



**WHRC General Meeting
8/17/2021 by Zoom**

Present: Elizabeth Assenza, Lindsay Averbook, Teresa Aravena-Gonzalez, Nicole Jacob, Jeremy Little, Maria Muti, Daniela Nedbalek, Sherri Oken, Eileen Rooney

Absent: Emma Partyka

Also Present: Liaisons Stephen Ingalls, Amy Rando

Guest: Jenn McDonald, Wakefield Content and Communications Manager

Call to Order 7:04 p.m.

This meeting is being recorded. The closed captioning feature is on.

Check in Question/Roll Call: What are you really looking forward to or dreading?

I. Social Media Responses

We discussed comments to our posts, particularly those on the Wakefield MA community group page. The discussion was led by Jenn McDonald, Wakefield Content and Communications Manager

A. Considerations

1. All municipal organizations are challenged by “trolls” and negative comments.
2. We must adhere to public record laws in how we post and respond since we are a government entity.
3. We must allow people to speak freely but must keep who we are in mind when responding.
4. The Town uses an archive service but some deleted comments may not appear.
5. The majority of comments in response to WHRC posts appear on community groups.
6. Engagements to posts on the WHRC pages is less because we have less reach than a community group page.
7. We want to be allies to those who may be harmed by the posts.

B. How do we respond to comments on social media to our posts?

1. Community page administrators do remove some of the posts but we can't turn comments off on our page.
2. There are filters mainly used for obscenities but they are imperfect and not a real solution.
3. Do not respond to people who are obviously baiting us.

C. Pros of Allowing Comments

1. Increase engagement.
2. Generate conversation.
3. Tag in others to spread the word.
4. Use as an opportunity to correct misinformation and state facts.

D. Cons of Allowing Comments

1. Trolls: You'll get to know who they are, with whom to engage and who to ignore.
2. You eliminate all the benefits of allowing comments since you would have to suppress comments on all posts.
3. People will notice when you don't allow them to speak.

E. Options

1. Ignore the troll and let the troll go away.
2. Correct the individual: Look for openings to state facts but don't run the risk of giving fuel to their negative fire.
3. Supporters may take on the troll. People often listen to those they know and trust, and supporters can say things that the organization cannot.
4. Report to Facebook: www.facebook.com/communitystandards
5. Report to the group administrator.

6. Have a Commission member (or an advocate, a supporter) share on the WHRC's behalf.

F. Concerns and Suggestions Going Forward

1. It is hard to stay on top of the comments. Have more administrators for our Facebook page to increase engagement and reduce the burden.
2. What is our responsibility, as individuals, when someone else posts about us and it is not a response to one of our posts? **Jenn will check to provide clarification.**
3. We need to pick our battles and provide information when appropriate.
4. Create a calendar of our posts.
5. Iron out the logistics of how and when we respond.

Action Item: We will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

II. New Volunteer

Abigail Lane is a student interested in getting involved as a volunteer. She may join us for meetings in the future.

III. A motion was made to approve the WHRC general meeting minutes from July 21, 2021, seconded and all voted in favor.

IV. Flags and Crosswalks Options and Restrictions

- A. Benny Wheat contacted Steve Mullen, Town Counsel, and Julie Smith Galvin, Chair of the Town Council.
- B. A meeting will be scheduled with them and perhaps Town Manager Steve Maio.

Action Item: Benny Wheat to follow up on flag options and decorating crosswalks.

V. Educational Social Media Campaign Idea

- A. See sample infographic on appropriate Trans terminology vs outdated terms still commonly used.
- B. Suggestions and Considerations
 1. Will this create negative backlash? Should we hold off posting until we clarify when and how we respond to comments?
 2. Partner with the student youth council.
 3. Create a post on acronyms (ex. BIPOC)
 4. Share in paper form in the community for those not on social media: newspaper, Town Hall, Library, senior center, civic center
 5. Call the campaign "The Language of Diversity" to frame it as informational not confrontational.

Action Item: Sherri Oken and Daniela Nedbalek will work on this together develop a campaign plan and material for presentation at the next meeting.

VI. Commissioner Education

- A. Every other month, invite a guest speaker to make a brief presentation to educate the members of the Commission.
- B. Tom Mullen has addressed us about the Open Meeting Laws and today, Jenn McDonald has led a discussion on social media.
- C. Future topical presentations should be brief ex. 5-10 minutes.
- D. Post our having speakers as an indication of our openness and desire to learn.

No subcommittee was formed or action item developed.

VII. TAB

- A. Discussion of Potential Dates and Times
 1. Our most quickly subscribed session was a weekday evening.
 2. Be mindful of religious holidays in Sept.
 3. Consensus: Schedule a Wednesday evening.

Action Item: Benny Wheat will identify possible dates in late Sept./early Oct. and contact the organizers.

VIII. Follow Your Art Community Studios

- A. They asked our help in advertising a fellowship for a BIPOC writer.
- B. We agreed that it was appropriate for us to do this.

Action Items: We will post this on our Facebook page. Benny Wheat will share this information with our Library just in case they have not received it.

IX. Upcoming Commemorations

A. Indigenous People's Day - October

Last year, we offered readings over the Indigenous People's Day long weekend.

Action Item: The Sub Committee to start planning includes Nicole Jacob, Benny Wheat, Daniela Nedbalek.

B. Hispanic Heritage Month - Sept. 15 – Oct. 15

Action Item: The Sub Committee to start planning includes Maria Muti, Teresa Aravena-Gonzalez, Sherri Oken

C. Event Planning Template Drafts

1. Create a universal template that all can use and format it for easier skimming and reference.
2. Keep in mind that templates are for use with future events.
3. Build in long enough time lines to accomplish the work.
4. Create consistency in how we promote events.
5. Can we have live events?
6. Jen Boettcher created calendar of when our major events occur.

Action Items:

Benny Wheat, with input from Sherri Oken, will work on the AAPI template.

Sherri Oken, with Daniela Nedbalek's input, will refine the communications promotional plan that provided a guide for before, during, after an event.

X. Storage

A. No update on physical storage

B. Electronic Storage

1. We have the storage and some documents have been stored.
2. Should everyone access it or should there be one administrator?
3. We need to set up the organizational infrastructure/categories before we start uploading.

Action Item: Maria Muti, with Daniela Nedbalek's assistance, will create sustainable categories and folders and show us how to use the storage at the next meeting.

XI. Matters not anticipated

A. Afghanistan Discussion

1. Is there a way for the WHRC to react that shows support to those who served in Afghanistan or concern for refugees?
2. Can we as an entity promote fundraising? Likely not.
3. On Facebook, should we post a message of kindness and concern?
4. This is a human rights issue but is it beyond our scope?
5. Can we share universal refugee and mental health resources, organizations set up to respond, as a WHRC response?
6. We all agreed on the horror of the situation but that we are a community organization of limited scope that does not have the resources or mission to address international human rights issues. We can provide information on organizations that have this expertise and mission.

Action Items: Post refugee and mental health resources for both displaced people and military personnel. Lindsay Averbrook can provide Red Cross armed services division information.

Maria Muti will provide resource related to Afghan refugees. Daniela Nedbalek will provide some resources. Eileen Rooney will write our cover statement.

B. October Speakers' series

1. No work has been done on planning the series with which the WHRC usually partners.
2. There are lots of questions about inside space usage.

A motion was made to adjourn, seconded and all voted in favor.

Adjourn 9:22 p.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by Sherri Oken, CAE