

## Leadership Day #2 Notes

Tuesday, November 17, 2020 | 2:00-4:00 PM (EST)

Participants: 69

**Dianne Crilley** welcomed the group and notified the group that the meeting is being recorded.

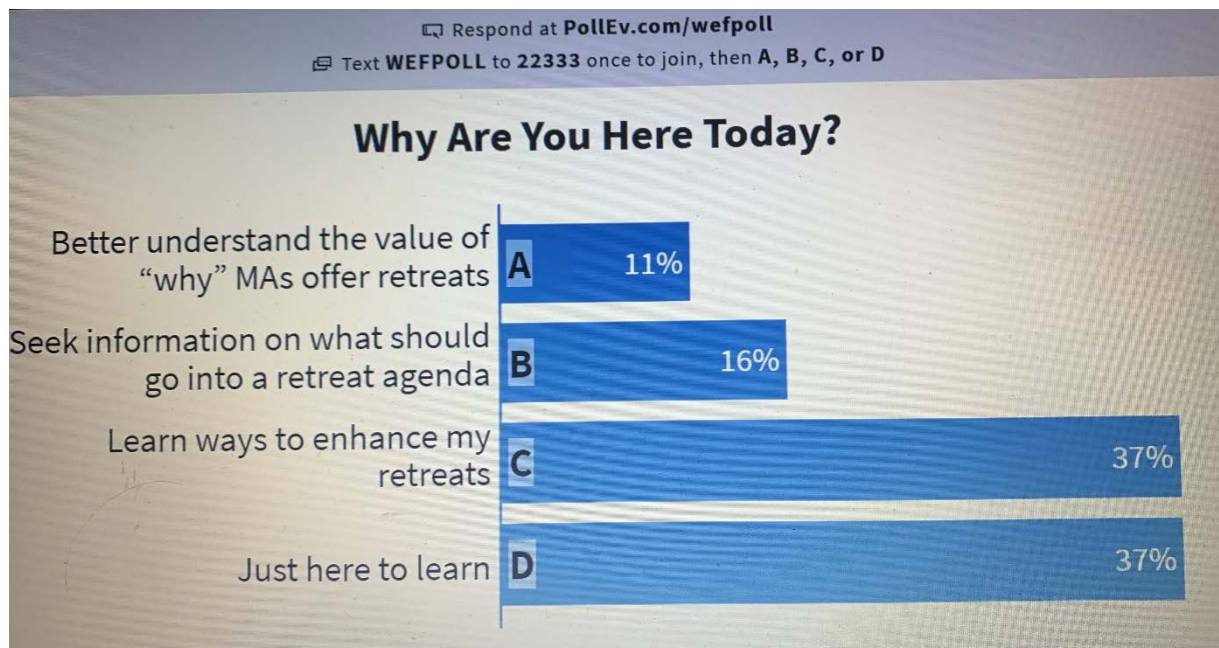
**Jamie Eichenberger** WEF President-Elect: Jamie spoke to the group in a welcome address. “WEFTEC went very well and staff, volunteers and committee members *stepped up*. We learned how we can take lessons learned and apply them toward day-to-day events. We also are not hosting any in-person meetings until 01 April 2021. Hopefully with wide distribution of vaccinations, we will be able to host in-person meetings. What WEF does, with our Board is truly unique. What we do touches all our varied communities. WEF and the MA’s can assist you as you navigate the challenging times we are facing.”

