Board Meeting Minutes

18 November 2025, 6:00 a.m. Central European Time (CET), ZOOM

Attendees: Pat Patton, (PP) President; Meera Bondre (MB), VP Membership; Nataly Garcia (NG), VP Marketing; Shirley Gillett (SG), VP Education; Joy Hurst (JH), VP Legal and Governance; Lynne Kent (LK), VP Fundraising; Gisèle Scanlon (GS), VP Advocacy; Saskia Voortman (SV), Treasurer; and Stacy Dry Lara (SDL), Executive Director. Minute taker SDL

Apologies: None

1. **Welcome:** PP welcomed all and called the meeting to order at 6.04 A.M. CET
2. **Agenda** Adopted, with EduCom update added to new business
3. **Minute Taking:** It was noted that previous minutes were taken by VP Legal and Governance or rotated between Board members. Board members were asked to rotate monthly minute taking. Meetings will not be video recorded. SDL will take minutes during this meeting. The Zoom AI Companion will be used to take the summary notes during the meeting; however, the AI Companion is not known for being succinct and can be inaccurate. Therefore, the Minute Taker will keep written notes from which to record decisions, motions, actions, required responsibilities, etc; the AI Companion can be used as a reference for overall discussions. There will be no attribution in the minutes, and they will mainly detail the decisions/agreements made/actions and deadlines. Draft minutes will be reviewed by PP, JH and SDL for accuracy. Minutes will be approved by the Board at its following meeting, after which they are posted on the GWI members' website and cannot be revised thereafter.
4. **Minute Guidelines**: Minute Guidelines are in development which will be shared with the person taking the Minutes each month.
    - Attendees were asked to advise the President of their preferences for which month they would like to be minute taker so rotation for one year can be made.
5. **The President outlined her Expectations of Board members for the Board meetings**: The purpose of Board meetings is to make decisions on the items presented and to receive progress updates on ongoing work. Preparation for these decisions should be completed in advance by the Vice Presidents and their respective committees. During a Board meeting, if a decision cannot be reached, the item should be referred back to the relevant VP or committee with a clear request for additional information and timeframe for the response needed. This approach supports focused discussion and helps ensure meetings remain within the planned two-hour timeframe. All Board members must come prepared so timeframe can be adhered to. All were reminded of the **confidentiality** of the discussions.

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6. Conflict of Interest: SV agreed to recuse herself from discussions in her NFA about GWI-Netherlands and VVAO membership structure in order that she can fully represent GWI in all discussions between GWI and GWI-NL and VVAO.
7. **Acceptance of Minutes 3 October 2025 deferred to December 8, 2025 Board meeting.**

Business arising from the Minutes

8. Call for Interest for Committees Update: Call for interest to fill vacant committee positions is ready for circulation pending Board approval of Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Fundraising and Marketing Committees. Proposed deadline for applications is December 3rd.
    - Applications will be given to the corresponding VP who will interview the candidate in December; then they will provide recommendations at the January 2026 Board meeting.
    - It was clarified that all Special Committee members accepted by the 35th Triennial General Assembly can be appointed in January 2026 along with accepted new applicants;
    - It was further clarified that all Standing and former Special Committee members, which have now become Standing Committees, will be elected in the future as per the 2025 constitution.
    - It was discussed that Independent Members are non-voting, but the constitution is silent on whether or not they can serve on committees. Clarification required. Referred to VP Legal & Governance and Governance Committee.
    - As per the Constitutional Amendment passed at the Triennial, a young person will need to be added to some committees. Some Committees already have a young member elected. Note: Policy Resolutions, Hegg Hoffett, Fellowships Committees already have a young member elected.

The committee vacancies are as following:
Finance Committee: Members including a young member
Fundraising Committee: Convener and members including a young member
Governance Committee: Convener and members including a young member
Hegg Hoffet Committee: Members
Marketing Committee: Convener and members including a young member
Project Development Committee: Young member
Membership Committee: Young member
Education Committee: Young member

9. **Terms of Reference for the Fundraising Committee** were discussed. Language was modified to include explicitly supporters, funders, donors and patrons.

   Also discussed:
   - The need for clear guidelines on the allocation of funds once they are raised, which was identified as a separate matter for the Finance Committee to address including discussion with the VP Fundraising.
   - Any funding received from a specific grant must be allocated to that grant as per the terms of the funding.
   - VPs will work together on fundraising for finding opportunities that match GWI mission and that GWI can be best suited to receive.

   Motion: That the Fundraising Committee ToR be approved as amended.
   Made by LK; 2nd by GS
   Motion carried.

10. **Marketing Committee Terms of Reference** were discussed and approved with the understanding that it could be revised if needed once the committee is established and functioning. Potentially GWI's work with UN agencies can be added.
    Motion: To approve the Marketing Committee ToR as distributed.
    Made by NG; 2nd by SG
    Motion Carried.

President's Report: PP has spoken with all VPs regarding strategic planning; all ideas being collated.

Executive Director's Report: SDL provided updates on advocacy initiatives and GWI business:

11. **CSW70 update:** written statement submitted with 14 co-sponsors; the GWI Call for Applications for delegates went out on 21 October. The deadline for applications is 21 November; a final reminder to apply has been distributed.
    - Parallel event applications opened 13 November. The deadline to apply is 5 December. In recent years GWI has historically organized three parallel events, configuration of CSW70 parallel events still under discussion, potential parallel event with French speaking NFAs.
    - Virtual parallel events cost $100 USD. In-person events have different costs based on room size ($400 for a regular room, $500 for a large room). It was confirmed that $400 will be allocated to CSW70 if all four parallel events materialize.
    - **Board approval required for GWI delegates to CSW70.**

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- 4 Board members planning to attend in addition to PP and SDL. Feedback given that the breakfast location is expensive, alternate site will be explored.

