

Washington State Environmental Health Association General Membership Meeting

October 6, 2008

**2008 Joint Conference on Health
Room F
Yakima Convention Center
Yakima, Washington**

Present

WSEHA Officers – Vikki Barthels (*Eastern Region Vice-President*), Steve Garrett (*Treasurer*), Tom Gonzales (*Southwest Region V.P.*), Ross Lytle (*Secretary*), Bruce Scherling (*President-Elect*), Ned Therien (*President*), Mike Vinatieri (*Immediate Past President*).

Other members – Nancy Bernard, Steve Fuller, Joe Graham, Tom Kunesh, Eric Meyer, Carla Sowder, Carol Spaulding, Art Starry, Faith Taylor-Eldred, Shawn Ultican, Karen Valenzuela.

Welcome and Approval of Agenda

Ned entertained a motion to approve the Agenda, with the note that the meeting did not start at the specified time. *Mike made the motion. Vikki seconded. Motion approved.*

Approval of Minutes

Copies of the minutes of the WSEHA General Membership meeting of October 8, 2007, held at the Joint Conference on Health, were distributed to the membership.

Karen Valenzuela made the motion to approve the minutes as printed. Bruce Scherling seconded the motion. Motion approved.

President's State of the Association Report

Ned noted that the current membership of WSEHA stands at 185 regular members. Two Pool Conferences were conducted this year, totaling 128 registrants. There were two Food Conferences held in Seattle, in conjunction with the USFDA – 201 attended those sessions.

For this year's Joint Conference, 439 people were registered, down from 516 last year. The good news is that there are 36 exhibitors this year. Karen asked if we will be continuing to do this type of conference in the future. Ned answered that WSEHA is committed to Joint Conference through 2009, but then we will try to do more mini-conferences.

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President's State of the Association Report (cont.)

WSEHA is currently looking for a Newsletter Editor.

We have tried to get electronic voting off of the ground, but we are not yet technically capable. Voting for WSEHA officers was by paper ballot again.

We have obtained WSEHA lanyards and pins, to be given to all WSEHA members who attend the Joint Conference. Members are encouraged to stop by the WSEHA booth to pick theirs up.

Mike attended the NEHA Annual Education Conference in Tucson this year. One of the main themes to come out of the AEC was "what to call ourselves". In other words, is our proper job title Environmental Health Specialist? Sanitarian? The title may play a role in determining salaries. Most states in which environmental health has been successful have mandatory registration.

The WSEHA Board has determined that we need to update the organization's By-laws. For example, should dues be established in the By-laws, or by procedure? Also, the WSEHA Board has looked into allowing companies to be a Sustaining Member. There is currently no provision for this in the By-laws. We may need to re-visit the By-laws to establish a new membership category.

Two university students will be awarded WSEHA scholarships. One award will be for \$1,000, the other for \$500. The recipients will be announced at 1:20 p.m. tomorrow.

The WSEHA Board, in its regular meeting last night, heard a presentation from John Thomas of the Washington Onsite Sewage Association (WOSSA), requesting that WSEHA sponsor WOSSA's weekend onsite sewage radio program. There are potential benefits, including strengthening our partnership with WOSSA. It may also help to get the environmental health message out to the public, so the public does not see us in a regulatory image. The Board will need to make a decision on this over the next month.

Public Health Professionals Training Needs Survey

Mike informed the membership that the results of the recent Training Needs Survey should be done, and the results should be posted online soon. A State of Washington epidemiologist has been doing a statistical analysis of the data provided in the responses. So far, there has been a clear call for more targeted, specific training. We've examined the chance of going back to the Spring WSEHA AECs, but it is just not feasible for now. We're planning to meet this "separate training" demand by holding doing more mini-conferences. Nancy asked about more short trainings sessions and formats that could be conducted at the Joint Conference. Ned said that WSPHA doesn't want to change its Joint Conference format. We need to get the message out that WSEHA needs help organizing more short trainings. We're trying to find new partnerships for training. Ned added that the Washington Department of Health does provide some minimum training to local health jurisdictions. It was also suggested in the Training Needs Survey that we set up more web-based training. Ned told the

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Public Health Professionals Training Needs Survey (cont.)

membership that we would like to hear more from them about training requests.

Treasurer's Report

Steve reported an overall loss of \$5894 for WSEHA this year. There is also a problem with the \$8,100 "Unclassified Income" figure within the budget, resulting from the Food Conferences this summer. The Executive Secretary will need to discuss this figure with the Seattle Sheraton; she thinks that WDOH may have miscalculated some of the original cost estimates.

Regional Vice-Presidents' updates

Southwest Region – Tom Gonzales – Tom thanked the Board and the membership for welcoming him to the organization. He noted that we have to be marketers for our profession. He also cited the NEHA Sustainability Program, which he would like to initiate with WSEHA. He also plans to step in as Education Committee Chair, but requested help from the membership.

Northwest Region – Geoffrey Crofoot - No report.

Eastern Region – Vikki Barthels – No report.

Olympic Region – Jodie Holdcroft – Not present – no report.

Central Region (position vacant) – No report.

Committee Reports

Annual Education Conference Committee - Tom has volunteered to be our lead on the Joint Conference. He has asked for help to get things going and help him with the work. He would like to see 3 or 4 environmental health educational tracks.

Webmaster – Dick Pedlar has noted that we are getting between 300 to 800 hits per week on the WSEHA website.

Nominations and Awards – Joe informed the membership of the WSEHA officers' elections:

Vikki Barthels was elected as the new WSEHA Secretary.

Geoffrey Crofoot was elected by 1 vote as WSEHA President-Elect.

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Passing of the Gavel

Ned passed the President's gavel to President-Elect Bruce Scherling. Bruce informed the membership of his desire to improve educational opportunities through WSEHA, and to initiate the use of the Web and member e-mail accounts for improving Board input.

Adjourn

Tom made the motion to adjourn the General Membership meeting. Mike seconded. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:19 pm