WEF MAX Offers a Forum to Share Successes and Lessons Learned to Strengthen MAs and WEF

WEF Vice President, Jamie Eichenberger
WEF House of Delegates WEFMAX Chair, Cliff Cate
WEF House of Delegates WEFMAX Committee Vice Chair, Mike Milius
WEF Association Engagement Staff: Dianne Crilley

WEF MESSAGE - Jamie Eichenberger, WEF Vice President

- Welcome to the first virtual WEFMAX “Glad we can come together.”
- Clean Water is critical to coming out from this pandemic
- WEF Staff and volunteers have been working tirelessly
- Visit WEF’s Coronavirus webpage – updated regularly
- Some events were cancelled but we have adapted
- Visit WEFs new digital programming online
- WEF has launched access water
- WEFTEC? What will happen? New Virtual platform and hybrid mix - 3-7 October
- WEF is in contact with state & local officials regarding WEFTEC
- WEF needs assistance re: WEF’s proposed changes to Constitution & Bylaws
- Leadership Nominations are open. Consider volunteering
- Two Trustee positions are open
- Tell us if you have applied for relief from WEF assistance programs or if you need assistance

MAKING DECISIONS IN A PANDEMIC

CLEAN WATER PROFESSIONALS OF KENTUCKY & TENNESSEE – Presenter: Paul Maron

- What do we do about our upcoming conference? Water Professionals Conference; joint with AWWA
- Primary source of income – 1,700 attendees with 200+ exhibitors
- We chose virtual for 2020 and in-person for 2021 in Chattanooga as best choice of four choices
- New issues regarding holding a conference are public health considerations
- Need to maintain quality and value of the conference – we are like family and have traditions
- There were emotional components to decision-making regarding cancelling the meeting
• What is the best option for members & holds least amount of financial risk?
• Need to comply with ADA Guidance – hand sanitizer, etc.
• Provide follow up results in positive response from attendees
• Set and adhere to deadlines
• If questions, please contact Valerie Lucas, Valerie.lucas@cleanwaterprofessionals.org

SESSION: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
PACIFIC NORTHWEST CLEAN WATER ASSOCIATION – Presenter: Rob Lee

• Define a baseline about what inclusion and diversity is
• Melting pot loses individual flavors – shift to the term “salad bowl”
• What is the dominant culture to which we are inviting people?
• Diversity – Quality of being different or unique, “A seat at the table”
• Inclusion – Act of bringing together, we are creating space for different perspectives to be heard.
• D&I promotes diversity of thought, ideas, and innovation
• US demographic(s) is changing – 25 years, people of color will reach majority in the US
• Env. Engineering field is changing with more females and persons of color – growth of 12.4%
• Yet, women are not being equally represented in executive levels (1/4 leave field before age 30)
• Are we creating the type of MA’s to solve some of these issues and show diversity?
• Ethnic & Diverse companies outperform their counterparts
• 57% of employees think their firms should be more diverse
• What are we doing as MA’s to bring in diverse groups?
• Access to a clean environment is crucial to people/groups of color, especially low-income groups
• Call to Action: Develop a DEI Policy, Set Target Demographics, continue conference leadership tract & promote InFlow program (Year 2)

FLORIDA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION – Presenter: Tim Ware

• Our industry needs more diversity of experience and culture
• Refer to WEF’s strategic goals, specifically 1-A (To increase diversity....)
• Need different talents - mind-sets
• Workforce D&I task force provides WEF Board with guidance
• InFlow – Reaches out to historically minority Colleges & Universities
• 2019 saw StemPATH – FL, FIU, HU & University of Alaska – to bring minorities to our industry by engaging them
• April 2019 WEF Board meeting held at Howard University “How do we keep you engaged?”
• What can MA’s do to support this mission?
• 36% MA’s collect demographics, ¼ of MA’s do not have a D&I committee
• FWEA: 9 Chapters, 19 Committees, ½ white, 26% Hispanic, 17% Black
• FWEA does not have a D&I Committee
• We need to do better
• But we (FL WEA) reach out, as an MA, very well to the community
• We have an active student design competition
NEW ENGLAND WATR ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION – Presenters: Sue Guswa & Mary Barry

- Founded in 1929, celebrated our 90th B-day, rebranded in ‘90’s
- Over 2500 members comprising of six NE States
- Annual Conference is in January in Boston
- Spring meeting rotates between the 6 States and held in June, around 300 participants
- Specialty Conferences 6 times/year
- NEWEA attends various WEF national events
- Over 45 Active Committees under a council director (Innovation & Ad-hoc Councils are new)
- “Innovation” is the fourth word in NEWEA’s mission statement
- Our Revenue comes from memberships and specialty events
- New Program #1 - NEWIN: Engaging the membership, NEWIN (New England Water Innovation Network)
- Merger finalized with NEWEA in Jan 2020 (New ways to bring diverse stakeholders together)
- NEWIN increased diversity of our NEWEA membership
- Innovation pavilion, modeled after what WEF’s innovation pavilion at WEFTEC, is held at our annual January conference
- New Program #2 - Water Warriors job initiative: Workforce Dev. Committee formed in 2020
  Brings Veterans into the workforce via training, certification, internship/apprenticeship & job placement

