Graduate Women International

Board of Directors Meeting

16 February 2026, 4 pm CET

Meeting held on Zoom

Minutes

Meeting called to order 4:12 pm CET.

Present: Pat Patton (President), Meera Bondre, Shirley Gillett, Joy Hurst, Lynne Kent, Gisele Scanlon, Ujwala Shinde, Saskia Voortman, Stacy Dry Lara (Executive Director)

Absent: Nataly Garcia, Lynne Kent

Minute taker: Pat Patton

1. Agenda: Adopted by consensus

2. Conflict of Interest: None declared

3. Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of 27 January 2026, approved by consensus with the correction of the description of the GDPR as the European General Data Protection Regulations.

4. Standing Reports:

a. **President Report:** written report was distributed; The President noted the Strategic Planning dates and the panel presentation she has been invited to join at CSW70 together with the Presidents of BPW International, Soroptimist International, Zonta International and Project 5-0; she also noted a request from a FEMU delegate to speak as a GWI representative during an interactive dialogue during the CSW session on 13 March. This is not an interactive dialogue that requires pre-submission of a statement but follows the afternoon presentation on 13 March and responses by volunteer organizations. Although formal request and submission are not required, all UN protocols must be followed. VP Advocacy Gisele Scanlon and VP Legal & Governance Joy Hurst with President Pat Patton and ED Stacy Dry Lara reviewed the request and responded that permission was given as the subject matter and description of the statement fit within GWI Policies however no mention can be made of GWI or specific organizations per UN protocols and all other UN protocols are required to be followed. All were asked to refer to her report for further details.

b. Executive Director Report: referred all to her written report; she noted the Zero-Draft response jointly written by GWI with WG-USA. She will send the report to all Board members; clarification was requested re: GWI process for generating UN statements, this will be provided; regarding preparation for CSW70, Stacy noted that Delegate reports will be requested post-CSW70 and, to protect the privacy of the individuals, these reports will be summarized for a report on the GWI website; the CSW training session will be held 19th February. She stressed the importance of starting the preparation for CSW earlier in the year prior to CSW as there is a lot to complete. The Triennial GA being held later in 2025 made preparation for CSW slower than usual as the new Board dealt with some matters later in the year following the Triennial.

5. Business Arising:

a. CSW70 Update:

Stacy provided an update on CSW70 and her preparation for the meetings:

- Delegate Training 19 February at 5 pm CET
- The Zero-Draft response has been completed and submitted
- The PowerPoint presentation for the delegate training was prepared with NY UN Reps Maryella Hannum and Maureen Byrne and VP Advocacy Gisele Scanlon
- The Report Template for delegates has been prepared and will be available for individual reports post-CSW; as noted earlier these reports will be summarized, to protect the privacy of the individuals, and the summary report posted on the GWI website.
- The GWI Policy Resolutions and SDGs document will be prepared for a handout for the delegates
- Information has been prepared for the GWI website
- The NY UN Representatives have coordinated with Stacy for preparation of the Breakfast briefings in New York and the GWI dinner
- The flyer for the Breakfasts Briefings and Dinner has been distributed to the delegates
- Response to the FEMU delegate who requested permission to speak during a session of CSW70 as a GWI representative
- The Delegate Handbook is in final preparation
- The YMN panel presentation and flyer
- The Side Event co-hosted by GWI and Soroptimist International; the ED of SI and Stacy will be the moderators of this event and will provide the introduction and

closing remarks. This event will be held at the Primary Mission of Ireland to the UN on 11 March at 3-4:30 pm and is an in-person event.

