

Committee Best practices Work Group Meeting – Approved at the November 1st meeting.

When: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 @ 6 p.m.

Location: Online via Zoom

Work Group Members present: Anthony “AJ” Jackson, Sandra Bauer (late entry @7:30 p.m.), Carolyn Gsell (scribe), Jon Pincus, Arna Shaw (facilitator), Allain Van Laan

Work Group Members absent: Sue Theolass

Others Present: Colleen Bauman, Dani Derrick, Paxton Hoag.

5 of 7 members present establish a quorum.

Sandra Bauer and Sue Theolass are attending the Budget Committee meeting tonight. The question came up about the time conflict between meeting times for the CBPWG and Budget Committee. Apparently, a regular Budget Committee meeting time has not been firmly established. We may need to move CBPWG meetings to a different day and time.

Agenda

Announcements

Carolyn is leaving the working group at the end of the year. She was thanked for her service. Arna would like to discuss bringing in new members and a scribe at the November meeting.

Agenda Review

1. Discuss CBPWG’s relationship with the Board and our mission.
2. Combine essential and recommended practices into essential practices as per Bod motion on Feb 18, 2022. The motion was “. The Board directs Board liaisons to ensure that all committees follow the most current Committee Best Practices Manual essentials and recommended practices.” 25 minutes
3. Continue discussion for appointing new members to Board committees. 45 minutes

Dani Derrick expressed an interest in joining the work group and taking on the scribe role. She is not available on Wednesday evenings, so for her to join the group, we would need to reschedule our meeting day and time.

Discuss CBPWG’s relationship with the Board and our mission.

The group had a conversation that included a discussion of the failed recommendation. Lisa Parker’s charge is that this working group isn’t authorized to meet. Arna’s understanding is that we were to continue working on these documents as motions come up on the board. By bringing recommendations to the board, we are finding things that could be clarified. It is the board that approves the recommendations, not the CBPWG.

There was a recollection of being at the board meeting where there seemed to be a broad consensus for this work to be done; Lily saying that we should send this back to CBPWG. We are not a committee; we’re a work group. We don’t ask the board permission for each topic we address. This is not a decision-making group. We do research and make recommendations, working from the existing BEST PRACTICES document.

Working groups should be proactive. We don’t need to wait for the board to tell us what to do.

We do need to beware of mission creep, but that’s not the case here.

In a democratic system, groups should be able to meet and make recommendations.

Lisa's view is not necessarily the view of the board.

If the board objects to a recommendation, we just go back to the drawing board.

We are working on a mission. It's really one person who is not accepting our legitimacy. Let's continue to work as we have. If the board doesn't like our recommendations, we can rework the recommendations.

The importance of having a policy on closed sessions was emphasized. Can we at least agree on that.

Multiple sentiments were expressed that the group should continue to move forward. There appears to be plenty of support for this work.

Arna asked everyone with the Working Group if we agree to continue our work. There was a unanimous YES.

The group discussed the recommendation that failed: THE MOTION to approve CLOSED COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

Several members of the working group don't like the broad use of the term "sensitive issues." Who decides what is sensitive?

We should work on crafting a motion that gives specific committees functional reasons for requesting closed meetings. Let's get specific.

If the work is continuous, should this working group become a committee?

The question was asked if we have polled committees about their history of closed meetings. By understanding committee requirements, we can better craft a recommendation.

The point was brought up that because board members are legally responsible for what happens in an organization, any board member should be permitted to attend a closed meeting. Is it possible that objections were raised because of the erroneous idea that all board members should attend closed meetings? The intent of the recommendation was that any board member should be allowed to attend. This was not a mandatory requirement.

There was a consideration that the narrative format that the motion as presented may be too much. We need to have good policies because of the increased size of our organization. That doesn't mean that we can't have trust.

We will put the discussion for recrafting the motion on the next meeting agenda.

Combine essential and recommended practices into essential practices as per Bod motion on Feb 18, 2022. The motion was ". The Board directs Board liaisons to ensure that all committees follow the most current Committee Best Practices Manual essentials and recommended practices."

After some discussion, what resonated most with the group is the concept that nothing needs to be changed in the manual to accommodate the combining of essential and recommended practices. The board basically said all recommended practices are now essential.

By not changing the manual in this regard, we add flexibility to the committee's process, making the recommendations less rigid. The liaisons can use the manual to help keep a committee on track.

Arna made the following motion: To continue leaving the current manual's "essential" and "recommended" practices as is (to not combine them), with The board motion dated Feb. 18, 2022, to be added to the manual. Jon P. seconded.

The motion passed unanimously, 6 – 0. (Sandra joined the meeting during this discussion and was present for the vote).

#3. Continue discussion for appointing new members to Board committees.

3 ways people get on committees:

1. They are invited by a committee to join (subject to board approval).
2. There is a call-out for new committee members. Board members can make recommendations. (whoever comes forward is subject to board approval).
3. A person can submit a Letter of request to the board without necessarily getting pre-approval from the committee.

it's a common practice in organizations for a board president to appoint people to committees. It may be worth opening a discussion about this. There are other ways to increase participation. Saturday Market encourages participation by allowing members who have attended 3 meetings to state their intentions to join the committee. At that point they are automatically on the committee. The Market has a couple of exceptions, such as the budget committee.

Several points of discussion were made:

- This is an important issue. Whatever we are or aren't doing, it isn't working. There have been people who have submitted requests to be on a committee but get nothing back from the committee.
- There must be room for other people to come in. We need to give folks who haven't been on a committee better access. We need both seasoned and new people with qualifications relevant to the committee's work.
- Bringing new people onto a committee is a form of mentoring.
- Designating two times per year where we announce opportunities to join committees.
- Allowing the board president to appoint committee members would be a bylaws change.
- We should be cautious about using the term "mentoring". We don't want to be in the position of teaching folks, "this is how we do it."
- How do other organizations recruit committee members?

MEETING EVALUATION:

- All of us are volunteers. We need to keep this in mind.
- One person expressed that they felt understood.
- There was appreciation expressed for Arna's chairing the working group.
- There was an appreciation shared for honoring straightforward talk.
- Sometimes we make mistakes. Rebound and trust the process.
- Non-work group members who attend make valuable contributions.
- Overall, the group agreed that we had a good meeting.

The meeting ended at 8:04 p.m.

PARKING LOT

1. Board liaison roles and responsibilities. Can they delegate that role? Can meetings take place in their absence.
2. How much member input is reasonable.
3. Web conference- Hybrid meetings
4. Policies and practices regarding the recording of committee meetings and the approved ownership, dissemination, and uses of recordings
5. Are committees still active and meeting essential and recommended practices? Does the annual report answer the question?
6. Bringing in new members? Scribe?

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Gsell, scribe.