

**Western Region General Business Meeting**  
**AMTA National Conference**  
**November 23rd , 2019**  
**9:30-11:00 am**

Board members in attendance: Leanne Wade, President; Becky Wellman, President-Elect; Holly Mead, Vice President; Kathrine Lee, Vice President-Elect; Kevin Budd, Treasurer; Erin Haley, Secretary; Tara Brinkman, Continuing Education; Ronni Paine, Government Relations; Livia Uemura, WRAMTAS President.

Leanne Wade, call to order at 9:38 am.

- I. Approval of Agenda
  - a. Agenda has been adjusted; please go to website to read the reports
  - b. Ted Fickett, **motion** to approve the adjusted agenda.
  - c. Lori Sunshine, **second**.
  - d. **All in favor, motion carries.**
  
- II. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Leanne Wade: Minutes have been posted and membership is encouraged to view minutes on the new website.
  - b. Tara Brinkman, **motion** to approve the minutes.
  - c. Kevin Budd, **second**.
  - d. **All in favor, motion carries**
  
- III. Officer Reports
  - a. President – Leanne Wade on behalf of Kymila Eubanks
    - i. Awards and scholarships are on the WRAMTA website
    - ii. We have money to give away - please nominate self or others
  - b. Vice President - Holly Joy Mead
    - i. 2020 Conference is in San Diego from March 30 – April 5<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton San Diego, Mission Valley
    - ii. Info about conference is in the VP report on the website
      1. Local chair is Haley Stead; co-chair is Marielle Shappelle
    - iii. Contact Haley Stead or Holly Mead to participate on the conference committee
    - iv. The 2021 Western Region Conference will be held at the DoubleTree Hilton Seattle Airport in Seattle, WA, March 8-14<sup>th</sup>
      1. Chaired by Kathrine Lee; please connect with her if interested in participating on the local committee
  - c. WRAMTAS President – Livia Uemura
    - i. WRAMTAS is continuing the Liaison Committee
      1. Meets with representatives from each university in the region to build connections
    - ii. President-Elect Cody Mills is continuing the Internship Spotlight
    - iii. The Video Master Class is continuing through the WRAMTAS Facebook page
    - iv. Three Scholarships and one University advocacy project grant are available. See report for more information.
    - v. Continuing the Connections Sessions at Conference (equivalent to Passages)
      1. Holding a raffle to win a Yamaha keyboard
      2. Keynote speaker is Jenna Bollard
  - d. Treasurer – Kevin Budd
    - i. Successful Reimbursement Pilot Program
      1. Still able to offer \$250 reimbursement to assembly delegates, board members, committee members;

2. Info on how to apply will be sent out via email
3. 10-14 business days for receipt of reimbursement
- ii. This allows us to invest and be more involved in our membership
- iii. WRAMTA remains in good standing; see report for specific numbers
- iv. Fiscal year budget has been brought to the board for approval.
- v. Sincere gratitude to past treasurer Kevin Hahn; he is an incredibly smart and humble person with excellent accounting skills
- vi. Please contact Kevin (Budd) if you have any questions or concerns; email is on the website.
- vii. Leanne Wade commented that both Kevins have been phenomenal and have worked diligently for a smooth transition; she thanks them for their commendable dedication and hard work

