Call to order and Introductions

Needs & Deeds- David Buggs

- Deeds:
  - NC Wildlife Resources Commission: created a partnership for inclusion, identified 3 primary goals and actions → went to director for approval and support
    - Did department survey (anonymous) and found out there is a great underreporting of harassment issues, etc; primary goals identified would help address this ongoing issue
    - The Relevancy Road Map is a tool to help accomplish these goals
    - Discussion: maybe look at sharing the survey questions and how it was deployed so other state agencies can look to mirror that
  - Unconscious Bias → a new workshop that the Management Assistance Team provides to state agencies. Reach out to AFWA’s MAT Team for more information, on their website
  - Greg (ODFW)- Reaching out to students of color to recruit; sometimes you need to reach outside your normal area of comfort to find these new people
  - Elsa (USFWS)- have a new Diversity & Inclusion implementation plan; recently approved
    - Three pillars to the plan: (1) Recruiting & hiring, (2) Barriers analysis, and (3) Employee engagement
  - Jen (NvDOW)- Infant at Work policy = allows people (men & women) to bring children to work for their first year → allows people to come back to work more quickly if desired; turned an old office into a nursing room; it’s been implemented for about 6mo and has received positive reviews; makes people feel welcome and that the organization is family friendly
  - TWS – put together a Code of Conduct to be adhered to during conferences with the goal of making new members feel more welcome
  - TXPW- create/drafted an agency wide value system; this opened up a conversation to start addresses these issues
  - TXPW- drafted a Diversity & Inclusion Goals document for each division; lesson learned is that pictures used are important → ‘If I can’t see me, it’s not going to be me’; images must be inclusive
• Needs
  o Gordon (NEAFWA) – how do meetings/group respond to requests from members who are not allowed to travel to a particular state/city/venue (for religious regions, or other reason)?
    ▪ Discussion: open up a conversation with those groups/people
  o Do we need to send a survey after a major meeting/conference to see if the Diversity & Inclusion needs were met?
    ▪ Should be part of a follow-up survey post-conference...maybe approach Cindy Delany with well thought out question or two to add to the conference.
    [ACTION] – Susan Steffen, Michele Dudash, Michelle Doerr will work on this
  o Newsletter- looking at creating a newsletter to help share this energy and engages those folks who what to be at these meetings or part of this conversation but are unable to.
    ▪ Would need a commitment from people to help make this happen [ACTION]
    ▪ Ideally this would be about 1x/mo; need to send Patty/Deb (AFWA) materials to put this newsletter together → Jen Newmark [ACTION] will work on a format to aid the request for material
  o David (TXPW) – wants to put on a plenary session on Diversity & Inclusion; will be bringing that request to the attention of the directors again [ACTION- David Buggs]
    ▪ It’s on everyone’s radar; just need to elevate it to the next level so everyone can understand the ‘Why’
  o NOTE: There is no tribal representation at these meetings → this needs to change

Relevancy Roadmap
  o Roadmap was adopted at the AFWA Annual Meeting- Sept 2019
  o 19 barriers that were lumped in to 5 categories; there is instructions on how to easily use the Relevancy Roadmap for your agency
  o Diversity & Inclusion in part of the roadmap and can assist in breaking down these barriers identified
  o There have been a number of agencies and organizations that are being pro-active in addressing many of these issues
  o WMI, through their MSCG, will be looking for states for pilot testing of the roadmap
  o WMI under their multi-state grant will be taking the Roadmap online and creating repository of successes and lessons learned with use of the relevancy road map
  o A living document that will be updated as needed; the sharing of stories is needed to update the documents as best as possible (successes and failures)
  o What role (if any) should AFWA have in coordinating relevancy implementation? [discussion]
    o Have a committee/working groups specifically dedicated to the implementation of the relevancy roadmap
    o Affects agency culture and capacity; there may be multiple existing committees where this could find a home
    o Perhaps need to identify a committee that would focus on this, but not have it be exclusively their responsibly as it touches many committees
A support system needs to be put in place to help state agencies implement the relevancy roadmap; many states don’t have the infrastructure or capacity at this point in time.

Perhaps have this as a standing item on all/most AFWA committees to keep the needle moving on this project, not have a stand-alone committee or working group.

If there is a committee created, have one of the goals be for them to find a way to incorporate it into every committee.

Perhaps look at creating a President’s Task Force instead of standing up a committee.

- A way to get a diverse set of people talking about this and working to move the needle on this project.

If diversity & inclusion is a large part of the new AFWA strategic plan, it might be easier to get this included into the committee structure, especially when updating the committee workplans and make sure integrated.

If we get this on the Executive Committee’s agenda, we can ask them for guidance as to how they would like to see this move forward.

Creating a non-traditional University Partnership- Julie Wicker (TXPW)

- There are a lot of benefits to diversity → create more perspectives for problem solving, have greater productivity.
- There is currently a large gap in our agencies and significant lack of representation.
- Finding that our application base is not diverse = problem.
- Went to University that already have a diverse student body for some recruitment.
  - Developed relationships with those schools.

Partnership Elements

- Develop a wildlife research project (urban).
- Make changes to the curriculum.
- Collaborate with TPWD staff and university staff.
- Create a dedicated internship program.

TPWD staff provided media training to help students (and professors) learn how to present themselves and prevent potential conflicts, how to talk to the public, etc.

Some lessons learned: it’s important to pick a project that can be done by first time researchers; mentoring is very important (both faculty and students); importance of networking and understanding funding sources, etc.; nurturing is important and it may take a while to see desired results.

Best Practices Document

- Interview questions → are the questions we ask fair.
  - Example: do you hunt or fish? The better questions might be- do you feel comfortable in an agency that promotes hunting/fishing; are you comfortable talking about hunting/fishing, etc.
  - Asking to send Jen Newmark examples of guidelines or best practices for interview questions [ACTION]