



Washington Evaluators Board Meeting 12/15/2021 – MINUTES

In attendance:

Beeta Tahmassebi, President

Melissa Chiu, Secretary, happy to be a Board advisor or consultant for 2022

Jessica Pomerantz, Treasurer

Natalie Donohue, Membership Chair, 2022 President-Elect

Esther Nolton, Program Chair, 2022 President

Katherine Braga, Communications Chair – On Leave

Kantahyanee Murray, Community Engagement Chair, will support Fanni in transition and will be a Mentor.

Kelly Feltault, Program Coordinator- will be on Programs Committee next year

Fanni Farago, Scholarship co-coordinator, next year: Comm Engagement Chair.

Val Caracelli, New Professional and Student Coordinator, DC Consortium Student Conference on Evaluation and Policy (DCSCEP)

Not in attendance:

Patricia Moore Shaffer, Past President

Emily Bango, President-Elect

Courtney Carr, Communications Coordinator and Acting Communications Chair – not feeling well, out.

Maryfrances Porter- co-coordinator for Mentor Minutes, lives in Charlottesville

Betsy Kaeberle- new coordinator for Mentor Minutes, GWU student, Program design and M&E

Eric Keys, Scholarship co-coordinator

Mindelyn Anderson, Evaluation Without Borders co-coordinator

Katie Pitts, Evaluation Without Borders co-coordinator

Danielle Lane, Program Coordinator

Marie-Ellen Ehounou, Membership Coordinator

Guests:

Blake Dohrn (she/her) – will be EWB co-coordinator. With Mindelyn. Constant for Manhattan Strategy group with DOL.

Amgad Farah (she/her)- She is joining Communications, member spotlights, and website point. Fresh Reads. Just graduated with MPH from GWU. Merge research experience with the world- comm and tech have become very important.

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Agenda Review

2. Governance:

- Approval of [last month's meeting minutes](#) (Secretary)

Melissa motioned to approve the November minutes. Jessica seconded. **VOTE: Approved. No Nays.**

- Review of monthly financials (Treasurer)

Financials – we are well off. We had anticipated dipping into savings for consultation work. Because we had a great year with membership and didn't have other spending, we were positive by \$2-3k. We are on solid footing for next year.

3. Update on Strategic Planning

Beeta posted message to membership on Dec. 4. Hasn't heard any comments.

Thanks to those sending summaries of annual reports. If no more comments, we can get this published.

4. Committee Updates:

What did you enjoy about being on WE this year and something looking forward to in 2022?

Grateful for engaged board, programs, membership increase, communications, community engagement, protocols that were established. People chipped in and helped one another. A tough year on many fronts. Excited to see how we build on things from this year.

- Programming

This is the last event of the year, 36 + 11 board meetings. = 47 events.

Thank you for being engaged. Beeta did 6 Presidents' Dinners. Will be continuing it next year with a spin: different affinity groups. New and Emerging evaluators. Federal, nonprofit, consultants/firms- convening and networking spaces. Wish we could have it at my house, but it will be virtual for a while.

Hopefully at least the Holiday Party can be in person next year. 2022 events are up:

<https://washingtonevaluators.org/upcoming-events>

Want to credit everyone who came before me. Programs were partly because of WE's amazing reputation. Great community. I have no shame in reaching out to people. No one said no. no matter how big they are. WE has a great reputation. When I walk into a room and say I'm from WE, people are really proud of that.

Grateful to have rejoined WE, since I don't live in the area. Not many evaluators out here. Great to build connections with people who get what I do. Wonderful people, giving and generous. Building the capacity of future evaluators. WE going online gave her the opportunity to reconnect and also give back. Do we need another chapter in southern VA? Hope some of what we're doing will stay online.

- **Community Engagement (Mentor Minutes, EWB, Scholarships)**

Observed tremendous volunteer eagerness in the WE community. From the emails from the Volunteer form, or people who sign up for membership, or when the Community Engagement team puts out a request- there's lots of interest. Needed mentors over the summer, the Board stepped up to help find mentors. MM was were able to address the backlog. Strong reputation WE has in the local evaluation community. Amazing. Testament to the work the Board does together to keep the organism vibrant and operational. Then we harness the interest to help fill the needs of the community engagement programs.

Observation-we had a lot of programming on antiracism. That is an important way for us to take action on our antiracism commitments. Also the DEI consultants. DEI is a journey and won't happen overnight. We made sure the programming met the need. Impressive. Hope in the future we will continue down that road.

Strategic planning- amazing how it was done virtually. We had multiple problems to face, not just COVID but how were we going to stand up and position ourselves, and make sure we have an inclusive organization.

As a new member and a student, WE has been very supportive. What to do, how to do it, support, advice, guidance and encouragement. As a new professional, there can be a lot of self-consciousness. You/They have faith in me as a new person. That isn't easy to find in a professional community. It's a dynamic community to be a part of. Got to go to AEA. We implemented 3 rounds of the scholarship. Thinking about how to get recipients more involved in the organization.

