or not? Sudha answered that Turkey dues for 2023 are paid.

SDL mentioned that she is getting asked from Turkey, there's a Turkish member on the PDC, and she's been asking now that they paid, can they move forward with receiving the first installment for the 2024. PDC is waiting on the board to say whether the board would approve for Turkey to go forward with their project.

9. Bid for GWI 35th GA Triennial Conference, all VPs and Stacy: PWC mentioned that she wrote to French Association, there was no response. She also wrote to her local associate and that's Greater London and the President of that is somebody called Gail Sagar or Sheridan and there are only 22 of them are in London and they've not said yes or no yet.

SRM mentioned that we are running short of time to have an in-person triennium, can we do it within the time frame that's left because it's what under a year now or just over a year not counting. She further asked that, what is the plan B if nobody comes forward.

SDL mentioned that it is very important to have the hosting in NFA on board with doing the event.

10. Responses to BFWG questions, Functional budget and Restrive, Sudha and Stacy: PWC mentioned that, GWI had a letter from BFWG asking questions about all the money and the functional budget and restaurant.

Sudha mentioned that, that was in terms of finding out how the finance works. And asking questions that were related to previous board and some of the things might be were related to this board time. She further mentioned that it is asked that, how many NFAs GWI has at present and how many paid? She updated that GWI has at present 47 NFAs and a few of them are not paid. Members in GWI together with all NFAs were communicated. They asked about the project. There was a question on membership, what membership development and areas are addressed. To answer this Sudha reached out to Mira to ask about the updates recent.

SDL mentioned that the functional budget and Restrive are completely opposite things. Restrive is a website management supplier and staff supporter of GWI. The functional budget is how GWI reports its finances. She voiced concern that the functional budget is misunderstood by everybody, the board and the membership. SDL gave example of international advocacy, because it comes up a lot.

SDL clarified that in the functional budget the international advocacy amount is a calculation of the office time spent working in international advocacy and not reference to any invoices received and paid. This means that there is an allocation table of the time the office spends doing something. And there are like nine or 10 different time allocation categories, international advocacy, communications, fundraising, projects, governance, administration, travel is one because that comes to play sometimes. Each one of those categories in a functional budget has a percentage of time that the office would spend doing that in a year. Each allocation percentage is determined by the GWI annual budget and every quarter she provides the allocations to the treasurer and accountant. She stressed that the accountant processes the allocations through a professional accounting software that calculates the functional budget monetary value, depending on the amount of time that the office spends doing one of those allocations. So people always misunderstand and they say why do we spend on international advocacy, there are no invoices for that, that doesn't exist. It's the amount of time that is spent that is processed in the form of a source of amount. Before 2019 GWI did not have a functional budget. She further explained that, "We had just straight accounting, although it was confusing when Daniel Castle and Catherine Bell were in office. They wanted it that way, but we streamlined everything under Geeta's board and the accountant and treasurer in 2017 and 2018 and into 2019. We streamlined everything and in 2019. Canada being a large NFA had a lot of influence on the resolution that they put forth that requested GWI to change their accounting reporting to have a functional budget and a quarterly report.

Sudha mentioned that "BFWG question is about the international advocacy, they a asked what is spent under this, it was not functional it was the normal, that was the normal budgeting page so that we actually put together like the some of the NGOs we subscribe. And any expenses that are spent on by the officer. So that was international advocacy that is apart from the functional reporting"

SRM asked about the scope of Restrive, SDL mentioned that they manage our website, which is not just a website. She explained that since 2013, Restrive has provided ongoing maintenance services for the GWI website, which is not just a website, but a platform that includes crucial functional and private aspects. Functional aspects such as many forms such as the NFA dues payment, donations, NFA contact details, Independent Member, Hegg Hoffet application, and Bina Roy Partners in Development forms, multimedia integration, and more. This is no small task as the GWI website is extremely large and dated. Hosting is included, which makes it essential to ensure ongoing maintenance to keep it up-to-date and secure. And importantly, since Restrive supports the office whenever needed. The decision was made in 2022 to have them to do that because of the work load at the office for one person when there were previously four staff members that have not been replaced. They do a lot more than just the manage the website. She made the example that from January to July in 2024 Restrive has work about 437 hours for GWI which calculates to 15.67 Swiss francs per hour which is she added impossible to achieve with a local Swiss or any other supplier for the quantity of work done by Restrive.

