



## **SEAC – November 20, 2024 - Meeting Minutes**

### **Zoom Meeting Attendees**

Courtney Smith	Cal Bellamy	Sandra Davis	Todd Larkin
Julie McElmurry	Cecile LaCombe Petro	Karen Marben	Richard Hardaway
Janice Malinowski	Sheryl Corey	Abbe Trent	Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud
Angie Carr	Ken Zubeck		

**Summary:** The meeting covered various administrative and organizational matters, including financial transitions, membership updates, and planning for future events. Discussions were held on improving member engagement, addressing attendance issues, and evaluating the success of recent training sessions and summits. The team also reviewed upcoming training needs, considered initiatives such as summit certificates, and approved meeting dates for the following year.

### **Next steps**

- Courtney to follow up with Burns Harbor contacts about joining the Commission and attending training.
- Cal to contact local state senator to encourage Highland to appoint a commissioner.
- Cal will try again to talk with St John and East Chicago about appointing a commissioner.
- Janice to reach out individually to Joint Board of Delegates members to emphasize the importance of attendance and address any concerns.
- Sherly and Julie to draft certificate of participation for summit attendees.
- Cecile to organize Board and Commissioner training event in spring 2025.
- Cecile, Sandra, and Dale to plan a train-the-trainers event for fall 2025, potentially with a speaker from a local university.
- Julie to send email with talking points for municipalities and draft annual report for January meeting approval.

The meeting was called to order at 8:33am with the reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Courtney then moved on to discuss the September 2024 minutes, which were approved unanimously (motion by Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud, seconded by Richard Hardaway).

**Membership Update:** Courtney led the discussion on membership, with multiple follow-ups for current community members without Joint Board of Delegates (JBOD) or commissioners, as well as initiating connect with non-member communities.

**Financial and JBOD Update:** Julie presented the financial update, highlighting that the organization had underspent its 2024 budget by approximately \$4,000. She also mentioned the spending on various projects such as management training, website updates, and the summit. Janice then discussed the Joint Board of Delegates meeting, where they approved the budget for 2025, which was slightly lower than the 2024 budget. The board also elected new officers, including Janice as President and Courtney Udvare as Treasurer. The conversation ended with a discussion about the attendance at the Board of Delegates meeting, which was deemed satisfactory.



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Courtney and Janice discussed the process of setting up the SEAC account with Chesterton and Courtney Udvare and the need for clear understanding of financial transactions. The conversation ended with Courtney forwarding some PDFs from Mark Herak related to the financial transition to Janice.

**Summit Update:** The team discussed the success of the recent summit, with 100% of attendees finding the Summit and the location and facility satisfactory. They also reviewed the feedback from the summit evaluations, noting that 70% of respondents found the summit more than satisfactory. The team considered reducing the length of the keynote presentation and increasing the case study discussion time for future summits. They also discussed the positive feedback on Dr. Marlon Mitchell's presentation and the possibility of having him return next year.

The group agreed to review the evaluations and plan for next year's summit, which will likely be in the fall. The idea of providing certificates of participation was raised, with the team considering the logistics and wording of such certificates. Sheryl was tasked with drafting a possible certificate wording.

**Training Committee Update:** Cecile reported that they had extended their contract for the year with a reduction in cost for the Traliant training video. She mentioned that they received some comments during the "Train the Trainer" trainings regarding the areas of social media not being up to date, and Sandra Davis provided valuable feedback. Cecile also mentioned that they completed two successful trainings in Gary and Cedar Lake, and Gary expressed interest in having her back for further training. Cecile also discussed plans for a training for Chesterton and Ogden Dunes, with Courtney and Todd being copied on the email regarding the Ogden Dunes training. Courtney clarified that Eric Kurtz from Ogden Dunes wanted to be a trainer, and Todd confirmed that he was not aware of the need for training in Ogden Dunes. Cecile proposed organizing a board and committee commissioner training event in the spring and a train-the-trainers event in the fall, with the help of Sandra and Dale. The team also considered inviting a speaker from a local university to conduct the train-the-trainers event, as they have expertise in teaching techniques.

**Communications Committee Update:** Julie shared the outcome of the 2024 General Election ethics pledge with 66% of candidates having signed the ethics pledge, a good result! She also provided details on website activity and updates. Julie will send an email to the group with talking points updating the member municipalities on SEAC activities and will draft annual report for January meeting approval.

**New Business:** The group unanimously approved the 2025 meeting dates as stated below (Motion by Sandra Davis with second by Richard Hardaway). The group then congratulated both Courtney Smith and Julie Wendorf for being NWI Influential Women Winners.

- Wednesday, January 15, 2025
- Wednesday, March 19, 2025
- Wednesday, May 21, 2025
- Wednesday, July 16, 2025
- Wednesday, September 17, 2025
- Wednesday, November 19, 2025

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30am unanimously (Motion by Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud, seconded by Julie McElmurry). Happy Holidays were wished to all!