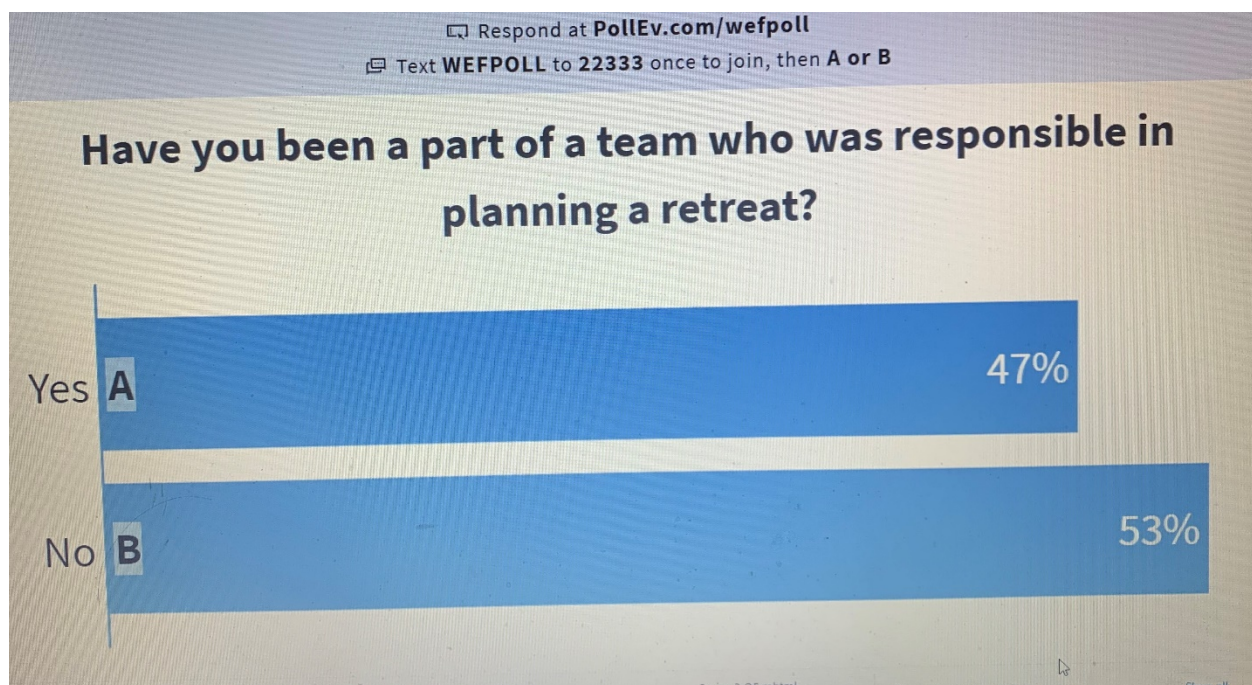
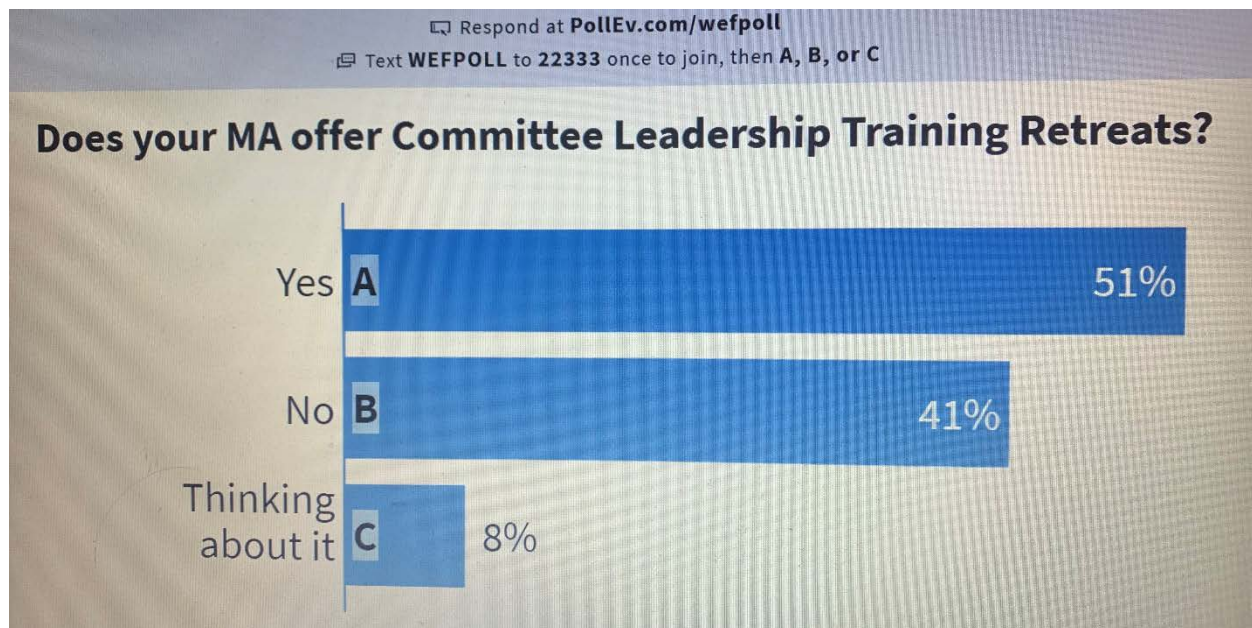
Mr. Eichenberger concluded, “I attended a Board retreat where we built trust and familiarity with each other. We found time to get to know each other as a Board and as leaders. We discussed our roles and responsibilities. The retreats allow us how to drive our organizations forward. We as leaders need to empower our volunteers so they have the tools/vision for them to succeed. This is especially true giving the events of last year.”