- The WhatsApp group for CSW delegates will be set up through the VP Advocacy Gisele Scanlon.

b. GWI-NL/VVAO request - Update

An update from the Ad hoc Committee on the GWI-NL/VVAO request was given; the letter outlining GWI's expectations and clarifications that are needed, was sent to the Presidents of GWI-NL and VVAO and a meeting will be held in the latter part of March to learn more about their plans and discuss GWI's considerations. Once the Ad Hoc Committee has more information about the request, they will refer questions to applicable GWI Committees for input.

c. Planning for regional NFA meetings - Update

An update from the Ad Hoc Committee on NFA Regional Discussions was provided regarding planning for the regional NFA meetings; Board members have been informed of the scheduled dates, and a "Save the Date" letter has been sent to NFA Presidents and CIRs. The flyer for the NFA Regional Discussions, including registration, will be released in March. The Ad Hoc Committee on Planning the NFA Regional Discussions will be meeting to further plan the format of the meetings.

d. Committee Applicants

VPs have been contacting the additional members appointed at the last Board meeting; there are a few committees that still need a young member; Gisele Scanlon put out a request through the YMN WhatsApp group and a few additional applications have been received. These are being reviewed by the applicable VPS and, in order to be able to include any new members as soon as possible, the President will seek approval from Board members of additional appointees through email over the next month and ratification at the next Board meeting.

6. New Business

a. Treasurer's Report – Saskia Voortman

i. Draft Year-End Financial Report: the draft Year-End financial report has been received and reviewed with the auditor. GWI has completed the year in a positive position; bookkeeping cost was higher than usual due to 2025 being a Triennial year; a few corrections to clarify comments will be made and the auditor will send the completed letter; the Year-End Audited statements will be ready for Board approval at the March Board meeting.

ii. Triennial/Conference financial report: the report has been received from Zambia and reviewed by past Treasurer Karoline Dorsch and GWI Treasurer Saskia Voortman and ED Stacy Dry Lara; there is a small amount of funds to be transferred back to GWI from GW Zambia; this is in process; the outcome is a neutral result for the Triennial/Conference. Dr. Shirley Gillett is thanked for her efforts to ensure that registrations were received in Zambia which helped to create the break-even result. Past Treasurer Karoline Dorsch and current Treasurer Saskia Voortman and ED Stacy Dry Lara are thanked for their diligence in working to complete this report.

iii. Dues Alleviation:
Requests have been received from Bangladesh and Argentina. The Finance Committee reviewed these requests and made a recommendation to the Board.
Motion: Saskia Voortman; Second Gisele Scanlon
That Bangladesh and Argentina each be provided a dues alleviation of 20% for the 2026 fiscal year.
CARRIED
Saskia noted that the Finance Committee will be considering additional policies regarding dues alleviation, keeping in mind the current Constitutional requirements.

b. VP Reports

i. VP Legal & Governance – Joy Hurst
Joy noted that the Code of Conduct document with the privacy provision included, will be presented for Board approval at the March Board meeting.

Conflict of Interest: Joy provided a review of the key components of the Conflict of Interest document; in discussion it was noted that the second sentence of #3 should be deleted and the section revised regarding the recusing of a member with a conflict of interest. Joy will make the necessary revisions and present to the March Board meeting for approval.
All Board members will sign the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest documents.

ii. VP Education – Shirley Gillett
The Education Committee has met three times and has welcomed their new young member. There was a request for two potential additional members for the Committee however, the Committee reviewed the request and finds that it is quite large at this time, and it isn't possible to add members.

All are interested in the upcoming NFA Regional Discussions and receiving the invitation in March. She noted her Personal Reflection distributed through the Discussion Network was well received but there have been some reports that it wasn't received by some members who thought they were on the distribution network; the Discussion Network digital function is under review to ensure that it is going to all members who have opted-in to receive it. Three EduComm members will be attending CSW70 and there may be some potential to do an event though the window to register for an event is closing soon.
A question has arisen through the Committee as to whether there is any financial support available to delegates to attend CSW70. The Board discussed the request and understands the individual's need however, regretfully, due to the continuing austerity budget of GWI, funds are not available to support attendees. Shirley will forward the request to Stacy who will respond.

c. NFA Annual Meeting per the 2025 Constitutional resolution passed at the 2025 Triennial GA

The Board reviewed the Constitutional requirement for 6-months-notice to be provided to NFAs of this meeting. The Board referred this to the Ad Hoc Committee on NFA Regional Discussions for a recommendation on a date in 2026.

7. **Other Business**

There was no other business raised.

8. **Next meeting: Monday 23 March 2026 at 6 am CET**

8. **Meeting adjourned** at 6:20 pm CET

Minutes taken by Pat Patton.