#### IV. New Business

- a. Leanne Wade invited Beth Robinson, Spencer Hardy, and Melita Belgrave to the podium to clarify the concerns about inclusion, closed/open groups, and Safe Spaces posted on the conference Facebook page. Encouraged people to be open-hearted about this conversation.
  - i. Ron Borczon requested an explanation of the current situation.
  - ii. Leanne Wade explained from the Western Region perspective: At a regional conference in Ontario (2018) there was a session presented that excluded some people (per complaints that were received). Some folks felt they weren't allowed in the session. Others felt that in order to stay in those meetings they were required to "out" themselves. Leanne acknowledged that the board made a huge mistake by not going back and talking to the presenters of the meeting to get context; we can't go back and fix it but from now on the board won't do that again.
  - iii. Spencer Hardy: Co-facilitated the session about which the complaints were made; acknowledged that there were missteps on the side of the presenters as well and thank you for acknowledging WRAMTA's missteps. Brought to his attention at National Conference 2019 that due to those complaints the WRAMTA board voted to include a line in concurrent session policy that states that there can be no concurrent session that has any exclusionary criteria [Leanne Wade confirmed, that is correct]. This was done without any communication with the presenting group [Leanne Wade confirmed, that is correct]. Spencer acknowledged that policy votes don't have to go through membership but suggested that in the future there is communication with membership on how to solve this type of situation [Leanne Wade, clarification: this statement is on the conference registration form; we adopted new language on that form, it was not a bylaw change].
  - iv. Beth Robinson clarified this information is on page 88 in the Procedures and Policies
  - v. Leanne Wade: moving forward, we will find some space that will work.
  - vi. Holly Mead: to clarify, the wording was changed to make it in line with the language of AMTA and their advice from their lawyer and their policies. Holly would love to hear what would the membership like that to look like; any feedback is welcome.
  - vii. Beth Robinson: Gave a brief history of this issue from a National Level
    1. Speaking on behalf of Team Rainbow, which is a work group for the LGBTQ community; not an affinity group.
    2. Following a roundtable discussion of LGBTQ needs in Calhara it was realized that safe spaces were necessary for safety reasons. This previously occurred under the radar.
    3. In Ontario the LGBTQ group presentation was not initially a closed group but the presenters made that change right before the group began. This happened out of order. Non-LGBTQ attendees were asked to leave the group.
    4. At National Conference LGBTQ and MTs of Color had roundtable discussion. MT of Color did not ask anyone to leave but it was made clear who the roundtable

was for and several complaints were made that attendees were made to feel uncomfortable and/or excluded.

- viii. Melita Belgrave, Chair of Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Committee:
  - 1. conversations started happening in Spring in preparing for National Conference 2019 between DEI and LBGQT and Music Therapists of Color groups that they could submit concurrent sessions that could be closed because there was no clear policy and procedure;
  - 2. At the April board meeting the board voted yes in favor of closed spaces. A workgroup was formed, tasked with making policies and procedures for 2019 National Conference as well as future conferences.
  - 3. While writing definitions for the conference program the work group was informed that the Executive Director of AMTA had spoken with a lawyer and stopped the process from moving forward;
  - 4. There was a lack of communication and transparency on both sides.
- ix. Beth Robinson:
  - 1. For National Conference 2019 two groups submitted for closed roundtables: LGBTQ (submitted by Leah Wroswonski, and MTs of Color (submitted by Sungeeta Swamy).
  - 2. Two weeks prior to the start of conference these representatives received emails from the ED explaining that closed groups would not be happening;
  - 3. Letters have been written and a petition has been started on change.org
  - 4. There has been dialogue between affinity groups but not between affinity groups and AMTA
  - 5. Current standing: we don't know what's going to happen next; there is potential for communication but no current agreement on how that might happen; there was a request to speak to single members of the affinity groups which were denied by the affinity groups as it did not feel like equal space.
- x. Melita Belgrave: feels communication continues to be siloed, individualized and splitting; there was moment of time offered for discussion at the Assembly of Delegates meeting and it wasn't on the agenda; therefore people that wanted to speak and share weren't informed in enough time to attend; additionally it wasn't there wasn't enough time to have a full discussion.
  - 1. There are missing links and the DEI is a new name just given to the committee this year.
- xi. Spencer Hardy, thanked WRAMTA for making space for talking about this. Wants membership to talk to representatives of these affinity groups. Believes WRAMTA can be a leader for all the regions in how to resolve this and move forward with better communication, and support.
- xii. Kathrine Lee, queried, please define affinity group and work group.
- xiii. Beth Robinson: affinity group is a very big umbrella term referring to a minority group; many affinity groups in AMTA; some are organized and structured; many are only a FB page and no leadership (possibly on purpose); no right or wrong way
  - 1. Team Rainbow is a small workgroup (6 people) that have been together for about 10 years; work on LGBTQ issues but does not represent all LGBTQ music therapists.
- xiv. Melita Belgrave, affinity groups are created by the membership, they are not connected to the board; a work group or a committee or a Task Force are set by and report to the board
  - 1. Beth Robinson: except for Team Rainbow which is not affiliated with the AMTA board; using the term workgroup to describe a group of people working together.
- xv. Lisa Jackert – asked if closed roundtable sessions have been done before.

