

WIKI SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON DC, INC.
Board of Directors Meeting

May 28, 2023 at 8:00 p.m.
Conference Call

Board Members Present: Peter Meyer [President]
 Diane Shaw [Secretary]
 John Sadowski [Vice President]
 Sara Snyder [Treasurer]
 Gerald Shields

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 p.m.

1. The draft minutes for the Board of Directors meeting held on January 30, 2023 were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes as written passed without dissent.
2. Mr. Meyer presented the Executive Committee report.. Ms. Ariel Cetrone, the WMDC Institutional Partnerships Manager, attended today’s Board meeting and gave an overview of the events and activities she has been involved with and plans for the upcoming months. Various edit-a-thons have been held, including one on Nobel Prizes for the National Academies, and one on Black Birders in collaboration with Kelly Doyle of the Smithsonian. Other events focused on the theme of Women’s history, for example at the University of Maryland, and one was an international event for Sage Publishing. Kelly Doyle and Ariel Cetrone were interviewed by Scripps News about the kinds of activities that WMDC has sponsored or collaborated with various partners. WMDC also received a request by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to develop a presentation or event about Holocaust revisionism. Ms. Cetrone noted that the summer is usually a slow period for events, although there might be one on “New America” in June. The fall season will be busier and she has been adding tentative programs to the calendar, including an event with the Italian Embassy which might be held in October.

The Hacks/Hackers’ WikiCred grant project is wrapping up. Ms. Cetrone is preparing a grant report, with an overview of the types of applications received, on topics such as vaccine safety or women’s health worldwide. The ARTT (Analysis and Response Toolkit for Trust) initiative, prepared with the help of Wiki Project Medicine, is winding down also and Ms. Cetrone is writing up some cohort reviews. ARTT software is being developed at the University of Washington and there will be a public announcement when it’s available. The grant money from the WikiCred and ARTT projects has been essential for supporting the work of WMDC while waiting for Wikimedia Foundation funding to resume.

Mr. Meyer shared the good news that WMF has approved two grants for WMDC, thanks largely to the efforts of treasurer Sara Snyder . They include a Movement Strategy Grant funded through December 2023 (\$25,000) for conducting interviews, surveys, focus groups and other activities to investigate the potential for creating a North American hub. Pharos of Wikimedia NYC is chairing an advisory committee and members of affiliates and some individuals are being consulted. WMDC also received a WMF simple program grant from the Community Fund to support regular functions of the organization, totaling \$146,450 to cover the period July 2023 to December 2024 (for reference see [Grants:Programs/Wikimedia Community Fund/Wikimedia DC:Sustaining and Growing Chapter Programs and Partnerships in 2023-24 - Meta](#)). Later this fall or winter WMDC can apply for chapter funding. The two grants will give the chapter more stability. These funds can be applied to hiring a consultant to help with WMDC's strategic planning process.

3. Public Policy Committee report: Mr. Meyer and Ms. Cetrone have been meeting frequently with the local WMF representative, Rebecca MacKinnon, Vice President of Global Advocacy on the Public Policy Leadership Team. Ms. MacKinnon is interested in having WMDC collaborate with her on ways to address disinformation and other issues of interest to Wikimedians.
4. Financial update: Mr. Shields has drafted the form for the chapter's DC tax exemption and will review it with Mr. Meyer. Ms. Snyder has been in contact with the Internal Revenue Service about waiving a potential late payment penalty (up to \$5000.00), explaining in a letter that the Chapter's old records were inaccessible because of the change in the organization's leadership. She hopes the IRS will not decide to charge the chapter, but it's up to them to make that decision. Ms. Snyder thanked Mr. Shields for arranging the DC Bar pro bono review for non profit organizations. She has talked with two attorneys and shared the chapter's documents with them, and asked them for advice on matters like donations, grants, the selling of WMDC-branded merchandise and the reports that the chapter needs to file to stay within tax, regulatory and legal requirements. The attorneys reassured Ms. Snyder that the chapter is generally adhering to best practices.

Mr. Sadowski noted that the chapter's biannual report to the DC government (BRA-25) was filed in August 2022. The Board agreed that it would be a good idea to set shared calendar reminders indicating when documents related to tax and legal matters need filing. For instance, the chapter's DC tax records need to be updated every 5 years. Mr. Sadowski also reminded the Board that it is recommended that the chapter's variant names (for instance Wiki Corporation of DC; Wikimedia District of Columbia; Wikimedia DC) should be filed for renewal with the DC government. Alternatively, it is possible to petition legally to change the chapter's name. Forms need to be filed for each

separate name that the chapter uses for its business. This is the sort of thing that would be good to discuss for the chapter's new strategic plan.

Ms. Snyder also noted that she has secured funding to hire an accountant to review the chapter's Quickbooks.

5. Now that the chapter is on a good financial footing again, planning can commence for the annual membership meeting with the usual budget review and overview of the year's past events, preceded by an administrative Board meeting. Mr. Meyer said the annual meeting should be virtual only again. The Board will need to nominate candidates for the Distinguished Service and Volunteer of the Year awards. Mr. Meyer suggested that Pharos of Wikimedia NYC or someone from another affiliate could talk about their chapter's activities and how they might collaborate with a North American hub, if the Board wanted to invite a speaker (although that's optional).

There was a short discussion about the need to cultivate future Board members, possibly from the chapter's awardees. A personalized digital Barnstar could be given to awardees, with or without the usual engraved glass trophy.

6. Wiki Science Competition update: Mr. Sadowski again brought up the suggestion that WMDC could take over the role of distributing the monetary prizes to the winners. Currently the process is very cumbersome and is handled by Wikimedia Switzerland. WMDC could disburse the funds from Podio or Wells Fargo bill pay.
7. Mr. Meyer will choose a date for the next Board meeting and a suggested date for the annual membership meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.