### 3 Key areas upon which to improve:

- Stay out of the weeds and hold people accountable
- Why we are doing things versus how we are going to get things done
- Finding time to pause to reflect on what we have learned along the way

### Poll #1 – Megan Livak (WEF Staff)





#### Mohammed Haque – Central States WEA– The value of Retreats

- 1,500 members, 3 States, MN, WI & IL
- We have section & committee chairs in each state
- Our leadership retreats were first established in 2005
- Inspired by the WEFMAX model

- Why Leadership Retreat in 2005? We wanted to get people together, engage membership and work towards a common goal and advance big ideas for the Association.
- We host it at a water park in July and encourage family participation.
- 20-30 Attendees, with extended family we will have 70-80 people.
- What have we accomplished? Governance documents and established Assoc. financial policy and we developed our award programs (importance of these programs).  
Student Design competition in 2005 grew from these meetings, Global Water Stewardship in 2004, leadership forum through CSX, Operator training program, YP & Student Chapter Development.
- CSX – Virtual was 2 hours instead of 2 days
  1. How many events do you want to have (we usually have 40 events)?
  2. Resource Management, LAC is now your tech. manager, avoid oversaturation of webinars and address topics of interest.
- Leadership: We have amazing & engaged leaders
  1. They cannot lead if they do not know *the game*
  2. They know to engage the membership

#### **Kathy Rabalais – Virginia WEA – What goes into building the agenda**

- Joint with VA section of AWWA
- 8 years & counting (joint with VA AWWA)
- Membership 1,700, 32 Committees, 6 Spec. Conference, Annual Meeting 1,900 attendees, 1 full-time and 1 part-time staff, approx. 80 events in a non-COVID year.
- We host so many events due to the strength of our committee leaders and our volunteers

Why do we host Leadership Training?

- Provide Direction for the coming year
- Develop leaders
- Share tools available to committees
- “Smash the Silos!” Foster Collaboration
- To thank our volunteers
- We choose our venues very carefully (botanical gardens, fun place, nice hotels, etc.)
- We have 15 joint committees (VAWEA & VA AWWA)

*“Since we’re pulling from the same membership, we need to work together.” Kathy Rabalais*

What does our day look like?