- xvi. Beth Robinson responded: they had been happening under the radar for several years but board approved them this Spring
  1. Melita Belgrave: clarified that the board approved that any affinity group that wanted closed space would be granted that space.
  2. An email was sent to all affinity groups and DEI to open up space for any group that submitted for a closed session
  3. Emails sent to representatives of LGBTQ and MTs of Color 2 weeks prior to conferencing cancelling these previously approved roundtables.
- xvii. Spencer: AMTA was informed by legal counsel that the affinity violated the Public Accommodations Law; Sangeeta Swamy consulted a different lawyer who stated it should not fall under PAL; affinity groups were thus cancelled.
- xviii. Carlene Brown: clarified that the affinity groups were in the program and people did meet.
- xix. Melita Belgrave in response to Carlene Brown: Affinity group lunches happen as they happen; this is about 2 very specific concurrent session roundtables that were approved initially.
- xx. Beth: Roundtables are about more sensitive subjects; different than networking (light luncheon topics) and they are not closed spaces.
- xxi. Melita Belgrave: anyone who does not identify as the group can go to lunches;
- xxii. Spencer: The question is “Why close these spaces?” The 2018 incident occurred at a time when these groups were held under the radar and the complaint was initiated by a person who wasn’t supposed to be in the space not valuing the space which brought the subject to light. This results in a need for education about these groups and how to make sure these spaces are provided and respected.
- xxiii. Ted Fickett: attended the group in Ontario to gain understanding and offer support and was asked to leave which he did and followed up with Spencer Hardy; didn’t log a complaint; but would like to know where can he go as an ally?
- xxiv. Beth: provide trainings at every national conference for allies and have a safe space for LGBTQs; always holds an allies roundtable as well.
- xxv. Spencer: Beth is referring to the National level; not sure about the Regional level.
- xxvi. Melita: Thanked Ted for sharing that he had communication with the presenter; that’s been lacking. Understands that there will be missteps along the way but please try to communicate rather than complain.
- xxvii. Jason Connors: Is it to be assumed that the National board did not consult legal counsel on these safe spaces and then had to pull back?
- xxviii. Melita Belgrave: can’t speak for the board but believes they probably did do due diligence before this happened.
- xxix. Kathrine Lee, as the Clinical Practice Networking Representative for WRAMTA addressed the question of where allies can go to show support:
  1. The networking lunches on the regional level;
  2. As Vice President-Elect she is figuring out how we can move forward. Is open to suggestions
- xxx. Melita Belgrave: On the National level different committees are communicating with DEI more and that is encouraged to continue; keep the communication open as the DEI is helping to draft policies for National conferences and the same can be done for Regional conferences.
- xxxi. Beth Robinson: one task is to have a section on the website to list the affinity groups.
- xxxii. Spencer Hardy: As a member of WRAMTA and as a troublemaker, should we create a structure that works for our region rather than waiting for National to make any decision?; don’t think we need to reverse the language; doesn’t need to be during

concurrent sessions but happening during the conference would be good; doesn't speak for all LGBTQ folks but if anyone would want to run a group; possibly set up an application process to run a group.