12. SDL gave a detailed account of various headquarter advocacy activities. See in attached Executive Director report.
13. **Draft minutes of General Assembly** have been sent to the Minutes Scrutineers for completion. The Constitutional amendments have been sent to the Legal & Governance committee to incorporate the changes adopted at the Triennial.
14. **Local arrangements Committee (LAC) final report anticipated shortly.**
15. **Notice has been sent to NFAs to submit membership numbers for dues billing December 1 for dues payable for 2026.**
16. Executive Director shared complications related to the Horvat legacy gift. US taxes must be paid. Matter referred to the Finance committee for recommendations on how to proceed.

New Business:

17. **Finance update**
    - LAC financials still to come
    - Last quarter GWI financial report, balance sheet will be shared in 8 December meeting Board Meeting.
    - Confirmation of NFA membership numbers in progress—numbers will be used for financial projections
18. **VVAO and GWI-NL request (letter has been circulated to Board)**: President proposed a strategy for decision making on the issue. Robust discussion regarding the pros and cons of proceeding as per the request. Fairness to all NFAs and GWI financial integrity highlighted. Additional information is needed from the requesting NFA.

Motion to form Ad Hoc Committee of PP, SV, JH, MB, LK and SDL to review the GWI-NL-VVAO request and process for making recommendation regarding GWI-NL-VVAO membership request.

Motion made by PP, 2nd: GS
Motion carried

19. **Heritage Fundraising Wall**

FinCom met to review where to allocate the Heritage Fundraising Wall funds (approx. $15,000). Recommend to Board to allocate $5000 each to General Reserve; new NFA Annual Connection meeting; and young member grants for General Assembly attendance.   For this initiative, 15% for admin is not to be taken. Noted that one brick was remaining to complete the wall; request for someone to purchase the last wall; brick was purchased.

Motion to follow the FinCom recommendation of Heritage Fundraising Wall allocation.

Made by SV, 2nd LK
Motion Carried.

20. By consensus the meeting was extended by 15 minutes.
21. **Board Strategic Plan Meeting**
    VPs will submit expanded strategic goals by 30 November, enabling PP to compile them ahead of the December strategic planning sessions. The need for measurable objectives and regular reporting was emphasized. The Board will hold a 1.5-hour planning session on 8 December. After discussion it was decided to hold the first Board Orientation on 3 December and the Board Strategy Session on 8 December in advance of the Board meeting which will be shortened to accommodate the Strategic Planning.
22. **Regional Groups**
    Not as organized and robust as anticipated; formed Ad Hoc Committee to review regional groups and formulate recommendations for improved engagement and revived interest in participating in first annual meeting.

    Motion to form an Ad Hoc Committee for planning of NFA Regional Meetings to be made up of PP, LK, SG, GS, MB, US, SDL.

    Made by PP 2nd JH
    Motion Carried.

23. **Virtual NFA Annual Meeting by Resolution passed at 2025 Triennial**
    - New Constitutional requirement; requires 6 months' notice to NFAs is required. many members do not like to have meetings in September due to new academic year; therefore, suggest August; this is a virtual meeting. Date and timing to be confirmed.

24. **GA Triennial ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS**

PP offered official acknowledgement for the special assistance of people who contributed to the GA. These people are: Louise McLeod (GA Booklet), Grace Hollett and Terry Oudraad (GA Minute Scrutineers), Terry Oudraad who managed the Hegg Hoffet shop, which raised approximately $800 USD and to our intern Celia who assisted with registration reports and general administration of the Triennial.

25. EduCom item: deferred.

26. Next Meeting 8 December 2025

27. **Meeting Adjourned**: 9.49 pm CET

Minutes Taker: SDL

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ATTACHMENT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

GWI CSW 70 Parallel events

- session led by the VP Education with the Education Committee (In person during CSW69)
- session organized by the Young Members Network in collaboration with the Office (Virtual during CSW69)
- session coordinated by the VP Advocacy, which was intended to be developed jointly with MemCom (Virtual during CSW69)

GWI's 16 Days of Activism campaign focusing on 16 types of gender-based violence. The campaign will kick off on 24 November with an announcement of the campaign. For 16 days there will be daily posts about the various types of violence. On 11 December a summary will be published. The Board was encouraged to like and share the posts.

GWI contributed to the co-sponsorship and promotion of the 17 October event "Widows and Peace: The Role of War Widows in Striving for Peace," held at the United Nations Palais des Nations in Geneva. The event highlighted the critical contributions of widows to peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery.

GWI participated in the 60th session of the Human Rights Council. Submitted a written statement and attended multiple side events; write ups are in the 8 October Update newsletter.

As part of Geneva Peace Week on 16 October, GWI attended the session "Fighting for a Voice: Women Ex-Combatants and the Politics of Reintegration" organized United Nations Department of Peace Operations; the write up is in the 22 October Update newsletter.

For United Nations Day on 24 October, GWI released a publication that highlighted our extensive 2025 advocacy across key UN bodies, including written statements and engagements focused on education, gender equality, digital inclusion, and human rights. The publication also reflects on GWI's longstanding partnership with the UN and showcased the essential contributions of its UN Representatives.

SDL managed layout and data for the infographic and social media campaign for World Teachers' Day on 5 October under the theme "Recasting teaching as a collaborative profession." To mark the International Day of the Girl, celebrated annually on 11 October to spotlight the challenges girls face and their potential to lead change, GWI released an infographic targeting this year's theme, "The girl I am, the change I lead: Girls on the frontlines of crisis."

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To mark International Day of Rural Women, observed every year on 15 October, GWI released a toolkit that recognise the vital role rural women play in food systems, communities, and sustainable development while highlighting the persistent challenges rural women face.

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