- Effective Communication, Collaboration, Succession Planning (1 hour for each topic)
- Committee Management Topics are Reviewed (Policy, Budgets & Deadlines)
- Team Building activities are incorporated
- Success Stories are shared – This is one of our most popular discussions.
- 75 attendees for joint VA WEA & VA AWWA Meeting

Tips for a Successful Event

- Change it up
- Be Strategic with Seating
- Develop a theme and involve a variety of speakers

- Ask for input from your leaders
- Keep it interactive and fun
- Keep track of commonly asked questions/inquires

#### Develop Tools to Drive Committee Success

- Org. manual that outlines Committee purpose/goals
- Provide Committee & Org. Charts
- Establish Committee Budgets (All VA Committee have budgets & provides ownership)

#### Results

- Leaders know what is available for them to fulfill their roles
- Volunteers become motivated
- Success stories are shared for Committee to execute
- Team Environment is defined

#### VA WEA/VA AWWA had their leadership training last week

- Title: *Engagement in the virtual world*
- 9:00 – Noon
- Shortened the Event and had 2 breakout rooms
- Provide ample opportunities for Engagement
- Lead by Example and again, Keep it fun!

### **Mike Sweeney & Karen Wallace – Florida WEA – Adding team activities and fun**

#### Leadership Development Workshop (LDW)

- 1.5 days
- Takes place in Feb. annually
- Founded 1941, 8 Chapters and 8 Student Chapters
- 19 Committees
- Purpose: To educate our Leaders, Engage Leaders, Appreciate Volunteers
- Separate & distinct from Annual Conference (March or April)
- Enables planning for next year (Business plans)

#### Planning

- Usually on Sunday/Monday to minimize interruption of taking vacation time
- Invite Current & incoming chapter/committee leaders
- President-Elect plans and facilitates the workshop
- Expect 40-50 to attend
- Host is a hotel in Daytona Beach
- Michael provided a sample agenda
- Michael provide a sample budget

#### Team Building & Networking

- Provide a shirt and a Mug
- DAL gives a presentation – “How do you host a successful event?”

Ideas about going virtual

- Choose the best virtual platform
- Hybrid v Full Virtual (?)
- Turn the Cameras on
- Have engaging visuals
- Plan breaks during longer meetings
- Add fun

Dianne mentioned Mohammed “modeled” his retreat from WEFMAX, choose two topics and executed them well. Dianne also mentioned *soft skills* incorporated in VA WEA’s workshop for leadership development and liked that the joint meetings with AWWA work well; smart to have strategic seating. Regarding FL, Dianne added, “your panels work well for you and I like the team exercise “build a bike”.

### **Question & Answers**

**Pam Burnett, *what kind of big ideas have arisen?***

- Kathy Rabalais replied, “Two committees five years ago now have joint meetings”

**Dianne, *“Does anyone charge for training?”*** No one is charging

***Adding a service project onto an event?***

- Mohammed Haque stated, “YP’s want to give back as much as possible. Global Water Stewardship came out of CSX and led to more student involvement”

**Christina Smith – *How do you determine which topics are attractive to a large group of people?***

- Kathy Rabalais, replied, “We have a pre-questionnaire and get a feel for what people are interested in. Have we not gone virtual, we would have done DE&I training.”
- Mohammed Haque, “The beauty is you can have any topic in any given year and choose those topics as suggested by the President and/or Exec Committee.”
- Michael Sweeney, “We ask at the end of the workshop, what did attendees like in this year’s training.”

***Any Lessons learned and not to try again?***

- Mohammed Haque, “Don’t get into the weeds. Control the direction of the conversation and keep it high level and work out the details after the meeting.”
- Kathy Rabalais, “We’ve had a few lessons learned and no one wants to hear the same speaker all day long”

**RE: *Budget from Janet C. Are all expenses included in the budget?*** All 3 presenters replied Yes.

**Douglas Pike, “We’re looking for sponsorships and maybe WEF should be looking for sponsorships as well”**

**Janet Cann: *Is there a moderator and who runs the meeting?***

- Kathy Rabalais, “Our leadership rotates the responsibilities. As for activities, I usually handle this.
- Mike Sweeney: President-Elect is the facilitator who runs the meeting at the macro level.

- **Mohammed Haque:** Depends upon the subject matter.

### **Breakout Room Questions**

1. What valuable information did you come out of today's meeting?
2. Think of something fun that you can implement at a retreat

**Houssam Eljerdi,** "I like adding the family aspect to the activities" As for fun, "charter a tour with a specific route, etc."