Looking forward to attending more. Got great ideas from Programs when I was a grad student.

- **Communications**

AEA Blog posts in January 2022: take Presidential strand topics at AEA--Do we want this idea? Do we want it to come from the 2022 Board (as opposed to the 2021 Board that did the Strand)? Katherine can share the guidance. It's 300-600 words. Hot Tips and resources too, so it's not just a narrative blogpost. <https://aea365.org/blog/contribution-guidelines/>

These people listed here might be great champions for each blog and they can decide if they want to invite others as authors but they would be your main POC for coordination, sound good?

AEA365 blog: January 23-29, 2022

Idea: turn our AEA Presidential Strand session into a week about our focus on anti-racism and how we embedded that commitment into everything we do

"How WE (Washington Evaluators) Met the Moment by Focusing on Equity and Access"

Day 1: Beeta - Leadership

Day 2: Emily - Anti-racism commitment

Day 3: Patricia - Strategic plan

Day 4: Esther - Programming

Day 5: Kantahyanee - Community engagement

Day 6: Natalie - membership

Could be hard for a new Board member to jump in and have multiple authors too. **Decision: People are fine with this theme.** If anyone wants help, please let Katherine and Beeta know soon. **Due on Jan. 8. Soft deadline: end of Calendar Year.**

Gratitude for wrap around community we provide professionally and personally. Positive energy and support. Excited to continue that. Eventually we'll be in person. Gratitude for the same thing looking back and forward.

Beeta's leadership has been wonderful, warm, professional.

Set up Courtney for success for acting while Katherine on maternity leave. **Volunteer of the Year Award to Courtney Carr:** Some people sign up just for the Digest and Courtney did not miss a beat with it. Did research on a new social media platform- helped us choose a new cost-effective option. Did more than she bargained for, and she did it with grace.

• **Membership**

We had 4 new org sponsors in the last month. 69 members come from organizational memberships. We have 67 student members- twice that at the beginning of the year! Team effort to get this high membership! (membership team, programs, communications/WE Digest)

People are amazing and phenomenal. You've taken off like rockets. Have been around for many years. Alliance between WE and Encompass is spectacular. Communications newsletter – people really look forward to it. I don't want to leave you, ever. Welcome to all those new, as you are the life-blood of WE. People come because they like the Programs. Used to be once a month at most. This shows and pays off.

Treasurer:

Single biggest expenditure was on DEI Consulting and it Super paid off. It's what we should have spent our money on. We got way more members, we could have double what was projected. Great in

revenue. Great in how we spent our money. Looking to Double Down on that next year. Sad the missed opportunity was a lavish-in-person party. On the other hand, virtual programs pull in others we wouldn't otherwise reach.

Secretary:

This Board had a lot of open Dialogue, shared ideas. We came at things from different perspectives at times and yet we always moved things forward. And then DO something, take action On things we could agree to move on.

We opened up conversation to not just the membership, but other evaluators in the DMV for input on the strategic plan and WE's direction. We have a strategic plan we should be very proud of that will take us forward the next 4 years.

Esther, the programming was phenomenal and supportive of new professionals and students.

Natalie, even though you're an introvert, I'm always impressed with your willingness to call people and organizations to get new/renewed memberships.

Katherine, I had a new appreciation this year for what Communications does. Relentless Weekly Digest, all the content in it is amazing.

Kantahyanee, your commitment to the Engagement programs was notable, through lots of hiccups on EWB, a rebranding of Mentor Minutes, and THREE rounds of scholarships!

Jessica, even though she was out of the country so much, she always made sure the Treasurer reports were in on time. I missed spending time at Board meetings with you, though.

Beeta was so graceful, open, and always so generous with her time.

5. Board Action Items (if any)

Melissa and Esther transition planning and how to share that.

Melissa: needs emails for all on the Board. Set up recovery/alternate contact so that you can get into your Google email accounts. Google won't let you in even if you have the right password if it doesn't recognize your device.

New Mentor minutes email address (currently mentorminutes@washingtonevaluators.org)?

Kantahyanee/Fanni say that the Maryfrances and Betsy want to send out the MM survey first before deciding on a rebranding. In that case, Sana will have to set up the new email address after it's officially rebranded. This is in the Transition SOP and I will be available to Sana to walk her through it.

- Next week will send board transition doc- quick start guide to new folks.
- Decision policy/SOP – first week of January
- Then will set up emails, change passwords, and Wild Apricot permissions
- In Jan/Feb will probably draft a Volunteer policy, since we have so many conversations about who is eligible to volunteer for what positions.

Esther: please Contact the new person to give them the SOPs. Familiarize them to the position. Have a google sheet sent to Secretary email.

Bank: need to find a location to meet at a branch together. Do it early in the year because the bank takes forever. Beeta, Esther, and Jessica.

Beeta passes the wine glass over to Esther!

7:39 pm ADJOURN