VIRGINIA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION – Presenter: Shawn Heselton

- Due partly to a huge shift in past decade in workforce regarding diversity and specialty training
  VA recognized need to create the VWEA Leadership Academy
- Program Details: Application (goals, essays, and resume) & Program Inclusions (In-person workshops, Leadership sessions & WaterJAM Graduation & Registration
- Program Details: Topics (EI, Motivation, Conflict Res., Learning Styles, Change Mgt, Project Mgt) and Expectations (Attendance, Participation & ACTIVE Committee Involvement)
- Class of 2020 has 30 people of diverse backgrounds, education & occupations
- In-Person session in Jan 2020 was a success
- Upcoming Additions: New Speakers and Materials, a State-wide program like WEF’s InFLOW program
- Leadership Academy Participant will mentor an InFLOW student

CHESAPEAKE WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION – Presenters: Tim Wolfe & Laura Jo Oakes

- 800 Members (MD, DE & DC)
- Over 30 Committees
- We (Chesapeake WEA) sponsors joint conferences, seminars, workshops, and webinars
- Annual Conference is about 1,000 attendees, 120 tech sessions to include an Ops Challenge
- Board Members are established electronically and presented at the annual conference in August
- CWEA Fall Leadership Retreat: Prepares people to move into different positions
- Leadership Retreat began in 2016 – WEFMAX was the inspiration (1-day event)
- Purpose to develop leadership within the Committees
- Leadership Retreat Goals & Objectives: Education, Resources, Networking & Workshops

**Q & A**

**Q:** Directed to Kelsey: How many votes short?
**A:** 204

**Q:** Directed to Paul Maron: Any penalties regarding cancellation of conference? Insurance?
**A:** No penalties. We have been purchasing event-loss insurance in most years. We did not purchase it in this time though.

**Q:** Directed to Dianne: Will slides be available?
**A:** All slides posted to WEFMAX section at www.wef.org and notes and meeting is recorded.

**Q:** Directed to Paul: Any changes, refunds, etc. due to cancellation of 2020 meeting?
**A:** Some exhibitors cancelled, some participants refunded, and registration transferred to next year. Student Chapters are meeting remotely.

**Q:** Directed to Paul: Election of the Officers – how is that being handled?
**A:** Members still vote. Decisions have already been made. We rotate States and try to have the President be from the State sponsoring the conference. Officer terms are extended.

**Q:** Directed to Jamie: Can you explain the WEFTEC exhibition hall.
**A:** Walt answered the question. We are working with our exhibitor partners regarding what works best. We will settle with an enhanced online guide, but not to the depth as an in-person experience. Some things we will try and will work great and other things may not work out so well. We will try to enhance the experience for our exhibitor partners.

**Q:** Directed to Laura Jo Oaks: Can you talk to sponsorships?
**A:** We have various levels of sponsorship for different events sponsored by CWEA, ads on the newsletters, signage, and some ala carte options. During registration you can have individual sponsors for events.

**Q:** Is there a fee for being involved into the Leadership Academy for VA?
**A:** $700/person, includes conference reg and 3-day in-person workshop, 4 1-hour remote leadership sessions & books.
POLLING:

Results

Question 1. Did we meet the mission Did this virtual WEFMAX meet the mission statement goal of “WEFMAX Offers a Forum to Share Successes and Lessons Learned to Strengthen MAs and WEF”?

- Yes = 57
- No = 0

Question 2. Which sessions interested you the most? (Check all that apply)

- Clean Water Professionals of KT on Making Decisions in a Pandemic = 30
- D&I – Pacific Northwest CWWA = 16
- D&I – Florida WEA = 33
- Engagement – New England WEA = 14
- Engagement – Virginia WEA = 13
- MA Sharing of Resources – Chesapeake WEA on Leadership Retreat = 16

Question 3. Was this your first Zoom Meeting?

- Yes = 1
- No = 56

Question 4. How would you rate your Virtual WEFMAX experience?

- Awesome = 26
- Interesting = 30
- Just Ok = 1
- Not so good = 0

Closing Remark – Takeaways...

- Thank you for putting these presentations together and still choosing to host a WEFMAX
- Great way to share our lessons learned
- Consider participating in one of the remaining 2 WEFMAX meetings.
- Dianne Crilley: We are adding a YP Summit session for the next two WEFMAX meetings. Urge your YP’s to attend and there are a lot of lessons to be learned.