

AASHE Board Meeting Minutes - Approved
October 28, 2021
1 - 3pm ET

Attendees:

Meghan, Audrey, Cindy, Raghu, David, Jay, Jenny, Meghna, Ann

Absent: Gil, Monica, Ashwani

Agenda

- Consent Agenda
 - Approve July 30, 2021 minutes
- Officer Elections
 - No applicants
- Board Elections & Appointments
 - Board recruitment language
 - Need to determine # of vacancies to fill and how

Notes

1. Opening Round

2. Consent Agenda

- Approve today's agenda and minutes from August 2021
 - Cindy motioned to approve
 - Meghna seconded

3. Draft Investment Policy Statement

- Evan Linhardt from Bernstein Investment advisors presented to the board the draft policy statement that had been reviewed by the Finance Committee.
- Questions shared in advance of this discussion included:
 - Are there any concerns or edits to this language: a. The organization requests the screening policy for weapons, tobacco, energy (coal, nuclear), adult entertainment, and any other screens implemented for appropriate strategies upfront and at request. AASHE requests ESG factors be integrated into the decision-making of the portfolio managers and in the proxy voting process.
 - Do we want to invest all at once or incrementally over the first 3 months?
 - See table on page 5; any comments on the level of risk proposed?
- No strong feedback on any of the questions above. Everyone is comfortable with taking recommendations from our advisor.
- Group discussion was in full support of policy and investing all at once.

- David motioned to approve; Raghu seconded; Meghna abstained (she hadn't been able to read the information in advance).

4. Conference Debrief

- Reflections and comments from the second virtual conference
 - Discussion points
 - Conference was fine
 - Engagement was down
 - It was difficult to access different parts of the platform
 - The registration window was too short
 - Need to continue prioritizing sessions on racial equity & social justice but implementation in particular
 - Why do we end access to content?
 - Can we license content? (Yes, the staff is looking into this)
 - Lots of people miss the hanging out aspect of the conference; just not the same being virtual
 - Software on the last day was clunky
 - Ensure a balance of sharing problems with sharing solutions.

5. Governance Discussion

- Discuss board applicants
 - No concern with the slate of candidates
 - Still interested in prioritizing diversity of the board
 - Will consider additional appointments to fill gaps in expertise (fundraising, DEI, corporate engagement)
 - Encourage board members to consider who will be a great addition and start recruiting now
 - We'll reconnect on appointments after the election concludes

6. Finances

- Staff have developed 2022 Budget Assumptions but not yet a formal draft budget
- The same number of staff anticipated, using membership numbers (actuals) from this year to guide next year, looking to make some strategic investments in STARS, online learning, technology, and HR.
- The bulk of this conversation and the feedback shared was about the potential for next year's conference
 - Need to consider what will do with our conference next year
 - Results of the August member survey, gauging interest in and ability to pay for an in-person conference in 2022 came back incredibly mixed.
 - Our membership is split nearly down the middle
 - Of those that are interested in going to an in-person conference, far fewer anticipate they'll be able to pay for it.
 - Of those that want to stay virtual, demographics are women and people of color

- If we're serious about equity, what does that look like for our conference?
- Consider a hybrid
 - It's not clear how to make this successful.
 - So many associations have tried this and it hasn't worked
 - It's an incredible amount of work to pull off and both audiences wind up feeling they didn't get a full experience
- Consider in-person but shorter and not as many sessions

7. Strategic Planning

- Discuss process and timeline for next year
 - Interested in having expert/consultant help to guide process particularly bring expertise on racial equity & social justice
 - Staff to lead next steps and ensure we have money in the budget to have expertise

8. Closing Round

Meeting ended 3:05 pm ET