

**Wisconsin Religious Collaborative
Board of Directors Meeting
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin**

January 22, 2024

Minutes

Roll Call

Pat Cormack, SCSC	President	Present
Sylvia Anne Sheldon, OSF	Vice President	Present
Theresa Sandok, OSM	Secretary	Present
Sue Ernster, FSPA	Treasurer	Present
Rose Jochmann, OSF	Board Member	Present
Mary Ann Pevas, OP	Board Member	Present via Zoom
Marie McKenna, SLW	Board Member	Excused
Sharon Pollnow, CSA	Board Member	Present
Jean Schafer, SDS	Board Member	Present
Julie Schwab, OP	Representing Jeanne Tranel, OP	Present
Julie Tydrich, FSPA	Executive Director	Present

Also Present

Facilitators: Ellen Bartel and Beverly Heitke, SDS

Call to Order and Introductions

Pat Cormack, SCSC, called to order a regular meeting of the Wisconsin Religious Collaborative at 9:00 a.m. She invited participants to introduce themselves and tell how long they have been involved with WRC.

Prayer

Pat Cormack, SCSC, led the group in a prayer for discernment.

Purpose of the Meeting

To revisit how WRC might best meet the needs of member institutes.

Facilitator: What are your hopes for our time together today?

That we gain clarity on how we would like to proceed, realizing that what we decide today will be something that addresses the present and may not necessarily be long term.

That we identify the realms in which we can realistically collaborate.

That what we decide to do does not duplicate the efforts of other entities.

That we leave with the direction we want to take and how we plan to accomplish it.

Facilitator: Looking at the areas of potential collaboration identified in your mission, what has been done?

Finance

No congregational collaboration to date, but there may be opportunities in the future.

Management

The leaders of three WRC communities met to explore the possibility of collaborating on health care. Although they decided that collaboration in this area was not feasible for geographic reasons, they all found the experience to be helpful in determining how each would proceed.

Early on, IT people convened and shared information and ideas with WRC members.

An archive committee explored options for collaborative archive depositories.

Pastoral Care

CSA offered online retreats that were open to sisters in other WRC congregations. Sharon Pollnow, CSA, said the CSAs could make other offerings available as well. She gave a presentation to her community on what they need to do going forward, and she offered to share it with other WRC members.

Governance

Recent joint educational sessions on governance included Zoom meetings with Bonnie MacLellan, CSJ, in 2022 and with Mary Jo Nelson, OLVN, Lynn Jarrell, OSU, and Janice Bader, CPPS, in 2023. The group agreed that these sessions were very helpful.

Mary Ann Pevas, OP, invited WRC leaders to join her in exploring the possibility of collaborating on governance. Leaders from the Bay Settlement Franciscans, Lake Franciscans, Racine Dominicans, Sisters of the Living Word, and Servants of Mary accepted the invitation and met by Zoom on November 6. At that first meeting, they shared information concerning their community demographics. They plan to meet again on February 6.

Other areas

Mental health. WRC sponsored joint educational sessions by Dr Emily Cash, PsyD, in May and November, 2023, and contracted with St. Luke Institute to provide consultation and online educational resources for WRC leaders.

Relationship building. Board members agreed that being able to talk to other leaders is an important benefit of membership in WRC.

Facilitator: Looking to the future, what issues as a community are you being called to that relate to areas in your mission, or not in your mission?

Governance: possible options in light of shrinking leadership pool; differentiating between canonical and noncanonical governance and between governance and management.

Legacy planning: spiritual legacy; financial legacy; land and buildings; sponsored ministries.

Social justice and mission integration.

Best HR practices.

Future relationship with affiliates.

Aging in place.

Companion when a sister goes to the hospital.

Health care coordinator.

Chapter membership: who is able to participate; levels of participation.

Archives.

Staffing for assisted living facility.

Sharing space with other congregations in retirement facilities.

Facilitator: What fears, concerns, comments do you have regarding the above?

Re: social justice, we are already collaborating in this area through our involvement with the LCWR 9 Legislative Network.

Re: archives, we addressed this issue previously and surfaced available resources for communities wishing to participate in collaborative religious archives.

Re: hiring a Shared Services Director, this would be a very expensive option and no longer seems like the best course of action for us.

Lunch break

Facilitator: If you agree not to hire a Shared Services Director, how do you wish to address the areas of concern you have identified?

The board agreed on the following approach:

- Step One: The board will have a preliminary discussion around the nature of the need, appoint a committee, give the committee a charge, and set a date for the committee to report back.
- Step Two: The committee will explore the topic, identify resources, etc., and report back to the board.
- Step Three: The board will revisit the topic with input from the committee and develop a plan of action.
- Step Four: The board will implement the action plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the action taken.

Facilitator: What three areas do you wish to address first?

1. Canonical Governance
2. Internal Management
3. Legacy Planning

Concluding Observations

Dues. This year's dues were based on hiring a Shared Services Director. Since we no longer need to budget for that position, dues for the second half of the fiscal year will be suspended. Members who have already paid their dues may request a refund or have those dues credited to the next fiscal year.

Role of Executive Director. We need to review and refine the role of the Executive Director in light of our new direction and mode of operating.

Topic of First Preliminary Discussion. The board will hold a preliminary discussion on the topic of canonical governance at our March meeting. Mary Ann Pevas, OP, will present a brief report on the work that has been done by the WRC governance committee she convened.

Thanks and Blessing

Pat Cormack, SCSC, thanked Ellen Bartel and Beverly Heitke, SDS, for their helpful facilitation of the meeting. Sharon Pollnow, CSA, gave a final blessing.

Future Meeting Dates

Date	Time	Place/Type	Prayer Leader	Notes
3/25/2024	9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.	Zoom	Sue Ernster, FSPA	Annual Meeting, to include election of officers
5/13/2024	9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.	Zoom	Marie McKenna, SLW	Morning: Joint Leadership Teams with Emily Cash
7/29/2024	9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.	Lake OSFs	Rose Jochmann, OSF	Location tentative

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Theresa Sandok, OSM
Secretary, WRC