

Women's Empowerment (WE) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 4, 2017

Noon – 1:00 PM

Portland Building, 10th Floor Lodgepole/Ponderosa Rooms

Attendees: Huong Nguyen- BES, Janis McDonald- PBOT (DEEP), Debbie Caselton, BES (DEEP), Ashley Tjaden- BES, Sarah Brunner- Parks, Penelope Luedtke- BTS, Francesca Patricolo- PBOT, Jordan Rooklyn –PPB, Rachele Altman- BES, Shahrzad Dey- BES, Bethan Nabhan- BES, Shannon Carney- CBO, Kate Green-BDS, Natalie Luttrell –Parks, Ida Salazar- BTS, Tanya Paglia- BDS, Puja Bhutani- BDS

Introductions around the room and brief introduction by Huong about purpose of meeting. Debbie provided a history of DEEP and what their role is with the affinity Groups. Janis provided a history of WE, formally known as Women's Affinity Group (WAG).

Huong went over the March 2017 survey results in her PowerPoint presentation (see attached). To summarize, the respondents (63 out of 182 = 34%), replied with the following:

- Group Name continue to be Women's Empowerment (WE) – 63%
- Areas of interest (top 5):
 - Learning opportunities 82%
 - Networking – 63%
 - Comradery and morale opportunities – 53%
 - Mentoring – 53%
 - Policy issues – 48%
- What do you want to get out of the group (top 3)?
 - Networking – 36%
 - Building Community & Support – 36%
 - Personal & Professional Development – 29%
- How often to meet? Once a month 42%
- Activities during groups (top 4)?
 - Women related issues – 26%
 - Group discussions – 26%
 - Speakers – 19%
 - Networking - 15%
- Should the group mission change? 68% No.

Open discussions:

- Current mission: *To empower and inspire women within the City of Portland, by providing opportunities to expand their professional network, exchange ideas and advice, advance their careers through mentoring and education, and meeting influential women who have achieved success. This shall be done in a supportive, non-judgmental and safe environment.*

Although the survey resulted in 68% replying no change to the mission, the discussions on changing current mission statement are:

- To incorporate the recognition and address of gender inequities within the City
- Embracing male allies (or all allies).

- Simplified and shorten current mission statement. A suggestion is to change mission *“To empower and inspire all women in a supportive, non-judgmental and safe environment.”*
- All agreed that the mission statement should state all women, but the group policy should spell out that the group welcomes all women and self-identified women.
- All agreed that a new leadership team will be formed and will go over the suggested changes and run a final past the rest of the WE Network.

- Draft Goals:

- Meet and network with other women in the City
- Build a safe, non-judgmental, and supportive community
- Facilitate meeting with successful women within the City
- Provide mentoring opportunities
- Provide personal and professional development opportunities
- Offer peer support to our members
- Promote networking opportunities
- Collaborate with internal and external women-focused organizations

Discussions based on draft goals:

- Need to identify and balance group long term vs. short term goals, and establish performance measure (grow network/ group)
- Defining the word “successful” in “facilitate meeting with successful women within the City”, or replace with “leader”, or delete.
- Support and partner with other affinity groups
- To celebrate women

- Other comments

- Define how WE Network distribution list/listserv is used
- Creating a Facebook group such as PDXCityMamas has

- Leadership committee:

- 18 people that expressed an interest in the survey
- Janis contacted these women and five (5) responded that they are still interested.
- The sign in sheet at the meeting also identified eight (8) who are interested in (including 3 responses to Janis)
- Leadership committee will be formed based on commitment. Sub-committee also will be formed.

Next steps:

- Leadership Team will meet and complete a Work Plan
- WE Network meetings will be scheduled for once a month for the first year at least. Suggestion that the meetings should have some good agendas and content for the monthly meetings, but quarterly a social event could happen for the networking aspect. Although the survey resulted in 42% wanting once a month meetings, 29% wanted to meet every other month, and 24% once a quarter.