

Ethnic and Gender Diversity Working Group minutes 19 October, 2016

The meeting was convened at 7:30 AM by in-coming Chair Jessica Homyack at the Raleigh Convention Center. The meeting was well attended by members and Executive Board representatives. All present introduced themselves.

Current board members, including those stepping down, were thanked for their service and participation.

Minutes from 2015 were approved

Treasurer's report – Balance as of October, 2016 is \$823.17. The Working Group receives approximately \$300/year in membership dues.

Bruce Thompson, TWS president-elect, attended the meeting and shared some thoughts with the group. He is working on developing the program for the 2017 conference. This working group is helping to plan a plenary for next year's meeting. Theme is: Wildlife Conservation-Crossroad of Cultures. The intent is to consider the diversity of cultures in the profession and to have a plenary that addresses that theme. The hope is also that content for other sessions will weave the theme into their content. Additionally, there is a new ad hoc committee of council that will interact with working groups.

Question = status of ad hoc committee for membership – not sure just what the status of the group is.

TWS Council did discuss the Draft Code of Conduct for TWS Conferences. The timing was too short to apply for this meeting and due process needs to be followed. Legal council has been involved to help vet the process. There was some verbiage regarding member response to perceived issues. Jessica Homyack indicated that we will want to continue to work with council on the code to move it forward. Thompson – the concept is basically approved, the need now is to wordsmith it and make sure it is in line with existing policy & legal concerns.

Don Yasuda – asked the situation of The 1000 funds and how that relates to other groups. Thompson – encourage the working group to communicate with Ken Williams or Ed Thompson if there are concerns. Question– how would request funding under the program? Answer – submit a proposal for funding.

Old business:

TWS code of conduct – already discussed, above.

Election Results were communicated –
Chair Elect – Don Yasuda

Sec/Treas – Kerry Nicholson

Board Members – Sara Schweitzer, Jonathan Derbridge, April Conkey

New Stickers with the updated WG logo were distributed to attendees.

Family-Friendly agenda – Sara Schweitzer. With a large conference it can be overwhelming and it is nice to have a place to unwind and find solitude. Especially true for individuals not comfortable with large groups. Another group with needs are families with children, need a place for mothers to nurse. Sara requested and we received a room this year that has been set up in the conference facility. Thus far in the conference the room has received use. When checked, there have been 1 to 8 people using the room. Comment was made that it may take a couple years for it to become a tradition at the meetings, but that the WG needs to communicate that this has been a success and should be replicated in future years.

Web Page – is now converted to the new TWS format. All are encouraged to get information contributed to the webpage.

Women of Wildlife Symposium 2016 – Jennifer Malpass – The symposium went well. The crowd was good. The momentum for future similar offerings is good. Comment: NPS has a service where you can see things live. Don Yasuda– suggested perhaps the working group could get access to make the recorded symposium available to all members (should be available to all TWS members after 1 year). Idea floated to perhaps use webcast for a WG symposium and seek a sponsor if there is a cost.

Panel discussion on micro-aggressions – This afternoon, organized by Jessica Homyack and Misty Sumner. The intent will be to be interactive with the audience and a wide a diversity of presenters.

Jessica Homyack and several others have been working on a book chapter on diversity to be part of a book on careers in the wildlife profession. The book should be coming out in 2017.

The new techniques manual there will be chapter on multiple cultures and how things are handled by different cultures.

TWS council diversity committee – Harriett Allen is the liaison for us to council– Cynthia Perrine is also involved in council-diversity issues. Discussed the committee. It is set up to address items that come to council and they provide advice to council. Harriett will be participating in WG conference calls and activities.

What follow-up can we do regarding the code of conduct? Council will also be looking at what other sub-units of TWS might have along those lines.

NEW BUSINESS –

Jessica- discussion of plenary. A sub-committee has been organized to work on the organizing. Ideas solicited for the meeting. Managing the cross-generational workforce – how do we do it? Consider – what is the relevancy of our profession to all generations and types of people?

Comment made – veterans may be a minority group to be considered
Another idea – the LGBT community has not been directly addressed/considered

Consider diversity we can see compared to the diversity we can't see.

Don't emphasize too much our differences – it can be divisive. Consider commonalities along with the diversity. We all have a common goal and come from different backgrounds.

Building a bigger tent – can we include those who do not come from a sustainable use/hunting background. Who are the others who contribute to the profession from a non-consumptive use way. E.g. – reps from Sierra club, birder organizations (Audubon), etc. While we focus on the North American model, there is a bigger picture than just hunting. A lot of people who care about wildlife do not hunt. The point was made that the plenary on Tuesday did not really reflect diversity.

Comment made that many agencies rely on license sales for their support which leads to a focus on consumption. Perhaps we can include discussion on the difficulty of funding for wildlife support. Consider – there is a fear of change by some.

Consider a blue ribbon panel reflecting all sides for a discussion.

Rather than increasing the size of the tent – connect other tents.

Other ideas can be sent to Jessica Homyack –

Stauffer – noted the CUEWG proposal for next year to have a session on inclusivity and diversity in the classroom/education. The EGDWG will be a partner with us.

Consider – offer to be diversity speakers for other sub-units when they form panels that would benefit from diverse presenters. Carol Chambers is working to put together a directory of potential speakers via Women of Wildlife (WOW)– we could do the same within this working group.

Cynthia Perrine – consider a symposium that invites others to share their stories – focusing on native peoples or others. Have folks share their stories, give it time to percolate a bit and then have a larger discussion.

Much general discussion of different ways of what might be addressed.

Open discussion on other items:

Nominations are open for diversity award – the deadline will be May 1 2017.

Sara S. – question – are our communications adequate or do we need something new? Seems to be OK?

Comment made – we should consider nominating more diverse individuals for the various TWS awards. We can nominate individuals for any award we wish.

The meeting was adjourned approximately 8:30 a m.