

**IASWG Board Meeting Minutes**  
**July 20, 2024 10:00 AM to 12:45 PM Eastern Standard Time (US and Canada)**

**PRESENT:**

*Alexis Howard; Angel Doetzel; Ann Bergart; Barbara Muskat; Carol Cohen; Donna McLaughlin; Samuel R. Benbow; Emily Santonocito; Georgianna Dolan-Reilly; Ginette Berteau; Greg Tully; H  l  ne Filion Onserud; Hilda Baar; Jen Currin-McCulloch; Jor  n   Vy  šniauskyt  -Rimkien  ; Karla Herrera; Kristina Lind; Kyle Mcgee; Linda Ducca; Lorrie G. Gardella; Mamadou Seck; Mark Macgowan; Michael Wagner; Padraic Stanley; Reineth Prinsloo; Robert Martinez; Ser   Godfrey-Kaplan; Shirley Simon*

**AGENDA:**

- Approval of past board meeting minutes: March 2024 & June 2024
- Symposium review
- Symposium planning for the coming year
- Hiring process for Operations Administrator/Symposium Coordinator position
- Student involvement
- Continuing education - *add endorsement for continuing education (H  l  ne)*
- Budget & finance committee membership & planning
- Preparing for new leadership

**Welcome by Barb**

- Welcoming remarks by Barb to acknowledge the state of the world.
- Motion to approve the last two board meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Donna and Shirley. Motion to be approved and accepted by the board.

**Symposium Recap and Review**

- 240 attendees; 110 presentations; 29 countries represented
- An amazing experience, overall! It was so good to be together again.
- Some challenges with managing both virtual and in-person attendance - if there is a decision to also offer a zoom participation experience there needs to be intentional planning in the logistics (potentially only have a few presentations with zoom access as it was difficult to make interactive in-person presentations also accessible to online attendees). However, there was an acknowledged appreciation for offering a hybrid option especially for virtual presenters and attendees to attend.
- Translations/Interpretations did not work well this year. This is an area of improvement for the future.
- Some Francophone presenters felt that they did not have strong attendance at their sessions.
- The local planning committee enjoyed the experience. It was "very intense/tiring and worth it." Because of this year's symposium, there is another group work conference in the plans for next year in Spain.
- A fantastic representation of how to apply local practices to other contexts/countries.
- This was a very renewing experience. Liked being outside the city. Appreciated the opportunities for connection beyond the educational sessions.
- A wonderful shoutout to the Membership Meeting as it was a great balance of fun, relationship-building, welcoming, informational and "group-work tangible."
- Liked the option to bring a companion as an accompanying guest.

- In the Chat from Mark Macgowan: “It was an amazing event in a number of areas . I was so excited to see its fruition from a meeting I attended at Complutense over a year ago with Andres and his Dean who offered her full support. It was in a great location that brought IASWG closer to our friends in that part of the world. I am very excited that it stimulated new interests and activities within Spain! It was rejuvenating to hear the wide variety of sessions and to see everyone in person. Here's to in-person Symposia!”
- Need to consider the future of symposia: Location? In-person or hybrid? Knowing the significant cost and time investment. Need to have a symposium planning committee? – This must be decided by November. There was significant discussion on the pros and cons of being in-person or virtual, and also hosting an in-person vs virtual board meeting.
  - The group is debated whether to hold future symposiums and board meetings in-person or virtually, considering the benefits of in-person connections versus the costs and logistical challenges. There are financial concerns about hosting in-person events, especially in expensive locations like New York City. The organization's budget and finances (Operating Budget) were presented, showing lower membership income than expected.
  - Various alternatives were suggested, such as holding events in less expensive locations, using Airbnbs instead of hotels, or alternating between in-person and virtual events. There is a desire to be equitable and allow international participation, but this comes with increased costs.
  - Environmental concerns about frequent travel were raised.
  - The group is considering having board meetings coincide with symposiums to reduce additional travel.
  - There is discussion about potential locations for future in-person events, with some interest in Canada (Montreal or Toronto), but not for 2025.
  - The organization is going through leadership transitions, which adds complexity to planning future events.
  - There is interest in maintaining engagement between symposiums through online special interest/mutual aid groups or other virtual activities.
  - It was recommended to have an online symposium in 2025, in-person symposium in 2024, and have an ad hoc committee for exploring sites for an in-person board meeting.
- **MOTIONS/VOTING:**
  - Motion by Lorrie #1: A recommendation for the 2025 symposium to be online. It was seconded by Mamadou. Yes = 19; No = 2; Abstain = 3
  - Motion by Lorrie #2: A recommendation for the 2026 symposium to be in-person. It was seconded by Sam. Yes = 24; No = 0; Abstain = 2
  - There was also a tabling of a decision to vote on having an in-person board meeting in 2024-2025. There was no motion. There was discussion about not making decisions too far in advance for the new leadership team.

## **Nominations and Elections**

There was discussion about the timeline and process for electing new leadership and board members, aiming to launch elections in early October. Some members expressed a need for clarity on the transition process and specific dates for when new leadership would take over. Concerns were raised about the short timeframe for orienting new leadership, especially given it's been 6 years since the last leadership change. Practical issues like transferring bank accounts and other administrative tasks during leadership transition were mentioned. There was a suggestion to have a transitional period from October to December for the outgoing and incoming presidents to work together. The Nominations and Elections committee are meeting this upcoming week to finalize the election timeline. The timeline will be emailed soon. There is also a need to have a Secretary. The [By-Laws](#) do not provide clear dates for term dates beyond “each year.”

## Hiring for new Operations Administrator

- Request for three board members and Emily to be part of the hiring committee
- Volunteers: Donna, Kristina, Reineth (with Barb, Emily); Helene will serve as a backup
- View [IASWG Operations Administrator role description](#)

## Student Involvement

There was positive feedback about student involvement at the recent symposium. There is concern about keeping students involved when the symposium is virtual.

## Chapter Development

The Chapter Chairs committee provided an update on active chapters and those that have been discontinued.

- 15 active chapters
- No longer chapters/to be closed: European Chapter, MN Chapter, Long Island - to be removed from our website soon
- Sera shared a working definition of a Chapter that is in development

## Endorsement & Continuing Education

- There was an initial discussion to create an IASWG endorsement process for training programs affiliated with the organization.
- There was a motion for “iaswg endorses the Loyola certificate program in social work with groups” by Lorrie and seconded by Michael. There was discussion and a desire to endorse the program and for Barb as president to submit a letter to Loyola. Poll results: Yes = 17, No = 0, Abstain = 0.

## Closing and Final Notes

- The group also acknowledged the success of the recent symposium in Spain, thanking Barb and Emily for their work.
- Several members took time to thank and appreciate the outgoing leadership team, particularly President Barb, for her service over the past 6 years.
- “I also want to add to what Sam said and say how grateful I am for the leadership of Barb, Ginette, and Reineth, who led us out of the pandemic safe and sound, and looking forward to the future. You have made it possible for us to not only survive but also to thrive! THANK YOU!!!”
- There were many requests for a closing/termination process for the leadership team.