

NSAWWA Retreat Report

9.16.08 Bruce Dvorak

A total of 17 current and past officers, and committee chairs gathered Friday, August 22, 2008 for a retreat at Mahoney State Park.

During the retreat, the group reviewed the Review Strategic Plan, discussed paid staff, talked about the creation of Committee Standard Operating Procedures, reviewed the by-laws, discussed the development of a membership/demographics survey, and talked about new initiatives for the section.

Key suggestions to the Board on work for the next year include:

Paid Staff: Suggested forming an Ad Hoc committee to look at budget requirements and to outline basic expectations of position.

SOPs:

Executive Board update the Strategic Plan's goals during September 2008 meeting

Committee chairs be asked to develop objectives to accomplish the section goals by December 2008.

[Section Chair]

Create resource books for new board members that will include (resources from national, policies, by-laws, and strategic plan). Give book to new board member at fall conference [Director and Past Chair in Charge].

Have new (and all) board members at past chairs breakfast at fall conference.

Have new Section Chair meet one-on-one with new board member(s) after the past chairs meeting and after the new member has received the resource book.

Put in-coming chair in charge of strategic plan, assisted by the Vice Chair. Assign specific trustees to help specific committees.

As a longer term goal, create a dashboard of goals / accomplishments on the web page.

SOPs: Ask Committee chairs to update their committee's goals and develop objectives that help achieve both the committee's and section's goals, and to create a digital standard operating procedure. Examples for several committees will be created. Then we will post these SOPs (and committee goals that are part of the strategic plan) on the web page next to the committee chair's name.

By-laws: Relatively few items need attention. Two specific items of extensive discussion were:

Electronic voting: while the use of electronic communication is not specifically mentioned in existing by-laws it is not specifically exclude from use; thus the use of teleconference meetings and electronic voting is proper under the existing by-laws.

Reorganization of the Board: no consensus, but may be a point for further discussion.

Send e-mail to membership in hopes of finding a volunteer to lead membership/demographics survey.

New initiatives where the Section should put its efforts. A list of the top initiatives (based on voting) were:

Membership Recruiting (e.g., provide scholarships to up to 10 small systems operators/managers to join NSAWWA if they attend the annual conference): Small Systems Committee in charge -36 (4 top votes)

Membership/demographics survey – 33 (4 top votes)

Outreach to high school and community college students (Eric Lee and Public Information Committee in charge) – 25

Promote Water Systems Use of Assess Management Tools (Education Committee in charge) – 23 (3 top votes)

Evening workshops and/or all day pipe design workshop (create a new3 design workshop committee or have a conference committee with two parts: fall and design?) – 18

Leadership Diversity (more trustees based on geography and small systems) – 15 (1 top vote)

Attached are notes from the following discussions:

Paid Staff

NSAWWA Retreat Report

By-Laws

Committee Standard Operating Procedures

Membership/demographics survey.

**Paid staff director discussion notes:**

**Hire:**

Executive director, executive administrator  
old operator, retired person, pregnant or new mother  
face to face recruiter  
    serve as the face of awwa  
    director will attend training sessions.. Especially at national  
somebody with lots of contacts  
    develop regional meetings  
assist committees  
Go to conferences know what resources are available

Position will be a part time job  
NSAWWA May need to provide a cell phone

The person to be hired would be the schmoozer... attend golf outings, Somebody not motivated by pay, somebody who has passion & energy

**Examples:**

Iowa - provide professional conferences \$45k per year  
reach certain attendance goals affect pay  
other sections \$18K per year

Q: How much cost would it take? How much could we have reasonable available

Q: How much revenue generation ability to improve pay possible?

Reimbursing travel expenses could be major expense in addition to pay  
Meeting with legislature? Actual job description will depend on candidate's strengths  
Strategic thinker as opposed to detailed budget person  
Awwa put out seed money in the old days to have continuity of contacts... permanent address & phone number

below minimum \$15K because of membership... national subsidizes section – 353 AWWA members in Nebraska. Need 1000 members to break even for national.

WEF joint conferences get \$10k to \$15k profit great plains conference. If AWWA attends maybe \$5K positive cash flow possible.

break even would be great for paid staff

Independent contractor. Not paid staff.

Is there somebody out there who has an interest... Kevin & Rob September update

November decision on whether to move forward or not

What are needs that paid staff could help to address?

43 sections only 3 are not paid. Nebraska may join other sections.

## By-Laws Update / Revision Discussion

Kevin Tobin and Rich Koenig led discussion regarding the need for updating the Section's By-Laws.

- The first issue posed was is the process to update by-laws accurate and is the procedure to propose changes too time-consuming? The consensus of the discussion was that the process currently outlined in the by-laws is accurate and that no change to the procedure for updating is warranted.
- The group also discussed the use of electronic communication for voting and conductance of meetings. The general consensus was that while the use of electronic communication is not specifically mentioned in existing by-laws it is not specifically exclude from use; thus the use of teleconference meetings and electronic voting is proper under the existing by-laws.
- Lastly, the group held a brief discussion on the need for reorganizing the Board. Examples of the Board structure of other sections were discussed. No consensus was reached on this subject.

Creation of Standard Operating Procedures  
Nebraska Section AWWA Retreat  
August 22, 2008

It was decided by the group that it is important and imperative to create SOPs for the committee duties as well as the board duties.

The Section's strategic plan specifies each committee's goals, whereas the SOP will indicate the goals, duties, and how/when to perform each duty. Each committee chair will be instructed to complete an SOP of the committee duties. Once the committee SOPs are established, they will be placed on the Section website.

The group created a draft SOP for the Fall conference Committee to be used as an example (as follows).

**Draft Fall conference SOP:**

**Goal:** Conduct Fall conference and encourage new attendees

**Duties:**

1. Attend joint planning meeting at previous conference – Nov.
2. Sign contract for the next year – Nov.
3. Schedule three-group planning meeting – Feb.
4. Attend three-group planning meeting – Mar.
5. Issue call for papers – Mar.
6. Schedule planning meeting for papers – Mar.
7. Hold planning meeting for conference presentations – Apr.
8. Coordinate pre-conference workshop topics – Apr.-Aug.
9. Coordinate with Director to inform National representative – May
10. Get draft of the program to the lead organization – July
11. Place draft agenda on Section website – July
12. Review contract – Aug.
13. Review draft program before printing the mailing– Aug.
14. Obtain current mailing list and send mailing – Sept.
15. Review program before printing conference booklet – Sept. board mtg.
16. Send confirmation and bio forms to speakers – Sept.
17. Have the Awards Committee coordinate attendance of award recipients – Sept.
18. Coordinate attendance of awards recipient's families – Sept.
19. Make reservation at restaurant for pre-conference dinner – Sept.
20. Purchase gift for AWWA dignitary – Sept.
21. Organize audiovisual equipment – Sept.
22. Have the lead organization secure reservations for the visiting dignitaries – Oct.
23. Assist lead organization in conference registration – Nov.
24. Attend joint planning meeting for next conference – Nov.