**Mohammed Haque,** "what stuck out was the need for a service project to be incorporated, build a bike, etc. Add a fun element.

**Scott Foley,** "We took away, that its important to have some gift or something symbolic to hand out as people are taking their time to attend these events. Team building is important to break up cliques and we need to reach a common goal. New Idea, "get YP's engaged with committee leaders to gather new ideas.

**Samantha Weidenbenner,** "Planning for new people to get seamless information from current leadership people is helpful.

**Kelsey Hurst,** "Valuable item people took away, the service project and building the bike which included cooperation and engagement. Keep things high-level, incorporating fun & after-hours events. Karen said they purchased food canned items and then donated.

**John Trofatter** mentioned, "fireworks" to spice things up and add for some fun. Also, Mr. Trofatter added that due to COVID, some companies may have money in their budget for sponsorships. Adding, "This is something the AE Team and WEF may wish to pursue."

**Lou Storino,** valuable ideas, the retreats are beneficial and be time well spent and valuable. Make it family orientated. Fun ideas incorporate the service project and maybe visit a food pantry.

**Mike Milius,** "Valuable, the service project, pre event survey, outside speaker, build a bike. Social Media exercises to break down the walls."

**Rob Wither,** "The idea of doing activities to engage participants is crucial. I have noticed committee chairs don't work with other chairs. Maybe a talent show to add some fun."

**Phillip Sexton,** "keep it fun, definitely engage sponsorships which provides a greater budget. Pam said, focus on the champions to rely on their feedback. Trying to leverage the people from whom you want to get feedback regarding guidance and next steps.