11. AOB: SDL reported the following:

SDL reported that she received notice that the GWI Switzerland tax exemption application has been accepted and is now for an indefinite period of time; this is an extension she filed in 2023 of the original tax exemption for GWI in 2013.

Since the last Board meeting, she has released several Update newsletters; most notably the Human Rights Council Special Edition.

She held a meeting with the Teachers for Rural Futures students as follow up to their student teacher practice this summer; they reported that boy students resented and disrespected the female students in the beginning – age group is teenagers. The students report that by the end of the teacher practice, and with the support of GWI, the boys did not want our students to leave; our students did a wonderful job and are grateful for the support of GWI; the students also reported that they were able to convince parents of girls to pay fees for the daughters as well as the sons; they students said many girls miss school because of domestic violence and that they tried to reduce this and convince the girls to stay in school.

She met with ResCom regarding planning for the 7 August and 4 September webinars about policy resolutions; have been working way through advert plan and so far 58 are registered for the 7 August session; registration low so far for the 4 September session.

She is almost finished creating the full list of Circulars for 2025 in person General Assembly and conference, final review now and then will send. This is important preparation for the extremely busy time to come.

She worked with Rest drive to collect and compile all of the videos for the 105-anniversary movie; produced both celebration sessions; published NFA compilation of videos.

Re the restripe SG asked if they could have included within their paid brief constructing the heritage website and thereby save the NZ $2000. SDL said they could have. SG said when she asked twice she was told no they couldn't. But also that it had been good working with Hayden from Myth as they could meet and work together in person.

SDL kicked off 2024 BRPID projects with 1st installment; she is sending documents to project leaders to confirm they received the 1st installment funds; she is finalizing fundraising proposal to the City of Geneva for the 2024 BRPID 2nd installment; should be ready to submit in a week or so.

She continued working with CFUW GWI supporters on the Dues Consideration Fund; she confirmed to the board that the fund has zero funds at the current time; that the first task of the committee is to raise funds for the fund; in January an Ad Hoc committee to review Dues Consideration Fund applications will be started; more details need to be worked out but now that the board has approved the idea, she will meet again with CFUW for next steps; they have internal items to work out as well.

She compiled data for 2Q2024 quarter financials and met with SS, accountant and Assistant Treasurer to finalize; FinCom will meet in August to approve and recommend to board to accept.

She held about a 2-hour meeting with legacy financial institution; trying to get approval to make direct transfer and not have GWI open a USA IRA account.

She finalized layout and design of 2023 annual report and released; the report has been submitted to CAGI as per Swiss government requirements for NGO to maintain good standing.

The office produced World Day against Trafficking in Persons infographic and has widely distributed; the infographic was published on WUNRN which is important media relations and publicity for GWI; social media campaign release on 30 July.

The office produced press release and infographic for Pan-African Women's Day on 31 July; both will release by 31st

Working with PDC on Dr. Mehta Fund SDG 4 project criteria based on BRPID

Met with HH committee to review many applications; applications open from 20 June until 15 August; there are many positive applications for follow up such as need institution invoice; many did not qualify – not a refugee or graduate or too high of a request.

PWC asked the Board members, that whether GWI should apply for U N Women's award for gender education? Board members answered in affirmative.

With consensus PWC declared the date of next board meeting on Thursday 22nd August2024 @6 pm CEST.

Wrap Up: PWC thanked to all the Board member for long but productive meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 7:58:01pm CEST
Minutes drafted by US