

WRHC Board Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2020
3:00 PM PDT

- I. Budget items
 - a. Hacker reported that, due to anticipated budget cuts at Southern Utah University (SUU), she has been asked to recoup costs associated with the canceled WRHC 2020 conference. These costs are estimated to be less than \$500.
 - b. Hacker also reported that the conference subsidy received from NCHC in the amount of \$500 was originally returned upon the cancellation of the conference but will be redistributed. The board was in favor of using these funds to offset costs incurred by SUU. Hacker will request that the check be reissued to SUU. Any remaining funds will be deposited into the WRHC account.

- II. Report on NCHC meeting of regional councils
 - a. Edgington reported that a recent meeting of representatives from the various regional honors councils had focused on recapping conference cancellations and the different scenarios that council leadership had faced. WRHC was in a better fiscal position than many of the regional councils that had entered into contracts with conference centers and other venues that did not offer the flexibility of an academic host institution.
 - b. Edgington and Lee noted that there was significant interest among the representatives present in continuing to hold meetings of council leadership. Future gatherings are expected to focus on ongoing challenges surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic as well as more long-term initiatives related to interregional collaboration (e.g., on service projects and undergraduate research supervision).

- III. Serving constituents virtually
 - a. In light of NCHC's decision not to move forward with an in-person conference in November, WRHC will equally plan for a virtual fall business meeting.

- IV. Upcoming WRHC conferences
 - a. Andersen reported that planning for WRHC 2021 at Washington State University (WSU) continues but that the cost of the conference is a concern in light of the fact that widespread budget cuts and shortfalls may curtail attendance. Certainly, depending upon developments with the pandemic, it may be necessary to consider a hybrid or fully virtual conference, and this decision will need to be made and shared with the membership in the fall semester. Lee advised that virtual options for participation be made available, especially to students, who find the opportunity to present at a conference very valuable. The board was in agreement that planning for a robust hybrid or fully virtual conference should occur alongside planning for an in-person event following consultation with relevant IT staff at WSU. Hacker shared an example of a virtual conference from Arizona State that offers a useful template. Syrnyk suggested that a brief survey of the membership would be helpful in that it would allow institutions to indicate their anticipated (in)ability to send participants to an in-person conference with an eye to their individual budget situations. The survey will seek to determine how many member institutions anticipate being able to send

participants to WRHC 2021 and how many would have an interest in attending a virtual conference should that format be deemed necessary and feasible.

- b. Although some other regional honors councils have altered the timeline of upcoming conferences to allow 2020 host institutions another opportunity to host, Hacker noted that SUU has recently had a significant leadership change and that, as a result, she is not able to commit to hosting WRHC again at this time. Therefore, upcoming WRHC conferences will proceed as planned with WSU hosting the 2021 conference, the University of New Mexico hosting the 2022 conference, and the University of Montana hosting the 2023 conference.
- V. Cherstin Lyon (Southern Oregon University) has raised the issue of student representation within WRHC. The board is in support of student representation but would like to see the student role carefully defined. Andersen, for example, wondered whether student representatives would be voting members of the board or act in a purely advisory capacity. Syrnyk felt that, even in an advisory role, student participation would be valuable. Edgington suggested the possibility of involving conference interns. Hacker recommended researching practices across regional councils and will prepare a proposal for discussion at the fall business meeting.
- VI. Other items
- a. The board will plan to meet again near the end of July to formulate the brief survey regarding potential conference attendance to be distributed to the membership in August when members will know more about their FY21 budgets.
 - b. Edgington will post the program for WRHC 2020 prepared by Hacker and her team to the WRHC website.