



SEAC - May 15, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

Pledge Recitation and Minutes Approval

Courtney started the meeting shortly after 8:30am and led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Julie McElmurry led the group in approving the minutes, with no objections raised. Courtney introduced a Zoom AI companion feature for meeting summaries and shared her intent to forward the AI results to Julie for review for the May minutes.

Member Update

Courtney requested all members to introduce themselves to aid the AI in recognizing voices. The Commissioners introduced themselves, including Todd Larkin, Julie McElmurry, Richard Hardaway, Sandra Davis, Dale Combs, Courtney Smith, Greg Wielogorski, Angie Carr, Janice Malinowski, Cyndi Hughes, Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud and Calvin Bellamy. The group then welcomed the new commissioners Angie Carr from LaPorte County, Cyndi Hughes from Lowell and Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud from Gary. Courtney reported on the status of various delegates and commissioners. There was discussion about the need for active participation from all commissioners and joint board of delegate members. Michael Suggs shared his efforts to address the issue with Councilman Washington's involvement. He indicated that a new member would be fully engaged by the next quarter.

Finances

Julie McElmurry reviewed the organization's financial status, revealing that they had already spent \$2,050 on advertising and supplies for the candidate ethics pledge process. Janice confirmed a remaining balance of \$39,750 for the year and mentioned working with Mark Herak from Highland to resolve outstanding membership payments. They also addressed Porter County's unpaid bill and noted that Janice would provide an update at the next meeting. Lastly, the group planned for an upcoming expense of \$3,000 for a speaker named David Lamardi.

Training

Cecile informed the team about the additional costs associated with a training event on the 31st, including meal expenses, which were confirmed to be budgeted for by Courtney. Cecile shared that the training event for management level personnel had 253 people already registered, significantly more than the previous event's attendance. Volunteers were needed for tasks such as registration and seating, with Courtney agreeing to take on whatever assigned role. The team planned to distribute an evaluation form developed by Julie McElmurry. Julie agreed to print name tags for the upcoming management training session once she received the final list from Cecile.

Cecile discussed how to have David's slides available for attendees. Julie suggested providing multiple slides per page to reduce paper waste. Additionally, Cecile announced that she is working with Trariant through a new customer relations person and hoped this would facilitate the annual contract.



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Cecile encouraged current ethic trainers to complete their municipalities' training by the end of June, emphasizing the importance of a unified schedule for feedback collection and training. She offered her services to train any untrained member community trainers. She also indicated that there would be a training for boards and commissions next year. Cecile highlighted the availability of ethic guides, handouts, and posters for distribution, which can be obtained from the NIRPC offices, and expressed her willingness to assist with their distribution. Cecile requested the team to notify her about any guides taken from the remaining boxes for budgeting and publishing purposes. Courtney indicated that most of the old guides would be replaced with new, rebranded ones, and Dale reported using around 300 for the Hobart employee training.

Communications

Julie McElmurry, the Commissioner for Dyer and the Communications Committee lead, presented an updated logo and brand for the organization. The new logo incorporates the Indiana State flag and a star, with the tagline "serving Northwest Indiana since 2005". A soft rollout of the new logo was already underway. Sandra and Courtney sought clarification on the symbolism of the flame in the logo, with explanations from both Julie and a third participant, Calvin.

Julie reported on the progress of the building of the new SEAC website by Mary Freda - Flores set to launch in late July and confirmed that the Candidate Ethics Pledge had successfully garnered 71% participation from the primary election county candidates this year. The team planned to continue the pledge campaign for the General election starting in September aiming for a 100% participation rate.

Next meetings

Courtney proposed canceling the May 29th Joint Board meeting, with the next one scheduled for August 21st. Lastly, Courtney reminded new members to forward Julie's "Talking Points" emails to their appointing officials or attend municipal meetings to provide updates.

The meeting was adjourned.