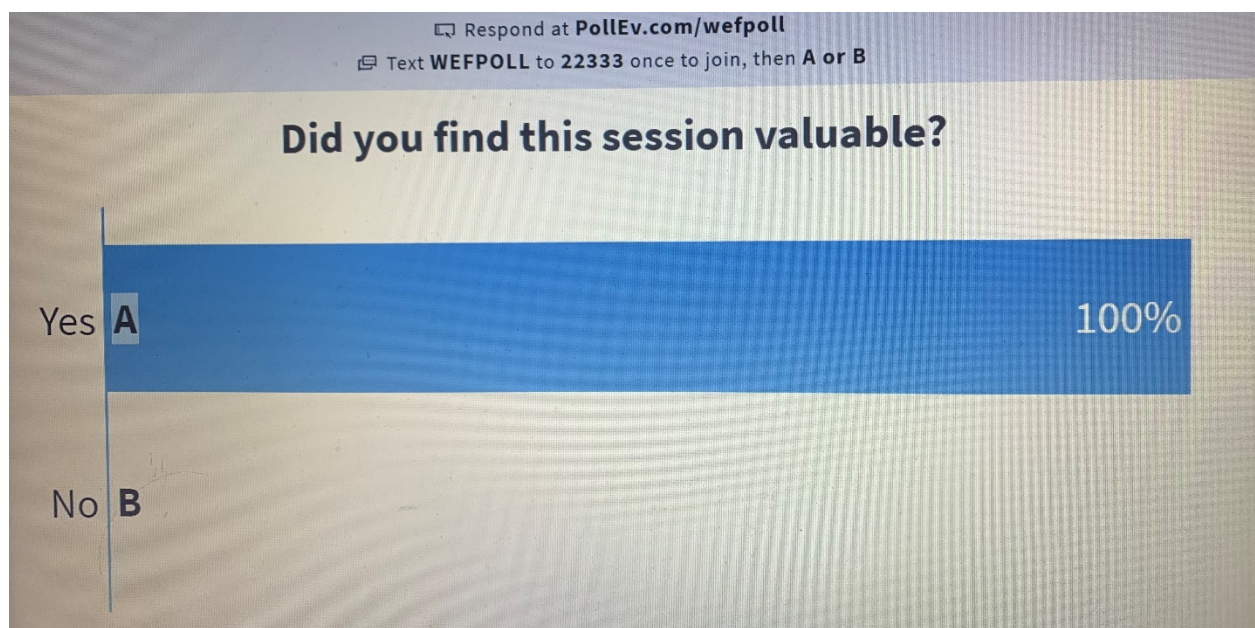
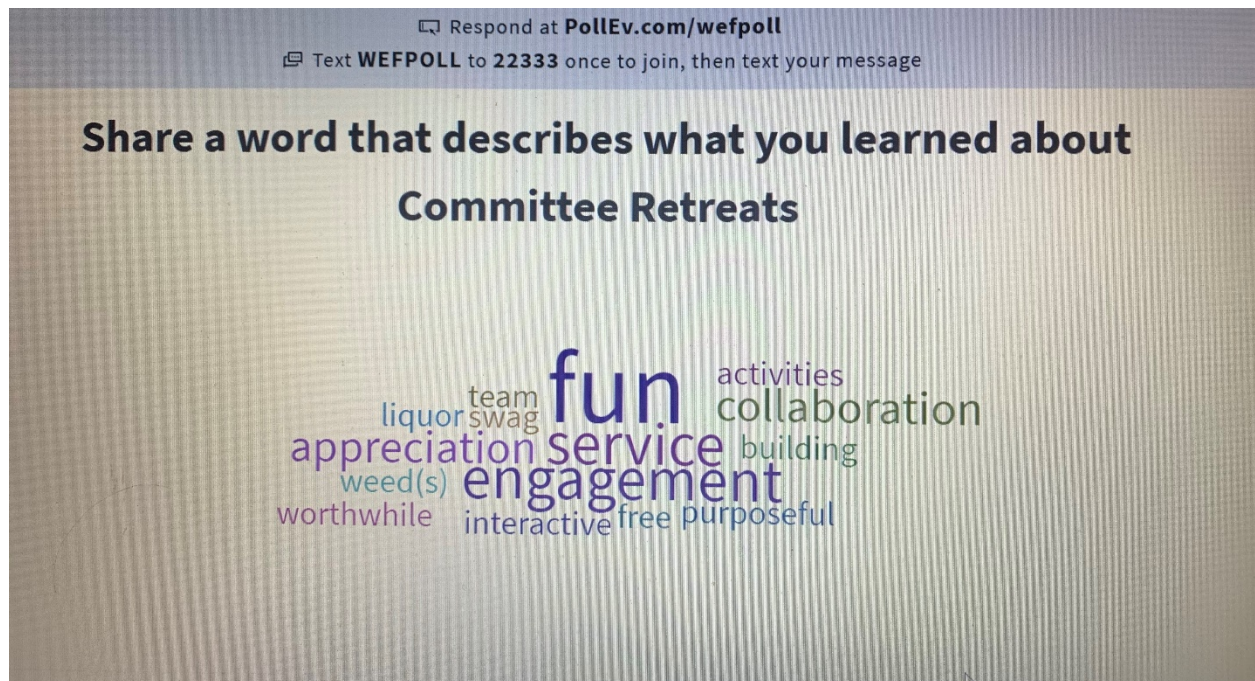
**Jamie Eichenberger,** "We dove more into why we may or may not have these. NE and RM tend to have orientations rather than leadership retreats; less around get to know you. We like those ideas as well. Had some concerns regarding budget (how to) and gaining sponsors would be great. We found more challenges than solutions. m

**Mike Milius RE: WEFMAX 2021**



“WEFMAX all virtual. We have more time as opposed to 2020. Let’s go back to that fun aspect and entertaining. It will be a 2-hour event. Topics will be determined by the MA’s by December. More information coming and think about attending them as they will be spread over two months.”

## Poll #2 – (Megan Livak) – Word Cloud Format



Respond at [PolleEv.com/wefpoll](https://PolleEv.com/wefpoll)

Text **WEPOLL** to **22333** once to join, then **A, B, C, D, E...**

## Which future Leadership Series will you plan to attend?

