

# Mediation Summary

Prepared by Will Hobbs

# Background

- Beginning in late 2016, many conflicts arose between members of Washco Dems, and the conflicts continued to escalate over the following year.
  - Actions included the motion to recall the Chair
- Proposal was made to bring in a professional mediator, and one was chosen, Chris Sheesley, MA, In-Accord Inc..
- E-board approved funding an initial exploratory set of sessions, “Phase 1”
  - The DPO split the cost with Washco Dems
- Mediator held preliminary two hour meetings with the two “sides” separately.
  - Mr. Sheesley presented his wrap-up, with indicating sufficient common ground to proceed fruitfully.
- E-board approved funding Phase 2, from which we anticipated concrete steps
  - The DPO also partially funded Phase 2
- Representatives of the two sides reconvened jointly, spent a full day discussing experiences, concerns, and desired outcomes.
  - Keith Haxton, Farrah Chaichi, Gabe Mendez, Louise Currin, Veronica Williams, Patrick McGuire, Chrissy Erguiza, Will Hobbs
- Seven areas were identified for analysis and discussion, prioritized by votes of participants.
- Final report was issued by the Mediator, reviewed by participants, provided to the e-board.

# Areas of discussion

A-C	Raw	Topic	Notes
1	17	Working relationships	Healing of; Desired tone for; Trust
2	21	Communication	Tone/quality of; Means of; Timeliness of
3	23	Leadership	Role of; Respect for; Expectations of; Accountability
4	34	Decision making	Codifying Best practices Who decides what? Efficiency & timeliness of
5	36	Conflict management	Best practices
6	40	Meeting management	Best practices for
7	53	General membership	Consideration of the broader membership

Seven areas identified for analysis and discussion and prioritized by votes of participants.

(Note: the final report covered the topics, but not in that order)

# Conflict Management, Officer Accountability

- **Problem:** conflict escalation path not adequate:
  - Discuss between two parties -> public confrontation -> launch recall effort
- **Proposed Solutions:**
  1. Involve the fewest people possible in any given conflict resolution effort.
  2. Escalate to a wider audience only after we have exhausted the above approach.
  3. Institute a “Conflict Resolution Team” or “Cares and Concerns Committee” and process
    - Rules committee members in the mediation process have agreed to advocate for this
    - Questions regarding scope and authority will be explored
  4. In lieu of a Conflict Resolution Team, the E-Board is the appropriate next step in the process.
  5. Only then would public confrontation and recall be appropriate

# Leadership

- **Problem:** Roles and expectations of officers not always clear, and lessons learned not always passed on to subsequent leadership
- **Solutions:**
  1. Conduct Postmortem between outgoing and incoming leadership
    - Focus on lessons and solutions, not blame
  2. All outgoing officers and committee chairs issue Exit Reports:
    - Clarify functions, list accomplishments, struggles
  3. Convene a “New Officer Retreat,” review and evaluate exit reports, post mortem lessons
  4. Add key conclusions to the Rules

# Communication

- **Problem:** Communications between officers and others:
  - Not always timely
  - Sometimes involves too many people (big Cc: lists)
  - Occasionally devolves into apparent personal attacks
- **Solutions:**
  1. Officers acknowledge receipt of communication within 72 hours
    - Even “I received your message and will respond soon” OK for complex issues
    - If sender needs answer within a specific timeframe, that information will be included in initial request
    - Timely follow-up is a must
    - If sender is unsure if the message has been received or acted on, the sender will call, text or email to confirm before taking further actions.
  2. Concerns about party issues should not be taken personally by the recipient
  3. Use To: and Cc: appropriately
    - To: recipients are expected to attend to issue, Cc: field is for those who are simply being informed
  4. When email exchanges become non-productive, a clear response to that effect will be sent.
    - E.g., “I believe that we have made our position clear and that further discussion will not be productive,” or, “Let’s meet to discuss this in person.”

# Decision Making

- **Problem:** Scope and Authority of subcommittees not always clear
- **Solutions:**
  1. Officers to clarify scope of subcommittee mission, and determine how recommendations will be handled
  2. After sub-group has completed its work, it will be reconvened to hear from officers how their work was considered and applied, even if significant time has passed

# Meeting Management


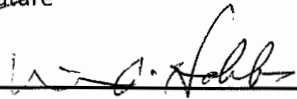
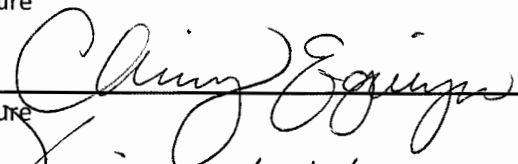
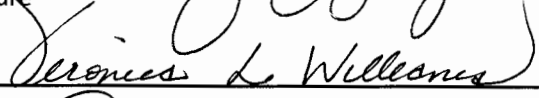
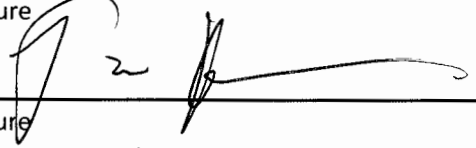
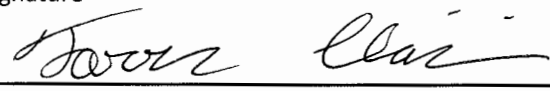

- **Problem:** Meetings not consistently conducted in orderly fashion:
  - Meetings are not always following Rules and Bylaws, and/or Robert's Rules as required.
- **Solutions:**
  1. Parliamentarian will apply rules accurately and even-handedly, not making expedient rulings to move the meeting forward
    - The Chair will work with the Parliamentarian to ensure that when a decision is contested, the Parliamentarian will find and cite the applicable rule
    - The Chair will ensure there is clarity before moving on
    - Pauses will be announced ("stand at ease") and respected if the Parliamentarian needs time to find citation
  2. We will be consistent about the application of Robert's Rules of Order:
    - All objections will be made from a microphone, unless it is an interjectory motion such as a point of order.
    - Officers will disregard all comments that are out of order
    - Officers will openly acknowledge a mistake when it is highlighted so attendees understand the proper process
    - Each participant is encouraged to help reinforce these commitments
    - Add summary of key Robert's Rules to vote cards used in CC meetings



# Next Steps

<b>Who</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>When (Proposed)</b>
Outgoing officers and interested participants	Convene/conduct postmortem, issue report	By end of 2018
Natalia Zhang	Post Mediation Summary doc to washcodems.org	By Thursday PM, 11/15/18
Rules Committee	Define and Create a Cares and Concerns Committee	By end of Q1, 2019
Officers and Committee Chairs	Issue Exit Reports	By end of November
Incoming and Outgoing Officers	Convene "New Officer Retreat" to review postmortem, exit reports, share best methods	By second week of January, 2019
Rules Committee	Incorporate key lessons from Postmortem into Rules	First Quarter, 2019
Credential Committee, Office Committee	Create/add sticker to vote cards given to PCPs during credentialing	By 1 <sup>st</sup> CC Meeting in January, 2019

# This Summary Has Been Approved by the Participants:

 Signature	<u>11/14/2018</u> Date
 Signature	<u>11/14/18</u> Date
 Signature	<u>11-14-2018</u> Date
 Signature	<u>11-14-2018</u> Date
 Signature	<u>11/14/18</u> Date
<u>Keith Haxton</u> Signature	<u>11/14/18</u> Date
 Signature	<u>11/14/18</u> Date
 Signature	<u>11-14-18</u> Date