- xxxiii. Beth Robinson: some options that were given were to have meetings offsite; in a suite away from conference; inner circle with the affinity group and outer circle for others;
  - 1. These were offensive suggestions for most and felt a little scary; should be on-site and at a decent time and in a location where everyone can attend.
- xxxiv. Jodi Winwalker: What are some of the primary talking points about the importance and need for having safe space v. talking points for not having safe space
- xxxv. Beth Robinson: Current information available – all affinity groups are trying to get the information out via social media primarily; a timeline is accessible on social media as well as several letters and a petition on change.org; every affinity group needs to speak for themselves there is no one governing body; would have to think about how that would happen.
- xxxvi. Spencer: Can't speak to the talking points against having the groups; personal perspective is that on a National level is that National is hiding behind a legal wall; no one is saying we don't want these groups; however, this highlights a greater systemic issue from the top down; negative voices within that but no talking points about why it isn't supported;
- xxxvii. Cecilia Bartosiewicz: New to the profession and the region; seems like closed groups are positive; what are the next steps, how do we make this possible?
- xxxviii. Leanne Wade: Western Region is committed to finding physical space, at conference, at an appropriate time; we are right in the middle of trying to do better; in other profession as clergy is required to take anti-racism training every two years; your job to educate yourself and if you don't know how to do that please come talk to her; doesn't think hearts were in wrong place; fear is a horrible motivator, recommends book called "White Fragility"; it's a conversation, it will continue; we aren't stopping this conversation.
- xxxix. Holly Mead: We have space; we are taking over the hotel – every meeting room; we are determined to designate space; communicate with Holly; anyone else that wants space let her know; email is wramta.vp@gmail.com.
  - xl. Kelani Das: Anecdotal story – was able to ask questions to a group of individuals who identify with marginal groups during a "meeting" at the restaurant; maybe we need a "crash together" space as well as a safe space; trust that we need to have a safe space; be aware that it might happen on one on one level to help people understand why.
  - xli. Beth Robinson: you have some responsibility, too, submit for an affinity group as allies.
  - xl.ii. Beth Hardy: This is super hard and I appreciate what the minority groups are doing; and how exhausting it is to do the work to educate others; we need to let go of our own biases of not being included.
  - xl.iii. Spencer Hardy: Thanks to the regional membership for having this conversation; we need more diversity in our field; we have the DEI committee currently but having the hard conversations is the way to create more diversity; people come to conference and notice the lack of diversity and when we create the space for that more people will come; Black Music Therapists network is doing an incredible job.
  - xl. iv. Becky Wellman: a side note is that we are opening elections soon; this is a good time to think about coming to the table; this is where change happens and if you want your voice heard; thank everyone for trusting us with time, emotions, thoughts and for making it happen; who better than Western Region to lead the way; Western region has accepted and we want to lead the way; we will make mistakes but please keep things open and know we are trying to making sure we are doing right by you.
  - xl. v. Jodi Winwalker: concerned if her previous question came across as microaggression; wanted to rephrase question – is there a structure that's already in place that can be

referenced because of the legality question; appreciates the region that we are and that we moving forward beautifully.

- xlvi. Melita Belgrave: make sure that we are aware of what is going on; anticipatory anxiety for conference for a lot of people and others that were unaware of the tensions; don't know how to become aware but know that there are probably other things going on.
- xlvii. Leanne Wade: asked if anyone else has anything else they'd like to say?
- xlviii. Kim McMillan: would like to address funding for MT in rural areas. It's a real struggle in private practice;
  - 1. Suggested solution: have a matching grant through AMTA to provide to a rural area to encourage the development in those areas; a grant that will support an MT part time for up to 2 years as they start a practice or so private practice can hire employees; we want MT to make music accessible to everyone and we need to figure out how to fund it; here are options; could be funded externally or internally.
- xlix. Ron Borczon: Appointed by the board to be on the Commission on what music therapy will look like; please visit the AMTA website and click on the link to a 2-question survey; please state that you are from the Western Region; there is an internal challenge between regions; currently Western Region is at 17%; (1:15:33); please contact if you necessary.
  - 1. Kelani Das: I'm your rep to the national board for advocacy; if you need support or need ideas; want to tie in to the topic of the day and the professional advocacy committee is here for the membership; please use the committee, especially for intra-professional issues.
  - li. Jennifer Geiger: Thanks all-time favorite region for having such a great discussion. AMTA Executive Director has been making her rounds to all the meetings; bringing her greetings; she is available for direct communication at [Ellinport@musictherapy.org](mailto:Ellinport@musictherapy.org).
  - lii. Ronni Paine: New Government relations rep; please reach out to me if you need anything.
  - liii. Leanne Wade: grateful that Ronni is onboard.
  - liv. Holly Mead: Registration for San Diego conference opens on Dec 15th
  - lv. Leanne Wade: we are here to work together and be our best selves so that we can serve a large and diverse population.
  - lvi. Ended in a chant "We are, we are, we are the Western Region"

V. Adjournment:

- a. Ron Borczon, **motion** to adjourn.
- b. Lisa Jackert, **second**.
- c. **All in favor, motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Erin Haley, MA, MT-BC  
WRAMTA Secretary